



**BEYOND
FRONTIERS
AND
BOUNDARIES**

**ForLate Don Pedro
Arrupe (1907-1991),
Twenty-eighth Superior
General of the Society
of Jesus who for me
and most Jesuits who
knew him or about him,
is the foremost of
modern saints.**

INTRODUCTION

The dominant emotions in my heart whenever I celebrate the feast of any Jesuit Saint are of total unworthiness on the one hand and immense gratitude on the other. The feeling of unworthiness is because I know that my belonging to such a great company is an anomaly and gratitude because though unworthy, I am still called.

The commitment and dedication of the giants who have gone before us is inspiring. This inspiration is also motivating and challenging because it keeps beckoning all of us to the 'Magis'. If they could, we can. This quality of 'letting the good become better, the better, better still and the better still, still better' must permeate all that we do. The Saints who have gone before us have shown that nothing is impossible if we only believe and persevere. They have shown us that we can do more than we think we can and are more than we think we are. They keep encouraging us to greater heights and to never being content with the 'status quo'. They stir us up to go beyond the tried and tested and to launch out into the deep. People asked about them as they must do about us, 'Who are you that you do these things and that you do them in this way?' (GC 35 D 2.10)

The history of the Society of Jesus is replete with examples of men who have gone beyond all types of boundaries and barriers. It abounds with men who have made breakthroughs in a variety of fields in Science, Arts and Literature. There have been Jesuit explorers and scholars, adventurers and pioneers, discoverers and inventors, originators and initiators. Indeed the history of the Society seems more fiction than truth. Yet, 'truth is stranger than fiction' in the case of the Society.

The motivation for this book came from a fellow Jesuit, Gordon Daniells who kept prodding me to write on the Jesuit Saints. I am also grateful to Dr. (Fr.) Conrad Pessa SJ who for many years has been a source of inspiration of what it means to be committed as a Jesuit and to keep striving for the Magis.

TITLE – There were three reasons for the choice of the title. One is that the Society of Jesus has always been a Society that has gone and motivated its members to go Beyond. Another reason is that Boundaries have always been viewed by the Society not as obstacles, but as opportunities for making love present. A third reason is that so many of the Jesuit saints have allowed their mettle to be tested and dared to live at the Frontiers, the cutting edge of life.

CONTENT – I am grateful to numerous web sites (listed below) and the book of Joseph Tylanda SJ on Jesuit Saints for most of the historical data regarding the Saints. I have avoided as far as possible dates, but have put the year(birth/death/joining the Society/beatification and Canonization) except in rare cases where I have also included dates because they seemed important to me. This is because of differing dates given by different sources and also because it seemed to me that the date was not as important as the year and other historical data. I have

made a genuine attempt to present the historical data in such a manner that it does not become heavy to read and assimilate.

I have also kept the scriptural exegesis as simple as possible and for this reason have only commented on the Gospel except in a few cases when I felt the First reading also had much to offer. The question or comment at the end of the exegesis is meant to get us to reflect on what we have read.

In the case of each Saint therefore, the following has been the procedure: Historical details about the life, mission and death of the saint, exegesis of the scripture chosen for the feast, its application to the life of the Saint and our lives, and a question for reflection.

I have avoided using what I consider 'loaded' words in both the historical data and exegesis. These are words that can be misunderstood because of the different times we live in today. In the case of Jesuits who had to suffer persecution from within, I have avoided naming the group wherever possible. In the scriptural exegesis, those opposed to Jesus' way of proceeding have been termed 'opponents'. To be sure, the situation today is not the same as when the Gospels were written or when a particular saint lived and acted out his faith. This is why we need to interpret history for our times today. They were men of their times and acted as they saw fit given the circumstances and situation. This must be kept in mind when any assessment is made.

The English Supplement to the Missal and Lectionary for the Society of Jesus was first published in 1975 and since then there have been many editions. Some memorials and feasts in that Lectionary do not find a place in the most recent edition. I have combined both and have kept memorials and feasts that were celebrated by the Society in the past. A case in point is of The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God celebrated on January 1 each year. I have also added a summary of the life of Don Pedro Arrupe and have chosen readings which I think summarise his life (February 5 – the date of his death). For me (and I would like to believe for most Jesuits) he is the epitome of the modern Saint.

The purpose of this book is that it be a ready reckoner for Jesuits who opt to celebrate the Mass of the Saint on a particular day. It may also be used in Novitiates and Juniorates as spiritual reading at meal times. I do hope that this purpose will be served.

Errol Fernandes SJ
Holy Family Parish,
Chakala,
Andheri East,
Mumbai 400 093.
May 24, 2017
Our Lady of the Way.

JANUARY 1 - MARY MOTHER OF GOD
Num 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:18-21

The first day of the New Year brings with it many thoughts, feelings and emotions. The fact that it is January and named after the Roman god Janus with two faces already indicates that it brings with it a looking back and a looking ahead.

Thus it is a day for retrospection and introspection and also a day for planning and goal setting. The retrospection must be with a view to help the planning and goal setting and not an exercise in condemnation of oneself or feeling regret.

It is fitting then that the first reading of today should speak of a blessing. The blessing is what is commonly called a Priestly blessing and pronounced on all the people of Israel. There are three pairs of verbs used in the blessing resulting in a threefold blessing. The first emphasizes concrete gifts—blessing and protection. The second stresses the hope that God will be well disposed toward the person and thus temper judgment with mercy and grace. The third asserts that God will pay attention and heed to his people thus providing fullness of life. The central message of the blessing is Peace, which must be translated as wholeness or completeness. The peace of God embraces every aspect of an individual's life.

The idea of blessing is taken up in the Second reading of today. Paul in writing to the Galatians speaks of the blessing that God conferred not just on Israel but on the whole world when he sent his Son. The sending of the Son was for one reason alone, namely to reconcile the world to himself and through that to make each of us sons and daughters of God. The Son that God sent in to the world was not an angel but born of a woman, Mary who dared to say that unconditional yes to God's invitation to be the mother of his Son.

This son whom God sent is human in every single aspect of the word and is therefore circumcised and given a name. The name that the child bears signifies his function. He is named Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. This child will be king, but a new kind of king. He will inaugurate a new world order, a world not like that of earthly kings but under the direction of God's design for the redemption of all peoples. In this world, God's Word is heard by all who remain open to that Word. In this world, there is hope for the oppressed, and those who heard what God is doing are filled with joy. God has not forgotten us or abandoned us to the brokenness we have created. God continues to be concerned and to make new and whole. The New Year thus, is for us as Christians, an announcement of hope. It is a call to continue to believe that God continues to be in control of all the events that will take place and that we only have to do what is required of us and leave the rest to God.

Thus the triple celebration of Mary Mother of God, the giving of the name of Jesus and New Year's Day all close in on one theme: Hope. The past is over and forgotten; it is forgiven and absolved; it is pardoned and made new. The challenge is for us to respond like Mary did to what God is doing in us and in our world. If we like Mary are open and receptive to the working of God in our lives, if we like her are willing to let God do in us, if we like her are willing to say that unconditional and categorical Yes, then the saviour Jesus will continue to be made present all through the year.

The priestly blessing of peace pronounced on the people in the first reading of today becomes then a blessing pronounced on each of us as we begin the New Year. We must keep in mind throughout the year that like the Galatians we are no longer slaves but sons and daughters of God. This means living in a fearless and bold manner. It means being able to face all the vicissitudes and challenges of life with equanimity and confident in the knowledge that we are loved unconditionally by God and that God will be with us every step of the way in the New Year.

Thank God for the last year and enter with boldness the New Year.

JANUARY 3 – THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS – Titular Feast of the Society of Jesus
Sir 24:1-2,8-12; Eph 1:3-6,11-13; Lk 2:21-24

Though the Church regards the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus as an optional memorial, The Society of Jesus celebrates this day as a solemnity on which it also celebrates its Titular Feast.

Reverence for the Holy Name Jesus began already in apostolic times. St. Paul in his Letter to the Philippians wrote, "So that at Jesus' name every knee must bend in the heavens, on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God the Father: Jesus Christ is Lord" (2:10-11).

The writings of St. Ignatius which include his autobiography, the Spiritual Exercises, the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and approximately 7000 letters in which the person of Christ was always at the centre, all point to the logical choice for the name of the Society founded by him. Ignatius believed that the true Superior and founder of the Society could only be Jesus and that is why he chose to name the Society after the name of Jesus.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast tells of the circumcision and naming of the child. Circumcision would mean to make the boy with the 'sign of the covenant' between Israel and God, as mentioned in Gen 17:11. However, the naming of Jesus is given more importance than the circumcision. Unlike in the case of John, the naming of Jesus does not cause any discussion. The name given to the child is a name chosen by God through the angel (2:21).

In the next three verses (2:22-24) two events are recounted that occasion the eventual manifestation of Jesus to Israel: (a) the purification of Mary, forty days after the birth of Jesus (Lev 12:2-8) and (b) the redeeming of Jesus, the first born a month after his birth (Ex 13:1-2). The redeeming of Jesus is regarded by Luke as the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. One reason why Luke may have done this is to draw a parallel with the presentation of Samuel (1 Sam 1:22-24). The main point that Luke wants to make, however, without being too concerned about other details is the fidelity of Mary and Joseph. They are faithful to all the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

The word Jesus is the Latin form of the Greek Iesous, which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew Jeshua, Joshua, or Jehoshua, meaning "Jehovah is salvation." Though the name in one form or another occurs frequently in the Old Testament, it was not borne by a person of prominence. At the time of Jesus, therefore, the name was common. The meaning of the name is "saviour from sin" (Mt 1:21). In both Matthew (1:21) and Luke (1:31; 2:21), the name is chosen

not by Joseph, the (foster) father, but by God. The choice of the name reveals who God is and who Jesus will be.

Jesus will be the one who will save people from their sins. He will be the one who will reveal God as never before. His revelation of God will be as unconditional and magnanimous love. This revelation will be from his own experience of God as loving father and mother. God will be revealed as one who always forgives and never keeps count of the wrongs that we do. God will be revealed as one whose mercy and forgiveness will always be greater than any sin.

Jesus revealed this loving God in his miracles, parables, sayings and way of proceeding. His eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners (Mk 2:15-17) and the emphatic saying in response to the complaint that he was doing this was, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.' (Mk 2:17).

The feast of the Holy name is thus an occasion for each of us to first open our hearts to experience God as unconditional love and then to reveal that love to others. For the Jesuits, the feast is specifically an occasion to thank God for the privilege of using the name for our least Society and to do our very best with God's grace to manifest our Society as a Society of unconditional love.

Will you open your heart wide to receive the love of God and then share that love with others?

**JANUARY 19 - STS. JOHN OGILVIE; STEPHEN PONGRACZ, MELCHIOR GRODZIECKI,
AND MARK OF KRIZEVCI; BL. IGNATIUS DE AZEVEDO & COMPANIONS; JAMES SALÈS
AND WILLIAM SAULTEMOUCHE.**

2 Tim 2:8-13; Matt 16:21, 24-27 or John 16:20-22

John Ogilvie, was born in 1579 in Banffshire, Scotland. After studying under the Benedictines in Germany and the Jesuits in Moravia, he decided to become a Catholic. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1596, when he was seventeen years of age. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1599 and was ordained a Priest in 1610. After ordination he served for some years in Normandy. During his time in Normandy, he made repeated requests to be sent to Scotland to minister there. He was finally allowed to go to Scotland in 1613, disguised as a horse trader. He had to celebrate Mass and preach in secret because after 1560 it became illegal to preach, proselytize for or otherwise endorse Catholicism. His ministry in Scotland lasted less than a year. He was discovered, arrested and imprisoned. He was found guilty of refusing to pledge allegiance to the king. He was hanged and drawn at Glasgow on March 10, 1615. He was 36 years old. He was beatified in 1929 and canonized in 1976.

István Pongrácz (Stephen Pongrácz) was born in Transylvania in 1583. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1602 and studied in Bohemia and Austria. He had been ordained for four years when he was sent to Kassa in Hungary (today Košice in Slovakia) with fellow Jesuit Melchior Grodziecki. He was given a death sentence along with Melchior and Canon Marko Krizin on charges of treason on September 7, 1619. He was tortured and beheaded. Like Grodziecki he was beatified in 1905 and canonized in 1995.

Melchior Grodziecki was born in Cieszyn, a border-town in southern Poland in 1582. He was educated in the Jesuit College at Vienna. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1603. He was ordained a Priest in 1614. He was sent to Kassa in Hungary (today Košice in Slovakia) with a Hungarian Jesuit István Pongrácz (Stephen Pongracz). When the army of the Prince of Transylvania, took Kassa, Grodziecki stayed at the castle, together with István Pongrácz and canon Marko Krizin. In 1619, the Transylvanian army stormed the castle and arrested Grodziecki, Pongrácz and Krizin. They gave them a death sentence on charges of treason; accusing them of inviting the Polish army into Kassa. They were tortured and then beheaded that day. Grodziecki was beatified in 1905 and canonized in 1995.

