

St Mary's, Inverness

The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122]

The Year of St Ignatius

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SIXTY -SECOND IGNATIAN REFLECTION IGNATIUS :THE IMPACT IN SCOTLAND



Jesuit Diplomacy and Manoeuvring in the Scottish Counter -Reformation:

In June 1567 Mary Queen of Scots was arrested by rebellious members of the Protestant nobility and was imprisoned initially in Loch Leven Castle. Forced to abdicate in favour of her son she never saw him again. Her half-brother James Stewart, Earl of Moray, was appointed to be the Regent. From the time of her first and other imprisonments she was taken south, to England, where she hoped for better fortune with her cousin Queen Elizabeth. The two women never met but the involvement of Mary with Catholic nobility in England and Scotland led to accusations of treachery and treason.

Mary, Queen of Scots was executed on 7 Feb 1587 at Fotheringhay Castle, near Peterborough. She had been involved with a plot involving an English recusant, a follower of traditional Catholicism, Anthony Babington and **Fr John Ballard** a Jesuit priest.

These plotters were soon discovered and executed. A systematic network of spies had been put in place in 1584, after the Throckmorton Plot by the advisors of Queen Elizabeth I of England, notably Lord Burghley and Francis Walsingham. Secret correspondence involving Mary, Queen of Scots and the Catholic League in France with the prospect of a Spanish invasion caused her downfall. The plots to replace Elizabeth, both Throckmorton and Babington, led to Mary's execution.

The Catholic royalty of Europe with the Catholic nobility of Scotland had been seeking ways and means of ensuring that Queen Mary's son, the infant King James VI, would be brought up as a Catholic.

As early as 1561-62 two Scottish Jesuits, **Fr William Crichton** and **Fr Edmund Hay** [cousins from the Aberdeenshire gentry] joined the secret mission of Nicholas de Gouda, the Legate of the Holy Father. After much secrecy and frustrated discussions, the parties managed to escape, Fr Crichton travelling to Antwerp with the Papal Legate.

For the next twenty years Fr Crichton worked in Scottish seminaries in France.



Fr Robert Persons SJ co-ordinated much of this. The Scots Mission was concerned with high international politics, with Robert Persons at the head of those who were confident that James would adopt the religion of his mother: ***"Our chief hope is in Scotland, on***

which depends the conversion not of England only, but of all the north of Europe.” In 1582, having been briefed by Fr Robert Persons, Fr Crichton returned to Scotland on yet another mission. On this occasion he visited George Seton, Lord Seton, who was the only Catholic serving in the Royal Council of Scotland.

Crichton corresponded with Esme Stewart, Duke of Lennox who was both a cousin of King James VI and also his guardian as James was even yet a minor. After clandestine night-time negotiations the Duke of Lennox promised that James would be brought up and educated as a Catholic. Articles of agreement were duly signed.

The documents were taken to France where the leading parties, the Spanish Ambassador, Henry Duke of Guise, and others began to assume that a Catholic succession was assured. The Catholic planners, including Fr Robert Persons SJ, Fr Crichton and the Catholic nobility were seeking military protection for the Duke of Lennox and his cousin King James. They were also looking for a suitable Catholic girl as a future bride for the young king. Whether due to security leaks, or simply because it was all too slow and became known, the Protestant Scottish nobility intervened. The Earl of Gowrie, William Ruthven, with others kidnapped the young King James. This ‘Raid of Ruthven’ negated these Catholic attempts at a Catholic succession in Scotland.

Fr Crichton was a persevering and persistent man, in 1584 he attempted a third mission to Scotland. This was thwarted as his ship was captured and Crichton imprisoned at Ostend. Queen Elizabeth asked for him: he was taken by ship to London and imprisoned in the Tower of London. There he was consulted on the question of

whether it was lawful to kill the Queen [Elizabeth]. This resulted from an earlier discussion in Lyon that he had with an English Catholic plotter, William Parry. Fr Crichton was consistent in claiming that while tyrannicide could be sanctioned by the Pope, it was not possible to carry out a murder and hope for retrospective approval. In effect Fr Crichton told Parry his proposed action was not allowed on Catholic principles. In the Tower, William Parry in his statement, declared that Crichton had given him a negative answer concerning killing Queen Elizabeth. Fr Crichton was released and travelled immediately to Rome to consult with the Jesuit General, **Fr Claudio Acquaviva**.