Marko Stjepan Krizin (Mark of Krizevci) was born in 1588 in Križevci. He studied philosophy in Graz, where he joined the Congregation of Mary. There he was a student of Petar Pázmány, later on a cardinal and Hungarian primate. Krizin decided to become a priest so he was sent to Rome to stay at the Collegium Germanicum and Hungaricum and study theology as a candidate of the Diocese of Zagreb.

He studied at the Pontifical Gregorian University from 1611 to 1615 and was sharp and virtuous. Krizin was ordained as priest and returned to his Diocese of Zagreb where he did pastoral work. Shortly after, the Archbishop of Ostrogon and Cardinal Petar Pázmány summoned him to Hungary. He was a teacher and headmaster of the Trnava Seminary and was then appointed Canon. He was also the prior of a Benedictine abbey near Košice.

At the time Košice was a fort of Hungarian Calvinism. In order to help the few Catholics left, who were even deprived of their churches, two Jesuits, Stjepan (Stephen) Pongrácz and Melkior (Melchior) Grodziecki were summoned to look after the faithful who spoke Hungarian and Slovakian. A Croat, Mark of Križevci worked with them in 1619 as a missionary.

At the time of the rebellion in 1619, the three were imprisoned because of their faith. They were tortured and asked to repudiate their faith, but they refused.

Križevci was set on fire by a torch and decapitated in 1619 along with Grodziecki. Pongrácz was killed the following day. They were not even granted a decent burial.

The process for beatification of the three martyrs began in 1859. They were beatified in 1905 and canonized in 1995.

Ignacio de Azevedo was born in Porto in 1527 into a very wealthy family. He was educated at the court of the Portuguese King John III. At the age of 18, he became the administrator of the family's estate. Even as he lived surrounded by riches and wealth, he was influenced by the preaching of Jesuit Priest Francisco Estrada. He decided to renounce all his possessions and entered the Society of Jesus in 1546. He was ordained Priest in 1553. He was deputed in 1565 by the General of the Society of Jesus, Francis Borgia to inspect the Jesuit Missions in the Portuguese colony of Brazil. He returned to Rome to report his findings in 1569. One of the points he made was to ask for more recruits and was given them. While on the way to Brazil in 1570, their ship named Santiago was attacked and captured by the Huguenots and Azevedo and 39 companions were all massacred. He was beatified in 1854.

James Sales was born at Lezoux in the Auvergne, France in the year 1556. He studied at the Jesuit school at Billom from 1568 to 1572 and was especially devoted to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament from his early teens. Although he felt God was calling him to be a Jesuit priest in his last year at Billom, he knew he was needed at home as he was the only son. His desire to become a priest increased when he moved to study at Clermont College in Paris and he would often kneel before the Blessed Sacrament asking our Lord to remove the obstacles keeping him from entering the Society. The following year in 1573 his father granted him permission and he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Verdun the same year.

He was ordained in 1585 at the age of twenty-nine and continued to teach theology at the university. Though he was desirous of going to America, China or Japan for missionary work, he was asked by the then General Claudio Acquaviva to make France his mission field. He did this. He preached passionately and his preaching made a deep impact on those who heard him. He also wrote several short booklets on various aspects of the faith.

In 1592, he went to Aubenas to preach the Advent and Lenten series of sermons along with Br. William Saullemouche. During this time, he was taken to the Huguenot headquarters for interrogation on various aspects of the faith. He spoke boldly, wisely and from the heart, but his hearers were not convinced. They were abused and interrogated for almost two days and left without food and water.

It was finally decided to execute Sales. Saullemouche decided that he wanted to suffer the same fate as his brother Jesuit. James was shot in the back for his faith and a sword was driven into his breast.

Sales was thirty-seven and Saullemouche thirty-six when they were martyred in France. They were both beatified in 1926.

Guillaume (William) Saullemouche was born at Saint-Germain-l'Herm in 1557. He joined the Society as a brother in 1579 at Verdun at the age of twenty-two. He served as a porter at Pont-a-Mousson and was known for his simplicity, gentleness of character, and obedience. People referred to him as "an angel come down from heaven in human form." He was transferred to Paris, then to Lyons and then in 1592, to Tournon, just in time to join Sales on the Aubanus mission.

He accompanied Sales on his travels to give sermons about the faith. However, there were some who could not accept the content of the sermons and asked Sales to recant. Sales refused until the protestors could prove what was wrong in the content. This they could not do. As a result of this the protestors decide to execute Sales whom they shot in the back. As Saullemouche bent down and threw his arms around his martyred companion, a sword was thrust into his side and he was then stabbed till he died.

He was beatified with Sales in 1926.

The Gospel text for the feast is from the Gospel of Matthew and contains the first passion and resurrection of Jesus in that Gospel. It also speaks of the consequences of following Jesus. In Matthew, these verses are addressed exclusively to the disciples unlike in Mark where they are addressed to the crowds. A disciple must be prepared to follow the Master and even to the cross if need be. This is the consequence of confessing Jesus as the Christ. "Must" (δεῖ) indicates the divinely decreed necessity that Jesus must suffer and die. Nevertheless it is planned by Jesus'

enemies of their own free will and with their own malice for which they bear full responsibility. God's plan and human responsibility are not mutually exclusive. The passive verbs indicate that it is not Jesus but his opponents who are the acting agents. However, since this plan has been set in motion by God and is under God's control, it is God who is the main actor. Yet, Jesus also acts in obedience to God's will. Though the Son of Man has to suffer, he will be vindicated by God.

The suffering of Jesus and the discipleship of suffering belong inseparably together. It is possible to truly understand Jesus only by following him in suffering. In Matthew's understanding the positive meaning of "bearing the cross" is orienting oneself to Jesus as the model for life and knowing the experience of being borne by the exalted Lord. At the beginning of discipleship stands the call to deny oneself. Denial of self is a conscious decision to count the self as nothing. It means turning from self to Jesus. One's response to Jesus will be the deciding factor when the Lord comes in glory.

It is evident in the choice of the first reading and Gospel text, that the Saints and Blessed who are celebrated today lived out totally the challenging call of Jesus. They did indeed deny themselves, counted themselves as nothing because of which they could dare to lose their lives when called to do so. It was dying to self which enabled them to let go of life in order to embrace the promise of Jesus: eternal life.

Before one can carry one's cross, one has to deny the self. Will you attempt to do that today?

FEBRUARY 4 - STS. JOHN DE BRITO; BL. RUDOLPH ACQUAVIVA AND COMPANIONS:
MARTYRS
2 Cor 4:16—5:1; John 15:18-21

John de Britto was born in Lisbon, Portugal in 1647.

He was dedicated at birth to St. Francis Xavier, and his family was known to the king at that time, King Pedro. He entered the Society of Jesus at the age of fifteen. In his effort to promote education among the native Indian people as a missionary to Goa, he wandered through Malabar and other regions and even adopted the customs and dress of the Brahmin caste which gave him access to the noble classes. His dress was yellow cotton; he abstained from every kind of animal food and from wine in an effort to be one with the people he wished to serve.

In 1683, John de Britto had to leave India but returned in 1691. He advised Teriadeven, a Maravese to dismiss the many wives he had and keep only one. However, one of Teriadeven's wives was the niece of the king. Due to this, John de Britto began to be persecuted. In 1693, he was taken to the capital Ramnad and from there led to Oriyur a small village in Tamil Nadu, where he was tortured and put to death by beheading.

He had wrought many conversions during his life, established many stations, and was famous for his miracles before and after his death.

He was beatified in 1853 and was canonized in 1947.

Rudolf Acquaviva was born in 1550 in Lisbon, Portugal. He was the nephew of the fifth General of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Acquaviva.

He was admitted to the Society of Jesus in 1568 and after his ordination at Lisbon was sent to Goa, India, where for a decade he had only modest success. In 1579, the Mogul Emperor Akbar requested missionaries be sent to his court near Agra. Rudolf got the assignment and was eager to present the Christian faith to the Muslim king. Akbar showed his openness to Christianity by permitting the construction of churches and the celebration of the liturgy.

Acquaviva's goal, however, was winning the king himself to Christ and, through him, his people. However, he was unsuccessful in this attempt. He had to content himself with the consolation that he had influenced the king even if in a small way.

In 1583, Acquaviva was appointed superior of the Jesuit outreach at Salsette. He and four associates decided to build a church in Cuncolim, a village that was the main source of resistance to their work. This frontal attack won Acquaviva his desired martyrdom, as he and his companions were massacred shortly after they arrived in 1583. He was beatified in 1893 by Pope Leo XIII.

The Gospel text for the feast of these saints is from the Discourse of Jesus on the 'Vine and the Branches.' The focus here is not on the relationship of Jesus and the disciples, like in the earlier verses of the discourse, but on the relationship of the disciples with the "world". Here, the "world" is used to represent, not the physical world, but those who are opposed to God's revelation in Jesus.

The challenge of love will be truly encountered when the community faces the "world". The "world" will hate the disciples because of their relationship with Jesus and because they live out his teachings. If the disciples want the world to love them, they must give up the teachings of Jesus. However, because they have been chosen by Jesus and set apart from the "world", they too, like Jesus, will have to endure the "world's" hatred.

The disciples must realize that following and obeying Jesus, as servants obey their masters, will lead to persecution. What has happened with Jesus will be repeated in the disciples' lives. While the authority of the one sent is the same as the sender, it is also true that the response to the one sent will be the same as the response to the sender. Those who do not accept the word of truth, spoken by God in Jesus, will indulge in persecution. Those who accept the word will respond by living out that word in their lives. Rejection of the disciples means rejection of Jesus because it is Jesus who sends them. Rejection of Jesus means rejection of God who sent him.

In a world in which the resonating message is to "have more", it is not always easy to speak and live Jesus' message to "be more". Those who do this are labelled as crazy and out of touch with reality. John de Britto was not afraid to do this and was ready to face the consequences. He was ready because he was part of the vine to live and die as Jesus did. He stood up for the truth right to the very end.

Are you like John de Britto and Rudolf Acquaviva ready to face the consequences of standing up for the truth?

FEBRUARY 5 – PEDRO ARRUPÉ
2 Cor 4:7-12,16-18; Jn 14:1-6

Pedro Arrupe was born in the Basque region of Spain in 1907. After some years of medical training, Arrupe joined the Society of Jesus in 1927. In 1932, the Republican government in Spain expelled the Jesuits from the country. Arrupe continued his studies in Belgium, Holland, and the United States. After being ordained, Fr. Arrupe was sent to Japan in 1938. He hoped to work there as a missionary for the rest of his life.

After the December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbour, the Japanese security forces arrested Arrupe on suspicion of espionage. He was kept in solitary confinement. Besides many other challenges that he faced what he missed most was celebrating the Eucharist. In the midst of his suffering, Arrupe experienced a special moment of grace. On Christmas night, 1941, Arrupe heard a group of people gathering outside his cell door. He could not see them and wondered if the time of his execution had come.

“Suddenly, above the murmur that was reaching me, there arose a soft, sweet, consoling Christmas carol, one of the songs which I had myself taught to my Christians. I was unable to contain myself. I burst into tears. They were my Christians who, heedless of the danger of being themselves imprisoned, had come to console me”. (Pedro Arrupe: Essential Writings, Kevin Burke, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2004, p. 57)

After the few minutes of song, Arrupe reflected in the presence of Jesus, who would soon descend onto the altar during the Christmas celebration: “I felt that he also descended into my heart, and that night I made the best spiritual communion of all my life.” (Ibid. p. 58)

When the security forces came after 33 days to release him from captivity, Arrupe was convinced that they were coming to execute him. The experience of captivity filled him with a deep inner calm founded on a radical trust in God.

Arrupe moved to Nagatsuka, on the outskirts of Hiroshima, where he resumed his duties as the master of novices for the Japanese mission. On August 6, 1945, he heard the sirens wail as a single American B-29 bomber flew over the city. He did not think much of it and expected to hear the all-clear siren soon. Instead he heard an enormous explosion and felt the concussion that blew in the doors and windows of his residence.

Moving outside Arrupe and his colleagues saw the first of the 2,00,000 casualties of the atomic bomb. Walking up the hill they saw the city of Hiroshima turning into a lake of fire.

Arrupe decided to use his medical training to help whomever he could. He and his colleagues were able to give aid to 150 victims. Knowing nothing of the dangers of atomic radiation, they

were perplexed and distressed at the many deaths of people who seemed to have no external injuries. Arrupe and his fellow Jesuits had only the most basic food and medical supplies and had to care for people without anaesthetics or modern drugs. Nevertheless, of the 150 people whom they were able to take in, only one boy died from the effects of his injuries.

Arrupe was serving as Provincial of Japan, when he was elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus in 1965. He held the position until 1983.

As the 28th Superior, or “Father General,” it was Arrupe’s task to guide the community through the changes following Vatican II. He was most concerned that the Jesuits make a commitment to addressing the needs of the poor. His work resulted in the decree from the 32nd General Congregation, ‘Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice’, passed in 1975. This led the Jesuits, especially in Latin America, to work in practical ways with the poor. In spite of threats against their lives—threats that led to the murder of six priests in El Salvador in 1989—the Jesuits continued their justice work with the poor, with Arrupe’s support.

Arrupe’s belief in justice informed his understanding of the goal of Jesuit education. He said: “Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ—for the God-human who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbours’; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce”. (Pedro Arrupe: Essential Writings, Kevin Burke, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2004, p. 173)

In 1981 Arrupe suffered a debilitating stroke and was forced to resign when an appointee was appointed as interim superior until 1983. He was wheeled in to the opening session of the 33rd General Congregation and was welcomed with a standing ovation. Many of the delegates had tears in their eyes. Arrupe’s final prayer was read to the community.

“More than ever I find myself in the hands of God. This is what I have wanted all my life from my youth. But now there is a difference; the initiative is entirely with God. It is indeed a profound spiritual experience to know and feel myself so totally in God’s hands”.

Pedro Arrupe went to his maker for eternal rest on February 5, 1991.

The choice of the scripture texts to celebrate Arrupe’s return to the Father is precisely because they summarise the kind of life that he lived. Like Paul before him, Arrupe too was aware that all power belonged to God and that he was always in God’s hands. Though he was afflicted, perplexed and struck down (both with the challenges as General and because of his debilitating stroke), he was not crushed, driven to despair or destroyed. He lived a life whereby the life of Jesus was visible in his body. Even when his outer body was wasting away, he did not lose

heart because he knew that his inner nature was being renewed by God every day. He considered his years of suffering as momentary and temporary only because he never lost sight of the eternal.

Jesus' assurance to his disciples in John is the assurance Arrupe would have experienced all through his life. His faith in Christ never wavered and despite all evidence to the contrary, he continued to believe that God was doing what was best for him. Jesus' departure from this world was in order to prepare a place for the disciples and because he does so, there will be dwelling places for all in his Father's house. These rooms or house where the son has a special and permanent place suggests a union with the Father in and through Jesus.

To explain what this means in answer to Thomas' question, Jesus states that he is going to the Father and represents the way to get to the Father. Jesus is the way because he is the truth or revelation of the Father as truth and love. He is the way because he is the life and lives in the Father who lives in him. He is the channel through which the Father's life comes to all. When Jesus speaks of himself as the way, he is not presenting himself as merely a moral guide, but as the only avenue or path to salvation. Those who believe in Jesus as the incarnate revelation of the Father which is the truth, receive the gift of life.

Arrupe's life was lived in such a manner that he believed in the words of Jesus. He saw Jesus as the way who revealed the Father as love and so even in his earthly death received the gift of life in abundance from God.

Will the life of Arrupe, the trials that he faced and the ignominy that he suffered inspire me to live life to the full?

**FEBRUARY 6 - STS. PAUL MIKI, JOHN SOAN, JAMES KISAI, RELIGIOUS, AND THEIR
COMPANIONS: MARTYRS**

Gal 2:19-20 or 2 Mac 7:1a, 20-23; Matt 28:16-20

Paul Miki (Paulus Miki), John de Gotó (Joannes Soan) and James Kisai (Iacobus Kisai) were the first of a long line of Jesuits who desired to live and die in imitation of their crucified Lord. Miki was also the first Japanese religious to be martyred.

Paul Miki was born in Japan in 1564 and educated at the Jesuit college of Anziquiama. He joined the Jesuits in 1580, and even while doing his studies, he became known for his eloquent preaching.

The initial growth of Christianity after Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan in 1549 led to opposition from Japanese leaders who feared that the introduction of Christianity was the first step in Spain's effort to conquer their country. Japan's ruler, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, banished all foreign workers in 1587, but the decree was not rigidly implemented and Jesuits were able to continue their work under the threat of persecution. Remarks made in 1596 by the captain of a shipwrecked Spanish ship led Hideyoshi to order the arrest of all Franciscans who had come to Japan from the Philippines three years earlier. Along with the Franciscans, police arrested the Jesuits Paul Miki, a scholastic, and James Kisai, a brother, and John de Gotó, a catechist who was in the process of entering the Society.

They were found guilty of misleading the people and condemned to death. Miki was crucified on in 1597 along with de Gotó, Kisai and twenty-three other Catholics during the persecution of Christians in the name of the emperor. He was beatified in 1627 and canonized as a Martyr of Japan in 1862.

John de Gotó was born in 1578 on the islands of the Gotó archipelago. He moved to Nagasaki to have the freedom to practice his religion after authorities on the island began persecuting Christians. He was living in the Jesuit community in Osaka and working as a catechist while attempting to join the Society. He was arrested in 1597 with Paul Miki and James Kisai and crucified. He was beatified in 1627 and canonized as a Martyr of Japan in 1862.

James Kisai (Iacobus Kisai) was born in 1533 in Japan. He worked as a porter for the Jesuits. He was interested in becoming a catechist and was trained by the Jesuits for this task. He joined the Society of Jesus as a brother in 1596. He was arrested in 1597 with Paul Miki and John de Gotó and crucified. He was beatified in 1627 and canonized as a Martyr of Japan in 1862.

The Gospel text of today is taken from the last Chapter and last verses in the Gospel of Matthew and is commonly known as the "Great Commission". The risen Jesus meets his disciples on a

mountain in Galilee and after making a revelation to them issues a command. He then promises them his abiding presence.

The mountain is not named, but Matthew does use the mountain as a theological topos. The first time the mountain is mentioned is during the temptation scene (4:8) where Jesus was promised 'all the kingdoms of the world'. However, because Jesus did not yield to that temptation he has now been given 'all authority' (28:18). The second time the mountain is mentioned is when Jesus goes on the mountain to deliver the Sermon on the Mount (5:1). He was portrayed as the New Moses giving the New Law which fulfilled the old. Here he gives his disciples a command to 'make disciples'. The third time the mountain is used is when Jesus is transfigured (17:1) and where he frees them from fear (17:7). Here too, there is the command to be fearless because of his abiding presence with them. The response of the disciples on seeing Jesus is obedience and doubt. There is trust and despondency, there is belief and unbelief. Jesus does not address this mixed reaction directly, but makes a revelation. He confirms what he had said earlier (11:27; 26:64). His power and authority are now unlimited. This power is the basis for the command to 'make disciples'. 'Make disciples' is the dominant imperative that is elucidated by the participles that follow. In Matthew, 'making disciples' is primarily done by teaching people the commands of Jesus not merely by baptizing. At the end of this appearance, Jesus gives the disciples an assurance of his abiding presence.

Thus the text may be seen to be divided into three parts. The first is the revelation that the risen Jesus makes which may be termed as Christological. The risen Jesus has supreme power over all things and persons in heaven and on earth. The second is the command to the disciples (Church) which may be termed as Ecclesiological. The Church is commanded to show by deeds what it means to follow Jesus. This is how others are to be won over to Jesus. The light of the disciples must so shine that those who witness it will praise the Father in heaven (5:16). Finally there is an Eschatological statement in which the risen Lord promises his disciples of his ever abiding presence. The disciples will not be left alone. In all the trials and challenges that they will go through the Lord will continue to walk with them guiding their path and lighting their way.

This assurance that Jesus gave his disciples of his abiding presence is the assurance that motivated Paul Miki, Soan John de Gotó and James Kisai to persevere. It must also be our reason for perseverance since Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Will you by your witness 'make a disciple' today?

FEBRUARY 15 - ST. CLAUDE LA COLOMBIÈRE: PRIEST
Eph 3:8-9,14-19; Matt 11:25-30

Claude La Colombière, was born in 1641 at St. Symphorien d'Ozon in the Dauphine, south-eastern France. After his family moved to Vienna, Colombière began his early education there, completing his studies in rhetoric and philosophy in Lyon. It was during this period that he first sensed his vocation to the religious life in the Society of Jesus. At 17 he entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Avignon. In 1660 he moved from the Novitiate to the College, also in Avignon, where he pronounced his first vows and completed his studies in philosophy. Afterwards he was professor of grammar and literature in the same school for another five years.

In 1666 he went to the College of Clermont in Paris for his studies in theology. Already noted for his tact, poise and dedication to the humanities, Colombière was assigned by his superiors in Paris the additional responsibility of tutoring the children of Louis XIV's Minister of Finance, Jean Baptiste Colbert.

The year 1674 was a decisive one for Colombière, the year of his Third Probation (Tertianship) at Maison Saint-Joseph in Lyon. During the customary month of the Spiritual Exercises, he was touched in a special way and took a vow to observe all the constitutions and rules of the Society of Jesus.

In 1675, he was named rector of the College at Paray-le-Monial. Here he encountered Margaret Mary and became her Confessor. He became convinced that Christ wanted him to spread the devotion to his heart and he accepted this commission.

After a year and half in Paray, in 1676 Colombière left for London. He had been appointed preacher to the Duchess of York - a very difficult and delicate assignment because of the conditions prevailing in England at the time. He took up residence in St. James Palace in October. In addition to sermons in the palace chapel and unremitting spiritual direction both oral and written, Claude dedicated his time to giving thorough instruction to many who came to him from every quarter. The intense pace of his work and the poor climate combined to undermine his health, and evidence of a serious pulmonary disease began to appear. Claude, however, made no changes in his work or life style.

At the end of 1678, he was calumniously accused and arrested in connection with the Titus Oates "papist plot". After two days he was transferred to the severe King's Bench Prison where he remained for three weeks in extremely poor conditions until his expulsion from England by royal decree. This suffering further weakened Colombière's health which, with ups and downs, deteriorated rapidly on his return to France.

During the summer of 1681 he returned to Paray, in very poor condition. In 1682, he suffered a severe hemorrhage which ended his life.

He was beatified in 1929 and canonized in 1992.

This text chosen for the feast is addressed to all those who accept the message of Jesus unlike those in Chorazin and Bethsaida. Jesus begins his prayer here by giving thanks to the Father. It is openness to the revelation of God that Jesus makes which is responsible for the receipt of this enormous privilege. Acknowledging Jesus is not a matter of one's superior knowledge or insight, but given as a gift to those who open themselves to this revelation. Jesus himself is an example of such openness, which allowed him to receive everything directly from God. It is his intimacy with the Father and not his religious genius, which is responsible for this grace.

Jesus invites all those who are burdened to come to him for rest. The burden in this context seems to be that of the law and its obligations. When Jesus invites the burdened to take his yoke, which is easy, he is not inviting them to a life of ease, but to a deliverance from any kind of artificiality or the blind following of rules and regulations. The disciple must learn from Jesus who is in Matthew "the great teacher". The rest that Jesus offers is the rest of salvation.

We can get so caught up today with wanting to have more that we might lose sight of the meaning of life itself. The desire to acquire more and more and be regarded as successful based on what we possess sometimes leads to missing out on so much that life has to offer.

Will you like Colombière open your heart to the revelation of love that God continues to make?

**MARCH 19 - ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, PATRON SAINT OF
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS**

2 Sam 7:4-5a,12-14a,16; Rm 4:13,16-18,22; Mt 1:16,18-21,24a

Devotion to St. Joseph became popular from the 12th century onwards and in the 15th Century the feast of St. Joseph began to be celebrated on March 19 every year. Devotion to St. Joseph as foster father of Jesus and husband of Mary grew tremendously in the 19th Century and continues till this day.

This Gospel text for the feast of today includes one verse of the genealogy, which specifies that Joseph was the husband of Mary of whom Jesus was born. The verses that follow narrate the story of his birth. Since Mary and Joseph were engaged, they were legally considered husband and wife. Thus, infidelity in this case would also be considered adultery. Their union could only be dissolved by divorce or death. Though Joseph is righteous or just, he decides not to go by the letter of the law and publicly disgrace Mary, but he chooses a quieter way of divorcing her. God, however, has other plans for both Joseph and Mary and intervenes in a dream. Joseph is addressed by the angel as "Son of David" reiterating, once again after the genealogy, the Davidic origin of Jesus. He is asked to take Mary as his wife and also informed that is the Spirit's action that is responsible for her pregnancy. He is told that he is to give the child the name "Jesus". Jesus (Iesous) is the Greek form of "Joshua" which, whether in the long form yehosua, ("Yahweh is salvation") or in one of the short forms, yesua, ("Yahweh saves"), identifies the son, in the womb of Mary, as the one who brings God's promised eschatological salvation. The angel explains what the name means by referring to Ps 130:8. The name "Jesus" was a popular and common name in the first century. By the choice of such a name, Matthew shows that the Saviour receives a common human name, a sign that unites him with the human beings of this world rather than separating him from them.

Matthew then inserts into the text the first of ten formula or fulfilment quotations that are found in his Gospel. This means that Matthew quotes a text from the Old Testament to show that it was fulfilled in the life and mission of Jesus. Here, the text is from Isa 7:14 which, in its original context, referred to the promise that Judah would be delivered from the threat of the Syro-Ephraimitic War before the child of a young woman, who was already pregnant, would reach the age of moral discernment. The child would be given a symbolic name, a short Hebrew sentence "God is with us" (Emmanu'el) corresponding to other symbolic names in the Isaiah story. Though this text was directed to Isaiah's time, Matthew understands it as text about Jesus, and fulfilled perfectly in him, here in his birth and naming.