Thereafter Fr Crichton's career is linked with the diplomatic negotiations surrounding the possible restoration of Catholicism in Scotland where he was resident in the Canongate in Edinburgh. The Catholic nobility were supportive, but there was little encouragement elsewhere. Withdrawing from diplomacy, and dynastic manoeuvring Fr Crichton spent the remainder of his Jesuit ministry at the seminary in Flanders, retiring to Paris in 1615, and dying there in 1617.

Fr Persons, Fr Crichton and the other Jesuits turned to educational endeavours after the Jesuit Superior General, Fr Claudio Acquaviva, considered that conspiracies and plotting would not be beneficial in the long term. With the knowledge of Pope Gregory XIII, Catholics were told to end all association with plans to assassinate Queen Elizabeth.

Jesuit activity in the west of Scotland :

Fr James Galwey, an Irish Jesuit, made considerable inroads in the western Isles. He made many converts on the island of Islay about 1615, but after being there for a week he was forced to flee to minister elsewhere. He and his two companions sailed first for Oronsay, and then to Colonsay where he reconciled about forty adults, many of whom had never seen a Catholic priest before. After saying Mass Fr Galwey's mission travelled to Jura, Gigha, Arran and the Kintyre peninsula. This was close to the territory of the powerful Dukes of Argyll who were champions of the Protestant cause. So thereafter Catholic mission in these area by the Jesuits was limited.

Scottish Jesuits, many from the Catholic nobility in Aberdeenshire, served throughout Europe in teaching and in pastoral work.

On the death of Queen Elizabeth the young King James VI of Scotland went to London where he was welcomed and crowned as King James 1 of England. He was known thereafter as King James VI and I [he had a preference for being called 'King of Britain' but that was not sustained].

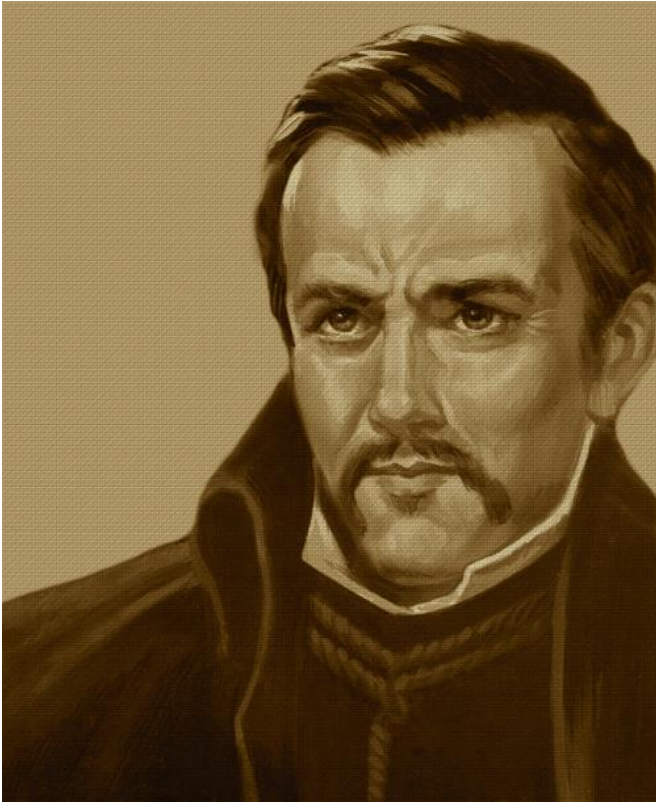


In many ways he was a unifying monarch serving both countries, although preferring to rule from London.