This birth narrative of Matthew invites us to reflect on a number of points. Of these, two are significant. First, many of us are often caught in the dilemma of doing the right thing which might

not always be the loving thing. If we follow only the letter of the law, we may be doing the right thing but not the most loving thing. However, if we focus every time on the most loving thing, like Joseph, it is surely also the right thing. Though Joseph could have done the right thing and shamed Mary by publicly divorcing her, he decides to go beyond the letter of the law and do the loving thing, which in his case was also the right thing.

Second, the story also shows us who our God is. Our God is God with us. Our God is one who always takes the initiative, who always invites, and who always wants all of humanity to draw closer to him and to each other. This God does not come in power, might, and glory, but as a helpless child. As a child, God is vulnerable. He is fully human and in his humanity, is subject to all the limitations that humanity imposes on us. Yet, he will do even that, if only humans respond to the unconditional love that he shows.

Joseph went beyond the law when he acted out of love and in obedience to what God wanted him to do. This is why the world could be gifted the greatest gift of all, Jesus.

When in a dilemma do you usually do the right thing or the loving thing? Would your life have been any different if Jesus had not been born?

APRIL 22 - THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

Gal 4:4-7 or Judges 15:9-12, 15; 16:1-4; Jn 2:1-5

It was on April 22, 1541 that Ignatius and his first companions made their solemn vows while celebrating the Eucharist, before the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. Many significant events in the life of Ignatius and the Society occurred on feasts or at sites honouring our Blessed Mother. Ignatius kept a vigil before the Black Madonna of Montserrat on the eve of the Annunciation to Mary on March 24, 1522; he took his first vows at Montmartre in Paris on the feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1534 and celebrated his first Eucharist in Rome on December 25, 1538, Christmas day.

This feast thus commemorates the dedication of the Society to Mary as its Mother. The first church that the Jesuits acquired was a small chapel named after a painting inside: Our Lady of the Way (Santa Maria della Strada). The painting would come to express the essence of Jesuit spirituality. As an Order dedicated to bringing the Gospel to every corner of the world, Our Lady of the Way was a highly appropriate Patron.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is part of the text which narrates the Miracle of turning water into wine. This miracle is found only in the Gospel of John and is the first of seven miracles in that Gospel. John calls the miracles “signs”. Though at first glance it might seem like a standard miracle story with a setting for the miracle, the preparation, the miracle proper and a confirmation of the miracle, there is much more than this here. The mention of terms like “hour” and “glory” indicate that one must look beyond the miracle to draw out its true meaning much like the servants drew wine from jars that had been filled with water.

In order to do this we must first become aware of the fact that by placing this miracle at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry and as the first “sign” that Jesus gives, John wants to communicate the abundance that is available in Jesus. Jesus wants to give freely and give to all. The setting of this miracle in the context of a marriage feast also increases the note of celebration and abundance. The mother of Jesus (Mary is never referred to by name in the Gospel of John and Jesus addresses her twice in the Gospel and both times as “Woman”) draws Jesus’ attention to the lack of wine. She makes no explicit request of him; however, the manner in which Jesus responds to her indicates that her words may have carried the connotation of asking him to intervene.

Though many have tried to lessen the harsh impact of the response of Jesus to his mother, it is clear that while Jesus is not being rude or hostile, he is certainly distancing himself from the request as both the address “Woman” and his words “what to me and to you” signify. The reason why he does not want his mother to interfere is because his “hour” had not yet arrived. The term “hour” is used here to signify the hour of Jesus’ glorification which includes not only his

death and resurrection but also his ascension. All that Jesus does is done keeping this broader perspective in mind. His mother must realize this. That she does is made explicit in her instructions to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you". This also signifies that this is the correct response to any request made of Jesus. His mother does not sulk or upset herself with Jesus' response. She rises to the occasion.

While the "how" of the miracle is not described, John describes in detail the preparation for the miracle. The stone jars were used instead of earthen jars because they were considered free of impurity and the water in them was probably used for the washing of hands before the meal. The quantity of water that the six stone jars hold is enormous and so what seems to be at the heart of the miracle is abundance and generosity. While the steward comments on the quality of the wine, John goes even further when he remarks about the manifestation of the glory of Jesus and calls the miracle a "sign" signifying therefore that one must look beyond it to draw out its full meaning. Thus the miracle points to the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, because that would be when his "hour" would indeed come.

In our modern age of the advancement of science and technology when we attempt to find rational explanations for most things, this miracle raises more questions than it answers. However, John is not concerned with these. His intention is to move the reader from fact to meaning. He does this by the numerous pointers or symbols that he gives in the story. These are the narration of the first miracle in the context of a wedding feast, the reference to Jesus' "hour", the manifestation of Jesus' glory and the use of the word "sign". If one reads these in the context of the whole Gospel, then one realizes that our well defined categories are shattered. The limits that we set on what God can and cannot do need revision, because the miracle speaks of the revelation of God and of the super abundance of gifts that his presence brings

The reaction of Mary in this miracle is also significant and must be commented on. Though Jesus distances himself from her "request", she does not react negatively. As a matter of fact, she allows Jesus his space and does not impose but leaves him free to act as he sees fit. She respects his authority and will not interfere when asked not to. This is evident in her comment to the servants, a comment which she continues to make even today: "Do whatever he tells you". She knows her place in the scheme of God's plan and will stick to that place. She will not exceed her authority. She knows where it ends. Significantly, though Jesus' "hour" has not come he still works his first miracle at the behest of his mother. He knows that she will support him on his way to that "hour".

When your prayers are unanswered, how do you respond? Have you set limits on what God can and cannot do?

APRIL 27 - ST. PETER CANISIUS: PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH
2 Tim 4:1-5; Mt 5:13-19

Peter Canisius was born in 1521 in Nijmegen in the Duchy of Guelders which is now the Netherlands. He was sent to study at the University of Cologne in Germany where he earned a Master's Degree at the age of 19. While in Cologne he met Peter Faber one of the first companions of Ignatius and through him was influenced to join the Society in 1543 at the age of 22. He was the first Dutchman to become a Jesuit.

Canisius was a gifted speaker and writer and had the ability to communicate his thoughts in a lucid manner. He used this gift well and became one of the most influential Catholics of his time. His book "German Catechism" was widely used by many in German speaking countries. The book contained the basic principles of Catholicism and was written in a style which everyone could understand.

In 1547 he attended several sessions of the Council of Trent. In 1554 he was offered the post of Bishop of Vienna but refused because he wanted to continue travelling and writing and preaching. He did, however, serve as Administrator of the Diocese till a Bishop was appointed.

In 1552 he founded what was to later become the University of Innsbruck. In 1591, at the age of 70, he suffered a stroke which left him partially paralyzed, but he continued to preach and write with the aid of a secretary until his death in Fribourg in 1597.

Canisius was clearly a man who lived well beyond his time. At a time when fundamentalism was at its peak and intolerance was common, he wrote to his Superior in the following words: "It is plainly wrong to meet non-Catholics with bitterness or to treat them with discourtesy. For this is nothing else than the reverse of Christ's example because it breaks the bruised reed and quenches the smoking flax. We ought to instruct with meekness those whom heresy has made bitter and suspicious, and has estranged from orthodox Catholics, especially from our fellow Jesuits. Thus, by whole-hearted charity and good will we may win them over to us in the Lord. Again, it is a mistaken policy to behave in a contentious fashion and to start disputes about matters of belief with argumentative people who are disposed by their very natures to wrangling. Indeed, the fact of their being so constituted is a reason the more why such people should be attracted and won to the simplicity of the faith as much by example as by argument."

This approach and attitude singles him out from his contemporaries. It was clearly an attitude that he learned from his Lord whom he wrote and preached about with such eloquence.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is from Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and is a link text, which joins the beatitudes (5:3-12) to the theme of the Sermon (5:17-20). These verses point out the effect that living the Sermon will have on the liberation of the world. The text makes two

assertions about the followers of Jesus. The first is that they are the salt of the earth and the second is that they are the light of the world. Both these symbols seem to point to the indispensable role that the disciples of Jesus are to play in the liberation of the world. It is through the lives of the disciples of Jesus that the world will be moved to glorify God. This is indeed a great privilege, but also a great responsibility.

Salt is an ingredient that adds flavour or taste to that to which it is added. It makes the insipid tasty, edible and enjoyable. Disciples of Jesus are called to add taste and flavour to the lives of others. However, more than this the disciples are called to reflect on the inherent quality of salt which is its saltiness. In like manner the inherent quality of the Christian is to be like Christ.

Light enables one to see correctly and results in removing darkness. This is what the disciples of Jesus must do if they are to be true disciples: remove the darkness from the lives of others. However, more than this, since the inherent quality of light is light; the disciples are called to be lights that shine.

In the next two verses which are the theme of the Sermon, Jesus states that his coming results in a fulfilment of the law not its abrogation. This means that he will go beyond a purely legal interpretation to a broader perspective. He will remove the focus from the mere external and concentrate on the internal. The focus will be more on the attitude than merely on the action.

It is evident that Peter Canisius was both salt and light to everyone he encountered. In becoming such he was able to see his good works and be drawn to Jesus. He was also able like Jesus to go beyond the letter of the law in his approach to all especially those who did not think like he did or who differed from him.

When was the last time you performed an action without any expectation of reward? Will you perform one today? How will you as a disciple of Jesus be salt and light today?

MAY 4 – ST. JOSEPH MARY RUBIO

Jer 1:4-9; Jn 4:31-38

Jose Maria Rubio was born in 1864 in Dalias, Spain. From a young age he felt the call to serve God in the priesthood. He completed his ecclesiastical studies and was ordained in 1887. For many years, Rubio served as a diocesan priest, though he always conscious of his call to be a Jesuit. This desire was fulfilled in 1906 after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He pronounced his first vows in 1908. He was known for his preaching and counselling and people from far and wide sought him out at all hours of the day. This prompted the Bishop of Madrid to call Fr. Rubio, “The Apostle of Madrid”. His whole life was devoted to bringing Christ to the poorest of the poor. He worked tirelessly to do this and besides providing many poor with physical nourishment, he also provided spiritual nourishment through the spiritual exercises.

He was fond of saying often, “Do what God wants and want what God does”. He died in Madrid in 1929. He was beatified in 1985 and canonized in 2003.

The Gospel text for the feast is from part of the dialogue between the Samaritan woman and Jesus. In these verses Jesus speaks of the food which nourishes him. This is ‘doing the will of the one who sent him’. This phrase summarises the entire ministry of Jesus. The four months of the harvest here seem to refer to a traditional period. However, as far as Jesus is concerned the harvest is here already. This harvest refers to the people of the Samaritan town coming to Jesus. This is an indication that the work of Jesus is successful and he (as reaper) and God (as sower) rejoice together in its success.

This Mission has to be continued by the disciples who are sent out on the authority of Jesus. Like Jesus was appointed to reap what the Father sowed, so the disciples are called to reap what Jesus has sown.

The text is an apt summary of the life of Rubio. Like the disciples before him, he too listened to the Mission command of Jesus and acted on it. This was why he was able to draw others to Jesus and became for them a source of life.

Will you like Rubio “Do what God wants and want what God does”?

MAY 16, ST. ANDREW BABOLA
Wis 10:10-14; Jn 15:9-17

Andrew Babola was born in 1591 in Poland. He joined the Society of Jesus when he was 20 years old in 1611.

The most successful and outstanding mission lead by Baobla was in the eastern part of Lithuania (present Belarus). There was a unique situation at that time, because of the Union of Brest, which gave the opportunity for the Orthodox Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to retain the old liturgy and to join the Roman Catholic Church. To begin with, it was a fruitful process of reunification of the two Christian Churches. But after a few decades the rebellion of unsatisfied Orthodox clergy started to grow. Finally it broke into a war of neighbouring Russia against the Commonwealth.

Bobola did not only work in the cities, but he would go frequently into the villages, and towns, which were situated in areas that were difficult to visit. It is said that just before his death two entire villages returned to the Catholic faith through his preaching. His opponents called him “the soul-hunter”.

In 1657, he was caught in Peredil, and threatened with the purpose of making him deny the catholic faith. He refused. His refusal enraged his tormentors and “they tore his skin from his hands and head and in imitation of chasuble that the priest wears at Mass, they tore the skin from his chest and back. Then in imitation of Jesus’ wounds, they cut holes in the palms of his hands. After two hours of his torture, during which he continually prayed for his tormentors, they jabbed a butcher’s awl into his chest near the heart. They then strung him up by his feet and finally gave him a blow with a sabre that mercifully brought an end to his passion.”

He was beatified in 1853 and canonized in 1938. He is known as the patron of Poland.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is part of the Discourse on “The Vine and the branches”. The love which the Father has for Jesus is the same love that Jesus has expressed and shown for his disciples. It is a love that is unconditional, a love without end. It is not merely a verbal expression, or an emotion, but a love that is shown tangibly and in every action that Jesus performs. The disciples have to act in the same manner as Jesus in order to make this love visible. There is only one commandment and that is the commandment to love. If the disciples keep this commandment, it will result in their being like Jesus, their master, who before them, revealed God’s love for the world.

This love is expressed in the most perfect of ways in the willingness to go to one’s death for the sake of a friend. The disciples are indeed friends of Jesus, as has been manifested in their keeping his command to love. It is important to note that Jesus is not placing a condition for friendship here (you can be my friends only if...); rather he is stating what and who the disciples are (because you are my friends, you do what I command).

The friendship that the disciples share with Jesus is grounded in love. This means that Jesus keeps back nothing from his disciples and reveals to them all that they need to know. His primary revelation to them has been of God as a loving and compassionate Father.

It is Jesus who has taken the initiative in calling and choosing the disciples and this fact reinforces the idea of grace. It is not one's effort that can earn discipleship but the grace of God which, when received, results in one living out the call to discipleship. The living out of the call is not merely a once for all act, but something that is done constantly and with perseverance. This will ensure that the effects of their love are abiding and lasting. The last verse of today, with its reminder to "love one another", forms an inclusion with the first.

Keeping the commandment of Jesus is thus not a chore or burden but done willingly because one has experienced this love first. The outcome of this sharing and manifestation of love is unbounded joy.

The word "love" has been a word that is used so often that it has been abused. We speak of our love for the good things of life, and of our love for the members of our family, and of our love for God in the same breath. "I love mixed vegetables" we might tell our spouse and, in the next breath, say "I love you". Love is not primarily an emotion; it is not even a feeling, but reality. As a matter of fact, the only reality is love. Fear, which is regarded as the opposite of love, is not real, it is only an illusion. If there is fear, there cannot be love, and where there is love, there is no fear (1 Jn 4:18). While Paul gives a beautiful definition of love in 1 Cor 13:1-9, my own definition of love is simple, but not simplistic. "In love, there is no 'I'".

The relationship that we share with God because of Jesus is one of sons and daughters. We are Jesus' brothers and sisters, even friends. This is because he has given us everything in all its fullness. He held nothing back, not even his own self. The manifestation of this self-giving, which began with the incarnation, was completed and continued on the cross, and through his resurrection and ascension. He continues to give, even today. However, the giving is only one side of the story. Without a receiver, the gift has no value. This is why, while the grace of God given as a gift in Jesus is first, our reception of that gift is as important if the act of giving is to be completed. We show that we have received this gift when we, like Jesus, also dare to reach out in love. When we speak an enhancing word, perform a loving action, behave a little less selfishly, and a little more selflessly, then the gift is given and received, again and again.

Babola was able to receive and share this love with others and was willing to lay down his life for this love.

How often has fear ruled your actions? Will you dare to act from love today?

Have you received Jesus' gift of unconditional love? Does this show in your sharing of that love?

MAY 24, OUR LADY OF THE WAY
Prov 4:10-18; Lk 2:15-19

In 1537 St. Ignatius hired a small house near a small church on a narrow street in Rome. The Church was named as Our Lady of the Way, because of a picture of Our Lady in the church and its proximity to the narrow street. Here St. Ignatius celebrated Mass and prayed with his companions.

For many years 'La Strada' (the wayside) was the 'heart of the Society'. It witnessed the long hours of prayer of St. Ignatius, his discussions, meditations, and reflections with his companions. The Constitutions were written here. The first novices were trained by St. Ignatius here. Hundreds of letters went from here to St. Ignatius' companions round the world. Fr. Cordacio, a wealthy and influential diocesan priest who became a Jesuit used all his money and influence to buy the rented house and secure the Church through Pope Paul III for the Society. In course of years the 'Gesù' Church and other buildings came up. All this through the powerful intercession of Mary, Queen and Mother of the Society whose same picture is venerated in a special chapel in the 'Gesù' and who is honoured with today's feast, granted to the Society of Jesus by Pope Leo XIII in 1900.

The Gospel text chosen for the memorial of the feast concerns the response of the Shepherds to the revelation that they have received. It also concerns the response of Mary. While all are amazed at the Shepherds report of the things that have taken place, Mary "treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart" (2:19). Mary is unable to make logical sense of all the events that have taken place in her life. The annunciation, the pregnancy of Elizabeth, the birth of John the Baptist and the birth of her son are all mysteries to her. Her response to these mysterious events is to 'wonder'. She tries to make as much sense as she can of these events. Even as she does so, she remains the servant of the Lord, his handmaid, who let it be done in and through her.

There are times in our lives when we cannot understand the meaning of events that take place. At times like these we respond in a variety of ways. If the event that occurs is not what we expected, we might lose faith in God, respond with anger or simply give up and give in. The Response of Mary is a challenge to us of how we also can respond. We might not always receive logical answers to the questions that we ask, but if remain God's servants and let it be done in and through us, we will find that peace which only the Lord can give.

Will you like Mary, let it done 'in and through you' by God?

JUNE 8, ST. JAMES BERTHIEU
Wis 3:1-9; Jn 15:18-21

James Berthieu was born in 1838 in Monlogis, Polminhac, in the diocese of Saint-Flour. He joined the Society of Jesus after his ordination as a priest in 1873 when he was 35 years old. When he was in his second year of his Novitiate he was sent to Madagascar to work there.

In 1880, the French government closed the Jesuit schools and forced the Jesuits into exile. Afterwards, once the Jesuits were accepted once more, he reopened a mission at Ambrosita in 1885. A few years later he went to evangelise in the district of Anjozorofady, a short distance north of Tananarive.

In 1886 another rebellion broke out a short distance from his mission and Berthieu ordered his villagers to flee. He and his people headed for the capital of Tananarive. On their way, however, they were attacked by one of the tribes and forced to scatter. Within a few days Berthieu was captured and led away to a village where the chief tried to get him to apostatize, but without success.

Faced with the demands that he renounce his faith he replied: "I cannot consent to that. I prefer to die." Thus, in the village of Ambiatibe, 60 km from Tananarive, he was killed in 1896. They took his body and threw it into the river, never to be recovered.

He was beatified in 1965 and canonised in 2012.

The Gospel text for the feast of James Berthieu is from the Discourse of Jesus on the Vine and the Branches. The focus here is not on the relationship of Jesus and the disciples, like the earlier verses did, but on the relationship of the disciples with the "world". Here, the word "world" is used to represent, not the physical world, but those who are opposed to God's revelation in Jesus.

The challenge of love will be truly encountered when the community faces the "world". The "world" will hate the disciples because of their relationship with Jesus and because they live out his teachings. If the disciples want the world to love them, they must give up the teachings of Jesus. However, because they have been chosen by Jesus and set apart from the "world", they too, like Jesus, will have to endure the "world's" hatred.

The disciples must realize that following and obeying Jesus, as servants obey their masters, will lead to persecution. What has happened with Jesus will be repeated in the disciples' lives. While the authority of the one sent is the same as the sender, it is also true that the response to the one sent will be the same as the response to the sender. Those who do not accept the word of truth, spoken by God in Jesus, will indulge in persecution. Those who accept the word will respond by living out that word in their lives. Rejection of the disciples means rejection of Jesus because it is Jesus who sends them. Rejection of Jesus means rejection of God who sent him.

In a world in which the resonating message is to “have more”, it is not always easy to speak and live Jesus’ message to “be more”. Those who do this are labeled as crazy and out of touch with reality. Berthieu was not afraid to do this and was ready to face the consequences. He was ready because he was part of the vine to live and die as Jesus did. He stood up for the truth right to the very end.

How do you show in challenging situations that you are part of the vine?

JUNE 9, ST. JOSEPH DE ANCHIETA
Zeph 3:9-10,14-20; Mt 28:16-20

José de Anchieta y Díaz de Clavijo was born in 1534 in San Cristóbal de La Laguna on Tenerife in the Canary Islands, Spain, to a wealthy family. He was one of the founders of São Paulo in 1554 and Rio de Janeiro in 1565. He is the first playwright, the first grammarian and the first poet born in the Canary Islands, and the father of Brazilian literature. Anchieta was also involved in the religious instruction and conversion to the Catholic faith of the Indian population. His efforts along with those of another Jesuit missionary, Manuel da Nóbrega, at Indian pacification were crucial to the establishment of stable colonial settlements in the colony.

It was at Coimbra that he was attracted to the Society of Jesus, and joined the Novitiate in 1551. As a novice, he became a man of deep prayer and a model of the virtues of humility and obedience. He also chastised his body by fasting and self-flagellation. As a novice, he had to give up more advanced philosophical studies, on account of serious illness. He had developed a scoliotic condition that would plague him the remainder of his life. As there were requests from Brazil for additional helpers and as the climate was thought to be hygienic and clean, his superiors sent Anchieta there. He arrived at colonial capital of Bahia in 1553.

Anchieta is commonly known as "the Apostle of Brazil". He was the second native of the Canary Islands, after Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur, also a missionary to Latin America, declared a saint by the Catholic Church.

Anchieta wrote a famous poem to the Virgin Mary, allegedly writing it every morning on the wet sand of a beach and committing it to memory, until he could much later transcribe its more than 4,900 verses to paper.

His lucid and detailed reports are still important today to understand the lives, knowledge, and customs of the indigenous people and the Europeans during this time. His writings also detail the astounding novelties of Brazil's wildlife and geography.

Anchieta lived more than a full life, but by the time he reached the age of 63, he was exhausted from his labours. He died in Reritiba (now Brasil) in 1597. He was beatified in 1980 and canonized in 2014.

The Gospel text from Matthew is from the last chapter and verses of the Gospel. They contain an appearance of the risen Jesus to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee. The disciples are obedient to Jesus' instructions because at the start of the text they are already at the mountain. The mountain is not named, but is a theological topos in Matthew. The mountain brings to mind the mountain of the temptation of Jesus (4:8) of the Sermon of the Mount (5:1) and of his transfiguration (17:1). In the first of these incidents, Jesus was offered all power and authority by the Devil, but refused to accept it. Now, God has given all power to Jesus. In the second, Jesus taught authoritatively (7:29) from the mountain, here he commands his disciples

to teach as he taught. In the third, Jesus gave the three disciples only a glimpse of his future glory, now he reveals himself as totally glorified.

Matthew does not focus on the external appearance of Jesus because he wants the focus to be on Jesus' words. The words of Jesus may be seen to be divided into three parts. They contain a Christological, an Ecclesiological and an Eschatological statement.

The Christological statement is that Jesus' power and authority are now unbounded. The same Jesus, who was for a while mistreated by all, crucified on the cross, abandoned by God even at the point of his death, died and was buried, is now the Jesus in whose hands everything rests. This statement leads to the Mission command to the disciples and explicates what 'Church' means. The authority of the 'Church' has its foundation in the authority of Jesus. The 'Church' goes out to all nations with the authority of Jesus. No one or place is excluded. This Church is called to 'make disciples' primarily not by baptising people but by teaching them to observe the commands of Jesus. These commands may be summed up in the command to love (22:36-39). When one loves one's neighbour as one loves oneself, then Church becomes present and visible.

The final verse of the Gospel is a promise of the abiding presence of the Lord with his disciples. Jesus who fulfilled the "Emmanuel" prophecy in his life time, is the risen Lord who assures the disciples of his constant and ever abiding presence.

The manner in which Anchieta lived his life and did Mission was one which shows that he had understood the Mission command of Jesus as it was meant to be understood. Through his person he touched the lives of all he came in contact with and revealed God as a God of love. Through his writings, he reached out far beyond the boundaries of his own country, indeed to the whole world.

Will you like Anchieta 'make a disciple' of at least one person today?

JUNE 21, ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

2 Cor 9:6-11; Mt 6:1-6,16-18

Aloysius de Gonzaga was born in Castiglione, Italy in 1568. His father wanted him to join military service, but by the age of nine Aloysius had decided on a religious life, and made a vow of perpetual virginity.

A kidney disease prevented St. Aloysius from a full social life for a while, so he spent his time in prayer and reading the lives of the saints. Although he was appointed a page in Spain, Gonzaga kept up his many devotions and austerities, and was quite resolved to become a Jesuit. His family eventually moved back to Italy, where he taught catechism to the poor. When he was 18, he joined the Jesuits, after finally breaking down his father, who had refused his entrance into the order. He served in an hospital during the plague of 1587 in Milan, and died from it at the age of 23, in 1591, after receiving the anointing from Robert Bellarmine.

He was canonised in 1726 and is regarded as the patron Saint of youth.

The text chosen for today is from part of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. It concerns three pious practices that were prevalent at the time of Jesus: almsgiving, prayer and fasting. These are used as examples of what true and false righteousness means. In each case, after mention of the pious practice, the Matthean Jesus explicates how it must not be done and why, and then goes on to explain how it must be done and why. In each case there is a contrast between public and secret and between external and internal.