The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 in which young Catholics attempted to kill King James by blowing up Parliament when he was due to appear there was thwarted. Its discovery led to the executions of all involved, including the leading English Jesuit Fr Henry Garnet SJ whose trial in 1606 was seen as being an example of Jesuit 'double-talk', equivocation. Garnet was not a violent man, but he was caught up in the plot through his foreknowledge of it through sacramental confession.

In these circumstances the generally tolerant King James became less lenient towards Catholics. It was in these circumstances that the ministry of **Fr John Ogilvie SJ** came to be so short-lived.

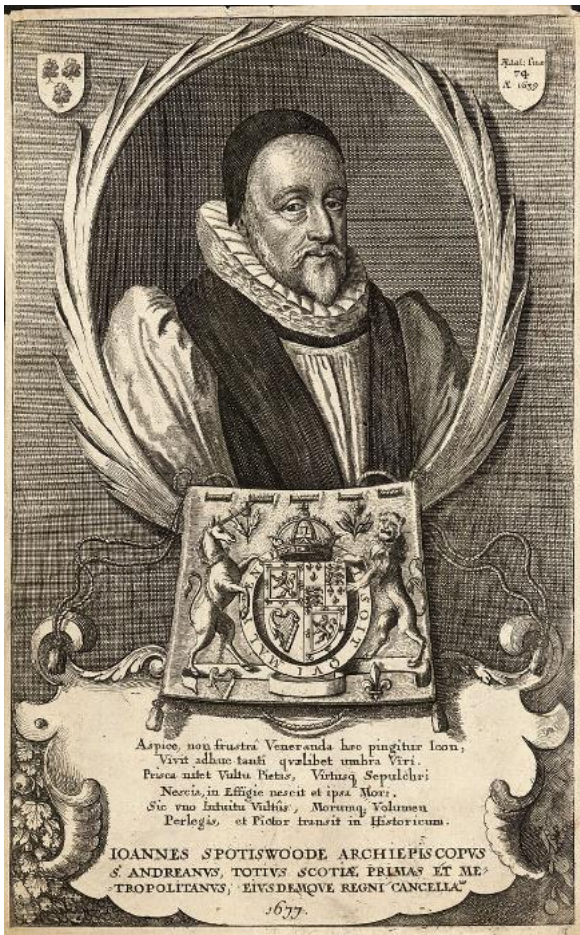


John Ogilvie was born near Keith, in 1579, the son of a local landowner, a laird, Walter Ogilvie. The family were presbyterian Calvinists. Like many members of the gentry John Ogilvie was sent to Continental Europe for part of his education. He attended a Benedictine School at Regensburg. He became aware of the religious debates and the fierce controversies of the times. His decision to become

a Catholic was in part inspired by the faith and witness of the Jesuit and other martyrs in England and elsewhere. At the age of seventeen, in 1596, John Ogilvie was received into the Catholic Church at Louvain in Belgium. While continuing his education there he sought to become a Jesuit. He was accepted and after his novitiate and formation in different Jesuit colleges he was ordained a priest in Paris in 1610.

While serving as a Jesuit in Rouen, in Normandy, John Ogilvie made persistent requests to be sent to Scotland, full knowing that since 1560 it was illegal to preach, or to seek to convert or be seen to support Catholics. John Ogilvie was aware that members of the Catholic gentry were likely to be quietly supportive because of family connections. He travelled to London where he did not find any support from his 'connections', so he returned to Paris. However, John Ogilvie came from determined stock and in November 1613, disguised as a horse-trader, going by the name of 'John Watson', he arrived in the Glasgow area. He had a brief clandestine ministry travelling from place to place,

teaching, preaching and celebrating Mass. This activity was mostly in private houses, but it was always fraught with danger as there were spies everywhere. John Ogilvie was betrayed by someone posing as a Catholic. His arrest in Glasgow was at the order of Archbishop John Spottiswood.



This portrait of Spottiswood was at a later period in his life when he had become the Archbishop of St Andrews.

In 1613 he was a close collaborator of King James VI and I, principally in his attempts to bring presbyterian Scotland more into line with Anglican ministry and practice.