Jesus uses hyperbolic language when he speaks of how almsgiving must not be done and uses similar hyperbole when he states how it must be done. Almsgiving must not be ostentatious but in humility and secret. When speaking of prayer, a distinction is made between prayer which is done for show and prayer which stems from the heart. The former makes itself an end in itself, the latter regards prayer as a mean to reach God. Finally, in the third pious practice, fasting, a distinction is made between fasting that is done to impress others and fasting that is motivated by an inner conviction. If one is convinced from within, then one will want it to be as inconspicuous as possible.

The reason for the choice of this Gospel text is because Aloysius understood completely the words of Jesus. His motivation to do good came from within. His desire to serve the poor and the sick was without expectation of reward. The austerities he practiced were for the sole reason of 'feeling with others'. His reaching out to the plague ridden of his time was because it was a need and he was willing to do all that he could to cater to that need. Indeed, Aloysius internalised every pious practice, because of which his righteousness was pleasing in the eyes of God.

When was the last time you performed an action with no expectation of reward? Will you perform such an action today?

JULY 2, STS. BERNADINE REALINO, JOHN FRANCIS REGIS AND FRANCIS JEROME.
BLESSED JULIAN MAUNOIR, ANTHONY BALDINUCCI
2 Cor 5:14-6:1; Jn 3:29-36

Bernardine Realino was born in Carpi in 1530. Even before joining the Society of Jesus he earned a doctorate in both civil and canon law. He served as a judge in Felizzano and was known for his legal brilliance. While in Naples, he was inspired by a sermon that a Jesuit preached and sought out the priest to make his confession. He was invited to attend a week long spiritual retreat. During this Retreat he made up his mind to join the Society and did so in 1564 when he was 34 years old.

After his ordination he was appointed as Master of Novices and later sent to found the Jesuit house and college in Lecce. He was concerned about the formation of diocesan priests and in 1583, began a movement to foster their training in theology and homiletics so that they could become better confessors and preachers.

He died in 1616 and is known as the Apostle of Lecce. He was beatified in 1896 and canonized in 1947.

Jean-François Régis was born in 1597, in Fontcouverte, Aude, in the Languedoc region of southern France. He was educated at the Jesuit College of Béziers. He entered the Society in 1616 when he was 19 years of age. He continued his study of philosophy even while teaching grammar at several colleges: Billom (1619–22), Puy-en-Velay (1625–27), and Auch (1627–28). After his theology he was ordained a priest in 1630.

In 1632, he began work with the victims of bubonic plague in Toulouse. From 1632 till 1634, he stayed at the Jesuit College of Montpellier. During this time he worked tirelessly visiting hospitals, assisting the needy and preaching the Catholic doctrine to children and the poor. He established safe houses for women and children who were abused. He established the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, which organized charitable collections of money and food from the wealthy. He also established several hostels for victimised women, and helped many become trained lace makers, which provided them with a stable income, and an opportunity to maintain their humanity under the threat of exploitation.

In 1633, he was invited by the Bishop of the Diocese of Viviers to give missions in all Parishes in the diocese. From 1633-40 he evangelized more than fifty districts in le Vivarais, le Forez, and le Velay. Regis laboured diligently on behalf of both priests and laypeople. His preaching style was said to have been simple and direct. He appealed to the uneducated peasantry and many were touched by his words.

Regis walked from town to town, in rough mountainous areas where travel was difficult, especially in the winter. He succumbed to pneumonia at age forty-three in 1640 at Lalouvesc (Ardèche), in France's Dauphiné region.

He was beatified in 1716 and canonized in 1737.

Francis Gerome (Jerome) was born in 1642 in Taranto in southern Italy. . He never travelled far from his birthplace, but his years of ministry in Naples were filled with activity and adventure. Though his initial formation was with the Theatine Fathers, he became associated with the Jesuits when he was hired as a prefect for the sons of the Italian nobility studying in their school. After being associated with the Jesuits for many years, he finally entered the novitiate in 1670 at age 28.

His first permanent assignment after ordination was the "Naples mission" which he served for the next 40 years. He worked with the sodality of artisans who met in the chapel beneath the Gesù church. He also preached in city squares or on busy thoroughfares as he promoted monthly Communion. In addition he visited slaves and prisoners in the galleys in the Bay and cared for them however he could. He also visited the sick night and day.

Jerome initially experienced great success in his ministry, but then met suspicion and jealousy which led to a severe restriction of his ministry. Some thought that a priest who preached in the streets and dealt with sinners was not fit for giving retreats to priests and nuns striving for perfection. The archbishop prohibited him from preaching in the streets until he learned that the complaints against Jerome came from jealousy; eventually he renewed his faculties.

His Jesuit superiors restricted Jerome's activities because they took too much time from community life. The provincial finally relented and gave Jerome free reign to minister to the Neapolitans, which he did from 1694 to 1702. In that year he began devoting half his time to missions outside Naples. People responded to his simple and earnest sermons. When he fell ill from pleurisy, he spent his last two months in bed slowly weakening and died at age 74, having been a Jesuit for 46 years.

He was beatified in 1806 and canonised in 1839.

Julian Maunoir was born in 1606 at Saint Georges-de-Reintembault near Rennes. At the age of 14, he entered the Jesuit College at Rennes and joined the Society at the age of 19 in 1625. He was ordained a priest in 1637 and returned to Brittany in 1640 and was assigned to Quimper where he had taught Latin and Greek while doing his philosophy studies. He was found to be uniquely suited for the difficult task of evangelizing the impoverished people of Brittany. Together with his companion, Pierre Bernard, he worked among the poor, the peasants and

fishermen. Father Maunoir worked as a missionary to the people of Brittany for 43 years, and managed to give a Christian meaning to what had become pious customs.

As he got older Maunoir had to reduce the number of missions he gave. He was on his way to start a mission when he sensed that death was near. His Jesuit companions helped him to Plévin where he took to bed and contracted pneumonia. When he died several weeks later, the people demanded that he be buried in the parish church there despite the bishop's desire that he be buried in the cathedral.

By 1683, Maunoir had formed over 1000 missionaries who continued the work that he had begun. He died in Brittany in 1683 at the age of 77.

He was beatified in 1951. He is known as the Apostle of Brittany.

Anthony Baldinucci, was born in Florence in 1665. Though he attended the Jesuit school at Florence he wanted to follow his older brother and join the Dominicans. However, he was inspired to join the Society of Jesus in 1681 and was ordained a priest in 1695. He wanted very much to be sent to Asia to minister there, but could not be sent because of poor health. He accepted this as the will of God and instead ministered in central Italy and especially in the cities of Frascati and Viterbo.

For four months of every year he would conduct missions. Between 1697 and 1717 he visited 30 dioceses and gave an average of 22 missions per year. The missions were generally centred on meditations from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola.

His preaching was simple, intense and theatrical. He organized processions which would start from various areas of the country to the place where he was holding the mission. Many of the people in these processions would wear crowns of thorns and scourge themselves. Given the size of these processions, Baldinucci often employed a number of laymen (whom he called *deputati*) to help manage the crowd. Many of these "*deputati*" were drawn from the people he thought might otherwise be tempted to disrupt the processions.

Baldinucci himself walked barefoot to each mission assignment, often carried a cross during his preaching and wore heavy chains. He would also walk through the assembled people scourging himself to the point of drawing blood and beyond. He would often finish these missions with the burning of various possible instruments of vice, including cards, dice, and the like, in the public square. People were reported to also lay their daggers and pistols at his feet at this time. His appearances were so popular and well attended that he often found crowds covering the walls of city when he arrived to deliver a mission.

Baldinucci had a particular devotion to the Virgin Mary, and made sure that a copy of miraculous picture of her as the Refuge of Sinners from the Church of the Gesu (Frascati) was carried with him in his travels. He also worked diligently to spread Marian devotions in his travels.

In addition to his preaching, Baldinucci also wrote two courses of sermons for Lent, gathered material for many more, composed a number of discourses, and maintained a long correspondence list.

He suffered from a myocardial infarction in the course of one of his preaching tours, and died in the village of Pofi, in the ancient region of Lazio in 1717 at the age of 52.

He was beatified in 1893.

The text chosen for the feast is from the final appearance of John in the Gospel in which he gives his final witness to Jesus. The reason for the witness is the report of his disciples that Jesus to whom John bore witness was also baptizing and that “everyone” was now going to him. This witness begins with John stating what at first glance might seem like a logical statement, but in its deeper sense means that Jesus has what he has from God. It is a gift from God to Jesus and given to him directly. This is why in his earlier testimony, John had made clear that while he was not the Christ, and he was the one sent ahead of him to prepare the way.

Since he was clear about his role in God’s plan of salvation, he had no difficulty with accepting it and living it out. He is but the friend of the bridegroom, who when the bridegroom appears will take his secondary and less important place. The bridegroom is the one who is at the centre of the marriage feast. When it begins the friend must recede into the background.

This witness of John defines the roles of each of us who like John are friends of the bridegroom, Jesus. Like John, our role is to prepare the way for him and to point out to him through our words and actions. If we understand this role and if at every moment we realize where our authority ends, we can fulfil this role as we ought to.

All the Saints whose feast we celebrate today realised their role in pointing to the bridegroom and then exiting from the scene like John.

Will you as a friend of Jesus point to him through your words and actions? How?

JULY 9, BL. LEO IGNATIUS MANGIN
Rom 5:1-8; Jn 12:23-26

Leo Ignatius Mangin was born at Verny, near Metz in France in 1857. He first studied with the Christian Brothers and subsequently attended colleges in Metz and Amiens. He entered the Society at Saint-Acheul in 1875, studied philosophy at Louvain and taught in Liege for a while before he went to the China mission. He was ordained in 1886.

Fr Mangin filled various positions during his years as a missionary. In 1900 he was stationed at Zhujiahe, a small town with 400 inhabitants but whose number soon grew to 3000 by incoming refugees because the Boxers, a secret Chinese society whose members extolled physical prowess and engaged in rigorous gymnastic exercises, were attacking the neighbouring areas. Fr Mangin was aware that the Boxers would one day invade his village wisely fortified it as best as he could including stocking up with a supply of food provisions. As superior of the district he also asked Fr Paul Denn who was then stationed in Gucheng to come to Zhujiahe as his assistant.

The Boxers did eventually attack the fortified village in 1900, but the villagers were able to repel them. Another attack the following day was also unsuccessful, but then 2,000 soldiers of the imperial army interrupted their journey to Peking (now Beijing) to reinforce the Boxers. When Mangin saw the size of the attacking group, he knew the village was doomed. Some people were able to slip away at night, but the two Jesuits chose to remain with their flock.

The attackers constructed towers that enabled them to scale the barricades, and fought their way into the village. The two Jesuit pastors gathered women and children into the Church and led them in prayer, preparing them for what was to come. The few men left alive staggered into the chapel shortly before the Boxers broke down the church doors and confronted the Catholic congregation. They gave people one last chance to renounce their faith, but only a few did so. Then the shooting began. Denn intoned the Confiteor and Mangin pronounced the words of absolution. They were among the first to be killed, and then the attackers fired into the congregation and slashed at people with swords, before setting fire to the church roof. Their bones remained in place until 1901 when they were collected and placed in coffins, and then buried in the new church erected on the same site. The death toll that day was 1,370 Catholics.

He was beatified in 1955.

The Gospel text for the feast of Leo Mangin is from the Gospel of John. Jesus introduces teachings about his death with a brief agricultural parable. The seed imagery recalls the parables of sowing found in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 13:3-32; Mk 4:3-20, 26-32; Lk 8:5-15). Jesus uses the imagery here to interpret his own death.

The significance of this parable for understanding Jesus' death lies in the contrast between remaining solitary and "bearing much fruit". In John, "fruit" is Jesus' metaphor for the life of the community of faith. Jesus thus uses the seed parable to show that the salvific power of his death resides in the community that is gathered as a result of it (cf. 10:15-16; 11:51-52).

Jn 12:25 is one of the best-attested sayings of Jesus; in addition to this verse, some form of the saying occurs five times in the synoptic Gospels (Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mt 10:39; Lk 9:24; 17:33). While all of the occurrences share the basic pattern of an antithetical parallelism that highlights contrasting attitudes toward one's life, there are also significant differences among the sayings. The significant number of variations within the synoptic tradition and between the Synoptic Gospels and John argues against any theory of literary dependence and for multiple attestations of this saying in the oral tradition. It also argues for the authenticity or historicity of the saying. The differences point to the ways each evangelist adapted this Jesus saying to serve his Gospel.

To love one's life is the opposite of Jesus' own action; it places one outside of the community shaped by Jesus' gift of his life (psyche) and leads to the loss of that life. To hate one's life in "this world" is to declare one's allegiance to Jesus (cf. 15:18-19) and so to receive his gift of eternal life (cf. 3:16; 6:40; 10:28; 17:2).

While the synoptic versions establish a condition for following Jesus ("taking up one's cross"), the Johannine version contains both condition and promise. Since Jesus' ultimate service is the gift of his life in love, he calls the disciples to love as he loves and hence to serve as he serves. What it means to be Jesus' servant will be enacted in the foot washing of 13:1-20.

The prime reason for the choice of the Gospel text is that Mangin became like the grain of wheat that was unafraid to fall into the ground and die. In doing so, he became like his Lord and master Jesus.

In becoming like the grain of wheat, Mangin became like Jesus. Will you?

JULY 31, ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA– Founder of the Society of Jesus
Jer 20:7-9; 1 Cor 10:31-11:1; Lk 14:25-33

If St. Francis Xavier is known as “A Saint in a hurry” and one who wanted to set the world on fire with the love of God, St. Ignatius of Loyola may be seen as the one who sparked in Francis Xavier that flame and caused that hurry. In more ways than one Ignatius influenced the life of Francis Xavier and numerous Jesuits after him to make a difference in the world, to be that “fire that kindles other fires.”

While the conversion of Ignatius from soldier to saint has been attributed largely to the profound experience when lying in his convalescent bed after the canon ball struck his leg and injured it, there are other experiences that Ignatius had after his convalescence that are also important and which set the tone for this transformation.

Three of these experiences may be highlighted. The first of these was the experience in a cave in the city of Manresa. In a monastery in Manresa, he practised the most rigorous asceticism with frequent confessions and masses and the performance of the most disagreeable and menial tasks. It was here that the phrase “Quid hoc ad aeternitatem”, which asks “How does this compare to eternity?” led to experience of the discernment of spirits. Ignatius experienced here a conversion from aggressiveness to assertiveness and from impulsiveness to discernment. This experience also led to the transformation of the recluse and ascetic into an apostle and missionary. It was in Manresa that he produced the now famous “Spiritual Exercises” which were to exert a potent influence on numerous people all over the world and which continues to inspire and influence people even today.

The second experience that Ignatius had was on the banks of the river Cardoner. Here he had a vision which is regarded as the most significant in his life. The vision was more of a kind of enlightenment, about which he later said that he learned more on that one occasion than he did in the rest of his life. Ignatius never revealed exactly what the vision was, but it seems to have been an encounter with God as God really is so that he was able to see all of creation in a new light. It acquired a new meaning and relevance which translated into an experience that enabled Ignatius to find God in all things and all things in God.

What God impressed upon his heart and mind we do not know, but God branded him as if with a red-hot iron, because after even these visions had ceased, their effects lasted. The vision strengthened him so much and gave him such conviction that he would later say that even if there were no scriptures to teach us in matters of faith, he would be resolved to die for his faith because of what he had seen. This clarity was so great that in the whole course in his life, that he would often say that even if he were to gather all the help he had received from God and all the many things he knew, and added them altogether, he does not think that they would equal what he received at that one time. And thus, his understanding became enlightened in so great a manner that it seemed to him that he was a different man and that he had a different intellect from the one he had had before.

The third experience that led to the deep transformation was at La Storta. Here he seemed to see the Eternal Father associating him with Jesus, who spoke the words: Ego vobis Romae propitius ero ("I will be favourable to you in Rome"). Though many interpreted this promise to mean the subsequent success of the Society of Jesus in Rome, Ignatius' own interpretation was characteristic: "I do not know whether we shall be crucified in Rome; but Jesus will be propitious."

What is the significance of these experiences for us today?

The experience of Manresa points to the fact that the world in which we live is temporary and passing. This is precisely why we must live each day as if it were our last. In doing so we must avoid giving into the negative which has the tendency to drag us down and look at every person, thing and situation as positively as we can. We must realize that "there is nothing in all creation that is only profane for those who know how to look". (Teilhard de Chardin)

From the Cardoner experience we learn that God is present in each and every situation and at each and every moment of our lives. This presence is not a hidden presence but a very visible presence if only we open our eyes and hearts to see. This experience also invites us to look at the newness that each day brings and to impress on us that the past is over and gone and cannot be changed. All the wrongs have been forgotten and erased and we must start anew and afresh.

Finally the constant presence of God in the world and in our lives does not mean that things will go the way we want them to go. As a matter of fact though Ignatius heard that Jesus would be favourable to him in Rome, he had most of his problems in Rome. The point, however, is that despite these numerous problems Ignatius continued to believe that God was working in his life. Thus even when all our plans go awry and we find it difficult to find the hand of God or feel God's presence, the fact of the matter is that God is always there.

The Gospel text for the feast is from Jesus' words to the crowds that accompany him on his journey. They set forth three conditions of discipleship, uncompromising demands made of those who would follow him: the willingness to leave family ties, the willingness to face radical self-denial, and the willingness to give up one's material possessions. In addition, he casts these conditions of discipleship in a demand for serious consideration and no-nonsense, prior deliberation about the costs of such following. The engagement is not to be undertaken lightly.

The first condition (v. 26) calls for a willingness to put parents, family, relatives, even one's own life, in subordination to discipleship. In effect, it asks the Christian disciple how much he/she esteems Jesus to whom allegiance is being given. All human and natural relations must be set behind the connection with Jesus.

The second condition (v. 27) calls for the disciple to carry his/her cross and walk behind Jesus. The Lucan Jesus here makes it one of the three conditions. In its own way it clarifies Luke's addition to the first condition, the hating of one's "own life," for it may even lead to a destiny similar to that which Jesus will face. The carrying of one's cross without regarding it as a burden is possible only if the first condition is met. A person who regards him/herself as nothing is the one who will be able to persevere in carrying the cross.

The third condition (v. 33) calls for a radical renunciation of all one's material possessions. It needs no explanation, but one should recall the Lucan theme into which it fits (see pp. 247–251).

The seriousness demanded by the three conditions is then presented in the twin parables (vv. 28–32) that follow. Jesus counsels his followers not to decide on discipleship without advance, mature self-probing. One must consider not only the demands to be made but also the consequences of what may only be begun and be left half-done because of a lack of follow-through and perseverance. Ridicule or surrender to unconditional terms should deter one from rash and unreflective decisions.

In these parables Jesus counsels the disciple to consider seriously what forces and resources the would-be disciple has. But the added condition in 14:33 counsels renunciation of all the material possessions that one has.

Ignatius clearly lived out the demands made by the Lucan Jesus in these verses. Once he had decided to follow Jesus, he was willing to give up everything and persevere. He had found the pearl of great price and was willing to go to any lengths to acquire it.

Will you like Ignatius be one-pointed in your love for Jesus?

AUGUST 2 -ST. PETER FABER
1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 10:24-27

Peter Faber was born in 1506, at Villaret, Savoy. As a boy, he was a shepherd in the high pastures of the French Alps. He had little education, but a remarkable memory. Two of his uncles were Carthusian priors. At first, he was entrusted to the care of a priest at Thônes and later to a school in the neighbouring village of La Roche-sur-Foron.

In 1525, Faber went to Paris to pursue his studies. He was admitted to the Collège Sainte-Barbe, the oldest school in the University of Paris, where he shared his lodgings with Francis Xavier. There Faber's spiritual views began to develop, influenced by a combination of popular devotion, Christian humanism, and late medieval scholasticism. Faber and Xavier became close friends and both received the degree of Master of Arts on the same day in 1530.

At the university, Faber also met Ignatius of Loyola and became one of his associates. He tutored Ignatius in the philosophy of Aristotle, while Ignatius tutored him in spiritual matters. Faber, Xavier and Ignatius all became roommates at the University of Paris. Faber was the first among the small circle of men who formed the Society of Jesus to be ordained. Having become a priest on in May 1534, he received the religious vows of Ignatius and his five companions at Montmartre in August that year.

In 1546 Faber was appointed by Pope Paul III to act as a peritus (expert) on behalf of the Holy See at the Council of Trent. In April 1546 he left Spain to attend the Council and reached Rome, weakened by fever. He died, reportedly in the arms of Loyola, in 1546.

After Ignatius, Faber was the one whom Xavier and his companions esteemed the most eminent. He merited this esteem by his profound knowledge, his gentle sanctity, and his influence over people.

If there is one quality that characterised the life of Blessed Peter Faber, it was his desire to spread the Word of God through his teaching and sermons. He was renowned for his learning and his knowledge of scripture and his skill in giving the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. Though he was an eloquent speaker and knowledgeable preacher his humility made him attribute his success to the grace and blessing of God.

Though he died when he was barely forty years of age, he was able because of his humility and openness to do great things for God.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast (10:24-27) is from part of the Mission Discourse (10:1-42) of the Gospel of Matthew. In the verses of today, a parallel is drawn between the disciples who are sent by Jesus and Jesus himself. The disciples will share the same fate as their master. His response to negative assessment of his mission was equanimity and this must be the response of the disciples' as well. They must not retaliate, but continue to persevere in the firm hope that they will eventually succeed. They are asked to be fearless in mission. The command "not to be

afraid” is repeated twice in these verses. The reason for their fearlessness is that the Father is in control even if all evidence is to the contrary. If they remain faithful they will show themselves to be true disciples.

We often begin things with a bang and then end them with a whimper. This is because sometimes our enthusiasm runs away with us. What is required is perseverance and this is more likely if we start slowly and steadily (as Jesus and Faber did) and then let things build up gradually than if we start with much fanfare, which soon fizzles out.

Will you like Peter Faber radiate Christ by what you do?

AUGUST 18, ST. ALBERTO HURTADO CRUCHAGA
James 2:14-17; Mt 25:31-40

Alberto Hurtado was born in Chile in 1901. He was only four years old when his father died. He received a scholarship which enabled him to attend the Jesuit school in Santiago. Later he studied law at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.

Hurtado entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus in 1923. After philosophy and theology studies in Spain and Belgium (because the Jesuits were expelled from Spain), he was ordained to the priesthood in 1933.

Hurtado was interested in labour law before entering the Society and long desired to improve the lot of the poor. Upon his return to Chile in 1936, he became a teacher at his alma mater, the Pontifical Catholic University, but also reached out to the poor, especially to the young.

In 1940 he began working for Catholic Action and in the following year became the national director of the youth organization. He also published a book titled, 'Is Chile a Catholic Country?' This book challenged some long-held conservative beliefs. It caused considerable controversy and even had some critics labelling him a "communist."

Alberto Hurtado founded his own organization for poor and abandoned young people, Hogar de Cristo. The Hogar de Cristo shelters quickly spread throughout Chile and served thousands of needy youngsters.

He established the Trade Union Association of Chile and published three volumes on the labour movement. He also founded a periodical, Mensaje.

In 1952, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and because of this he knew that the end was near. His death was national news.

Hurtado was beatified in 1994 and canonized in 2005. He remains very popular in Chile to this day.

The Gospel text for the feast may be seen as a summary of Hurtado's life during which he let his faith be revealed in action. It is a passage about the "kingdom" of God, about all those who are kin to God, and, therefore, who are kin to each other. We are each of us kin to one another. We are all indeed one. The deepest expression of this truth, on this side of life, is a spirituality in which there is no split between our devotion and our deed; no split between mystery and commandment; no split between piety and ethics and no split between being and doing. Like mystery and commandment, interwoven as they are, Jesus is one with the hungry and the thirsty, is one with the stranger and the prisoner, and is one with the naked and the sick. To care for these, is to care for Jesus. To care for them is to reach back into the very essence of life and to touch the God who takes shape in the hungry, in the thirsty, in the naked, in the sick, in the stranger, in the prisoner. "And then the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it

to one of the least of these, who are members of my family, you did it to me." The text, thus, is not so much about the condemnation of God, as it is really about the universal vision of the love of God, about the very scope of God's love in Jesus for the whole world. Jesus remains the model of unconditional and eternal love. This was shown in the most powerful of ways by Jesus himself, when in total obedience to the Father, he dared to spread his arms on the Cross in total surrender of self. Therefore, God raised him.

This understanding is important to avoid any kind of misinterpretation that might arise due to a person thinking that it is his/her deeds that earn merit and reward. The righteous who reached out to the least of their brothers and sisters, did so because of the necessity to help, love, serve, visit and feed. They dared to listen to the promptings of the Spirit and responded to these promptings. They did not do what they did for reward. It was not the condition of their good deeds, but its consequences. They did not earn the kingdom but inherited it. Inheritance is determined by the giver not the receiver. The kingdom remains a free gift of God.

Though the unrighteousness also address Jesus as Lord – a title used in Matthew's Gospel only by those who at least have some faith - it is not enough. Their address remains at the theoretical level and is not translated into action. They did not act because they did not believe that God could hide himself in the poorest of the poor. They did not believe that God could be present in the scum of society and in those who live on the margins. They believed that God could be present only in a beautiful sunset or in the stimulating fragrance of a rose or in the silence of one's heart. They did not realize that our God had been made visible in Jesus, who taught all who were willing to listen, that God was primarily a God of the poor, and that though he was king, he came only to serve.

The sufferings borne by the least of our brothers and sisters continue to summon and challenge us as Church today. They continue to ask us to dare to be credible and authentic witnesses of the Gospel. They invite us not merely to preach acts of loving kindness but to do them. However, what we need is not merely more action, more doing for the sake of doing. No! What we need is a universal unity of love and togetherness. It is a togetherness that transcends all of our frontiers, the frontiers of our mind and of our heart, the frontiers of our creeds and doctrines, the frontiers of our ideas and concepts. This is a radical call to transcend all of those externals that keep us apart, that keep us separated and split.