At first John Ogilvie was treated respectfully, but in his refusal to give the names of Catholics with whom he had contact he was subjected to torture, from sleep deprivation, to the

agony of 'The Boot'. This latter was an instrument designed to break the lower leg, splintering and crushing the main bones. After all that, during his subsequent trial, it is perhaps understandable that John Ogilvie was hardly diplomatic. He was tried for treason because he converted people to Catholicism and for proclaiming that the Pope had a universal spiritual primacy. He rejected the oaths of Supremacy of the King. He was convicted of refusing to pledge allegiance to King James. He surely caused offence by accusing the King of *'playing the*

runagate from God. Stating that he would no more acknowledge the King as he would ***'an old hat'*** it is not altogether surprising that in those violent times he was found guilty. His execution on 10 March 1615 at the Tollbooth at Glasgow Cross by hanging and disembowelling [drawn] was spectacular. There was much sympathy for Ogilvie whose last words were ***'If there be any hidden Catholics here, let them pray for me, but the prayers of heretics I will not have.'***

It is said that as he fell from the gallows he threw his rosary into the crowd where one of his persecutors caught it and thereafter became a Catholic. Such was the sympathy for Fr John Ogilvie that his body was not subjected to the further indignities of beheading and quartering. He was buried in some haste in the cemetery at Glasgow Cathedral.

The cult of devotion soon followed, and as a Martyr of the Counter Reformation he was declared 'Venerable' in the seventeenth century. He was beatified in 1929 and canonised in 1976.

The Aftermath

When Charles I succeeded his father, James VI and I, he brought to London a French Catholic Queen, Henrietta Maria. This was a hopeful period and, in the prospect of greater toleration, a considerable number of Jesuits arrived in the Scots Mission. This was initially based at the historic family seat of the Hay family, staunchly Catholic Aberdeenshire gentry. Among North-East Scotland county families the majority were Catholics.

Fr John Leslie, a Jesuit from another prominent local family attended the Scottish coronation at Holyrood Abbey of King Charles I. The area of Aboyne on lower Deeside was served by the Jesuit brothers **John and Andrew Leslie**. They ministered in the rough mountainous conditions for nearly thirty years. Fellow Jesuits **Fr John Innes** and **Fr Hugh Strachan** [both local men] also laboured in the Grampian and Highland area of the Lord's vineyard, areas that were prone to famine and in which there was much poverty. The reports of these Jesuits make interesting reading :

"I have a district some sixty miles long entrusted to my care [...]. The district was at that time suffering grievously from famine, and the inhabitants could only with great difficulty supply themselves with the absolute necessities of life. My food was barley bread, my I cannot state precisely the number of those whom the Lord has been pleased to bring through my means to the knowledge of the truth, and indeed in these difficult times I should not have thought it safe to keep a written list of them. But unless my memory deceives me, a hundred adults have come into the bosom of our holy Mother the Church, and a much larger number of young children have received baptism [...]. Since I first began to traverse this region, no child has died without baptism, no adult without receiving the last Sacraments [...]. While the most Reverend [Bishop Thomas] Nicolson was visiting this district, which is confided wholly to my care, over six hundred persons were anointed by him with the holy Chrism. [50](#)

Fr Stephen Maxwell (1660–1713), was the Jesuit Superior based in Aberdeen “a man of extraordinary wisdom.” In his time Jesuit influence extended westwards to the Grampians.

In the west the Mission of **Fr John Farquharson** became famous and widely respected.

Fr John Farquharson was the son of the Aberdeenshire Laird of Auchindryne who had become a convert to Catholicism. After his studies and ordination John Farquharson, now a Jesuit priest, arrived from Douai in 1729 to take charge of a mission which extended from Beaulieu through the glens of Strathfarrar and Affric.

Another Jesuit colleague, **Fr Alexander MacRae**, a native of Kintail and a convert from the Episcopal Church, worked with Fr Farquharson. They were successful missionaries in the difficult conditions of the mountainous Highland areas. By constant teaching and preaching, baptising, reconciling, and celebrating Mass the Highland Mission became so fruitful that the Strathglass mission was said to be a “**nursery of priests**,” particularly among the Clan Chisholm. The graves of many of these priests and bishops can be seen in the churchyard of St Mary, Eskadale.

Another convert from Episcopacy, **Fr Alexander Cameron**, became a Jesuit priest and worked with Fr Farquharson in the years leading up to the Jacobite uprising in 1745. After the Battle of Culloden in 1746

both priests were imprisoned. Fr Cameron died that year from the ill-treatment he endured on board a prison ship moored on the Thames.

Fr John Farquharson managed to return to Fasnakyle, where the River Affric joins the River Glass. He continued to serve the Strathglass Mission until 1751 when he returned to Douai. He lived in retirement at the family home with his nephew at Balmoral on Deeside.

The Font which Fr Farquharson used for many baptisms can still be seen outside the Church of Our Lady and St Bean at Marydale. It is part of a memorial commemorating the Jesuit Mission in Strathglass and Fr Farquharson's remarkable ministry. Between Cannich and Struy, in Strathglass, by the side of the road, a memorial well to St Ignatius can still be seen. There are plans to refurbish this. It continues as a visual reminder of the impact of St Ignatius Loyola over the years.

Points to ponder :

- Dynastic considerations, the religion of Church and State, were fiercely contested. In more ecumenical times do we consider inter-church relationships to be important particularly in the face of militant secularism? How do we reach out to separated Christians?
- Is the Catholic Heritage, 'The Faith of our Fathers' sufficiently prominent in our lives? How do we best cherish and transmit these things?

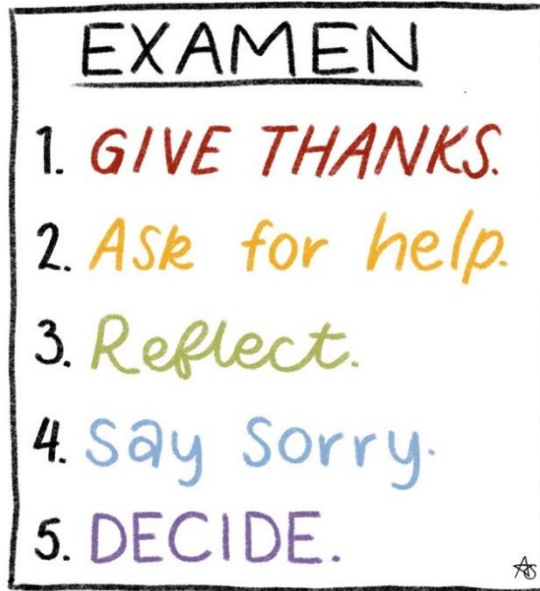
- Ignatius Loyola began a world-wide, world-changing movement, particularly through the work of the Society of Jesus. How can we best continue and promote Ignatian ideals?



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 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 Matthew 8.18-27

¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹ A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ²¹ Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."²³ And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ A windstorm suddenly arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves, but he was asleep. ²⁵ And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" ²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a dead calm. ²⁷ They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Points for Reflection:

- The scribe's assertion that he wants to follow Jesus is followed by Jesus saying that in this there is no guaranteed security. Perhaps we need the security of stability, place and family, so how do the words of Jesus have any meaning for us?
- The man who wants to bury his father, a natural and religious duty, is told by Jesus 'let the bury the dead' – 'Follow me'. This comes

over as hard, yet it makes a point: family loyalties can bind and inhibit the development of faith. This may be a particular case, but do we sometimes need to 'let go'? True discernment comes in dialogue-prayer with Jesus, mindful of the totality of His life and teaching.

- It is natural to be afraid of storms, squalls and squabbles whether natural or domestic, yet fear can be paralysing. Jesus summons us to courageous faith. In His word we find that '**perfect love casts out fear**' - his creative word brings order out of chaos. Again we find understanding through reflection on the Life and Teaching of Jesus and by speaking to Him about it. What sort of man is Jesus? God-in-Christ reconciling and restoring, always attentive and responding> are we attentive to the echoes of our prayers?

After a moment of quiet we offer our day and our week:

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