The challenge for us today is to forget our own needs for love and happiness and to reach out in love to make someone else happy who may be in greater need. For whatever we do to the least of these needy children of God, these brothers and sisters of Jesus, we do to Jesus Himself. Hurtado did this in an exemplary manner and invites us to the same.

Will your faith like that of Hurtado show itself in action today?

**SEPTEMBER 2, BLESSED JAMES BONNAUD; JOSEPH IMBERT, JOHN NICHOLAS
CORDIER; THOMAS SITJAR**
Rom 8:35-39; Mt 10:16-22

James Julius Bonnaud was born in 1740 in Haiti. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1758 and taught in Brittany. He finished studying theology in Flanders and then returned to Paris and joined the diocese. He wrote tracts and booklets against the revolutionaries and their anti-papal Civil Constitutions, making himself a target for the revolutionaries.

As it progressed the French Revolution became rabidly anti-Catholic. Property was seized, religious orders suppressed. Priests were then required to sign an oath for a national church independent of Rome, with severe penalties for those who refused. Then on September 2, 1792, with invading the Prussians and Austrians near the gates of the city, the Paris Commissar decided to kill all priests. Among those martyred were James Bonnaud and 13 other Jesuits among 95 priests at a Carmelite friary. They were locked into a chapel and, those who refused to sign the oath, were thrown down a flight of stairs to a mob who attacked them with all kinds of weapons. Altogether 14 Jesuits were martyred. With James Bonnaud were: William Anthony Delfaud, Francis Balmain, Charles Berauld du Perou, Claude Cayx-Dumas, John Charton de Millou, James Friteyre-Durve, Claude Laporte, Mathurin Le Bous de Villeneuve, Claude Le Gue, Vincent Le Rousseau de Rosancoat, Loup Thomas-Bonnotte and Francis Vareilhe-Duteil.

He was beatified in 1926.

Joseph Imbert was born in 1720 in Marseilles, France. He entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Avignon. After his ordination in 1754, he taught in three different Jesuit Colleges and was in Grenoble when the Society of Jesus was suppressed in France in 1762. He joined the diocese of Moulins but was forced to relinquish his Parish when he refused to accept the 1790 Civil Constitution on the Clergy.

He continued to work clandestinely in France. He was appointed Vicar-Apostolic of the diocese when the Bishop was expelled. He then became a target of the authorities and was arrested in 1793. He was deported to Africa along with 24 other priests. He was imprisoned on the ship *Deux-Associés* that was anchored near a fortified island off the mouth of the river. Like many of the other prisoners he became sick because of the unhygienic and unhealthy conditions and died in 1794.

He was beatified in 1995.

John Nicholas Cordier was born near Souilly in the Duchy of Lorraine in 1710. He entered the Jesuit novitiate in Nancy in 1728 and after completing his philosophy at the University of Pont-a-

Mousson, he taught at colleges in Digon, Auxerre and Autun before returning to Pont-a-Mousson for theology and his doctorate.

After his ordination he taught philosophy at Strasbourg before going to Rheims as prefect of studies and subsequently as superior of the residence in Saint-Mihiel in the diocese of Verdun. With the suppression of the Society in Lorraine in 1786, Cordier remained in Saint-Mihiel as chaplain to a convent of nuns until 1790 when the government suppressed all religious orders in France.

He was arrested in 1793, and charged for being a refractory priest and ordered to be deported. He was imprisoned for six months before he was forced to join the convoy of priest-prisoners to Rochefort although he was only able to walk with great difficulty with the aid of a cane.

The Deux-Associés and the Washington (on which Cordier) never set sail because the English navy had successfully blockaded the French coast. They continued to be anchored at the Charente estuary. As the ships were former slave ships, conditions were extremely harsh. With overcrowding, cramped space and the fetid and asphyxiating air, no sanitation facilities and insufficient food and clean water, many suffered respiratory problems and serious illnesses, such as scurvy and typhus. Each night, two to three would die and taken by their fellow priests under guard, to nearby Ile d'Aix and buried in the sand. Prayers for the dead were forbidden.

Protests from the inhabitants of the island forced the movement of the two ships to the sparsely populated Ile Madame. The summer heat caused more to fall ill and a temporary hospital of marquees was erected on the island. Cordier was taken to this makeshift island hospital after he became ill and died there in 1794.

He was beatified along with Joseph Imbert in 1995.

Tomás Sitjar Forti, was born in 1866 in the city of Gerona. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1880. After completing his philosophy and before his ordination, he taught Philosophy for eight years at the diocesan seminary in Montevideo, Uruguay. He was ordained in 1900. He taught metaphysics to young Jesuits at Tortosa and later at Sarria for three years. He was then appointed superior at the residence at Terragona and then was appointed rector in Gandia

He was assassinated in Gandía Bianca Cruz at August 19, 1936 at the age of 70 years.

When the Spanish revolutionary government suppressed the Society in 1932, the Jesuits remained dispersed and lived in small apartments in the city. In 1936, he was arrested and imprisoned. When taken before their accusers and questioned which party he owed his allegiance to, Sitjar answered, "We belong to God's party."

He was executed in 1936 and died with his rosary in his hand.

Sitjar was beatified in 2001, together with 232 other victims of the Spanish Civil War.

The Gospel text for the feast is from the Mission Discourse of Matthew (10:1-42). The sayings found in Matthew's Mission Discourse here are found in the Eschatological Discourse of Mark (Mk 13:9-13). This is an indication that for Matthew, Mission is already eschatological. The punishment, which is referred to here is not random, but official punishment from members of organised authority. Even in this difficult situation the disciples are offered encouragement. They will depend not on their own strength, but on the Holy Spirit. They are to be missionaries even in the courtroom. Their imprisonment and trial must be regarded as an opportunity to make mission known. Mission takes priority even over family ties and if family ties have to be broken because of mission then so be it. The affirmation of the coming of the Son of Man is probably meant to provide succour to the missionaries in their distress.

Jesus is not calling us here to be sadists and look for suffering, persecution and pain. Rather he is challenging us to go about doing what we have to do, to be as prudent as possible about it and if despite that persecution, suffering and pain come, to be prepared and ready for it and not to be afraid.

How would you define “your” mission today? Are you engaging in mission?

SEPTEMBER 9, ST. PETER CLAVER
Isa 58:6-11; Jn 15:9-17

Peter Claver, was born in 1581 to a prosperous family in Verdu, Spain. He entered the Novitiate of the Society of Jesus in 1601 at the age of twenty. When he was in Majorca studying philosophy, Claver was encouraged by Alphonsus Rodriguez, the saintly doorkeeper of the college, to go to the missions in America. Claver listened, and in 1610 he landed in Cartagena, Colombia. After completing his studies in Bogotá, Peter was ordained in Cartagena in 1616.

Cartagena was one of two ports where slaves from Africa arrived to be sold in South America. Between the years 1616 and 1650, Peter Claver worked daily to minister to the needs of the 10,000 slaves who arrived each year.

When a ship arrived, Peter first begged for fruits, biscuits, or sweets to bring to the slaves. He then went on board with translators to bring his gifts as well as his skills as a doctor and teacher. Claver entered the holds of the ships and would not leave until every person received a measure of care. Peter gave short instruction in the Catholic faith and baptized as many as he could. In this way he could prevail on the slave owners to give humane treatment to fellow Christians. Peter Claver baptized more than 300,000 slaves by 1651, when he was sickened by the plague.

In the last years of his life Peter was too ill to leave his room. The ex-slave who was hired to care for him treated him cruelly, not feeding him many days, and never bathing him. Claver never complained. He was convinced that he deserved this treatment.

In 1654 Peter was anointed with the oil of the Sacrament of the Sick. When Cartagenians heard the news, they crowded into his room to see him for the last time. They treated Peter Claver's room as a shrine, and stripped it of everything but his bedclothes for mementos. Claver died September 7, 1654. He is the patron of African missions and of interracial justice, due to his work with slaves in Colombia.

St. Peter Claver was canonized in 1888.

The penultimate verse of the Gospel text of today, in which Jesus tells his disciples, "I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last", serves as an antidote to a selfish life and ensures that one will continue to live even after death as Peter Claver does.

The disciples can be fruitful primarily because the love which the Father has for Jesus is the same love that Jesus has shown for his disciples. It is a love that is unconditional, a love that is totally caring, a love that places the other before self and, a love without end. It is a love that is shown tangibly and in every action that Jesus performs. There is only one commandment that Jesus gives his disciples. That is the commandment of love. If the disciples keep this commandment, they will resemble Jesus, their master, who revealed God's love for the world tangibly, in the most perfect of ways, by willingly dying.

The disciples are indeed friends of Jesus, as has been manifested in their keeping his command to love. Jesus is not placing a condition for friendship here (you can be my friends only if...); rather, he is stating who the disciples are (because you are my friends, you do what I command). Keeping the commandment of Jesus is not a chore or burden but something done willingly because one has experienced his love first. The outcome of this sharing of love is unbounded joy.

As Jesus treats his disciples as his friends, he reveals to them all that they need to know. His primary revelation to them has been of God as a loving and compassionate Father. It is Jesus who has taken the initiative in calling and choosing the disciples and this fact reinforces the idea of grace. It is not one's effort that can earn discipleship but the grace of God which enables one to live out daily the call to discipleship. Jesus' self-emptying love points back to the self-emptying love expected of us. We are to love one another in the way he loved us.

However, this kind of self-emptying love does not always come easily, as today's first reading from Acts demonstrates. Initially, Peter was reluctant to have anything to do with Cornelius because he was a Roman centurion. However, he soon learned that, because God does not hold back from anyone his self-emptying and unconditional love. When genuine love was present, all distinctions of caste, creed, colour, and race disappeared, John reiterates this point in the second reading of today and goes even further. He states very clearly that it was not we who first loved, but God. God took the initiative and sent a part of himself, his son. It is in Jesus, the Son that love has its origin and finds its fulfilment.

Love is not just an emotion – but reality. As a matter of fact, the only reality is love. Fear, which is regarded as the opposite of love, is not real, it is only an illusion. If there is fear, there cannot be love, and where there is love, there is no fear (1 Jn 4:18). While Paul gives a beautiful definition of love in 1 Cor 13:1-9, my own definition of love is, I believe, simple, but not simplistic. "In love, there is no 'I'".

As love keeps giving, Jesus continues to give, even today. However, the giving is only one side of the story. Without a receiver, the gift has no value. This is why, while the grace of God given as a gift in Jesus is first, our reception of that gift is important. We show that we have received this gift when we, like Jesus, also dare to reach out in love. When we speak a comforting word, perform a loving action, behave less selfishly and more selflessly, then the gift is given and received, again and again.

Will you like Peter Claver receive the love of Jesus and share it with three persons today?

SEPTEMBER 10, BL. FRANCIS GARATE

Eph 6:10-18; Lk 14:1,7-11

Francisco Gárate Aranguren was born in 1857 in the Kingdom of Spain as the second of seven brothers. He was born near the Basilica where Saint Ignatius was born.

At the age of fourteen he left his home for domestic work in a Catholic college that had just been opened. In 1874 he decided to become a Jesuit and a lay brother in the Society. Along with two other companions, he travelled on foot to Poyanne in France to begin their novitiate.

He made his first and perpetual profession in 1876, and served as a Sacristan and infirmarian in the La Guardia college near the Atlantic Coast and spent a decade there. It was his first assigned task since he finished his novitiate. In March 1888 he was assigned to the Duesto College where he was Doorkeeper and Sacristan for over 41 years, till his death in 1929. In the performance of these duties he distinguished himself by his courteous ways (he was nicknamed Brother Courtesy), his welcoming and negotiating skill, his serenity, discretion, humility, detachment and union with God.

Gárate tended to ill students with great care and kindness while being attentive to their needs. He offered consolation and encouragement to students and was a wellspring of advice for all. He was also noted for his methods of simple living in terms of his room and his clothes and it even extended to the foods that he consumed.

His health started to fail in September 1929 when he began to suffer sharp abdominal pains following Mass. He agreed to remain in bed on the condition that he finish the remainder of his chores. He asked to be anointed that evening but his discomfort was so bad that a nurse called the doctor who had to operate on his blocked urethra. He had brief relief and despite the successful operation continued to decline. He died on the feast of St. Peter Claver.

His remains, initially buried in the local cemetery, were later transferred to the University of Deusto and placed in the pavement of its public chapel. He was beatified in 1985.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is from the Gospel of Luke (14:1, 7-11). Since the text includes 14:1, which spoke of a Sabbath setting, this text must be seen in that light. The text is set in the context of a meal, and contains instructions on behaviour to guests who were invited. Meals were important social ceremonies, and very little was left to chance. In his instructions, Jesus advocates what may be termed as practical humility, with words from Proverbs 25:6-7. It must be noticed that when the host asks the guest to move down from the place of honour, no term of address, respect or affection is used, whereas when the host invites the guest to move up, the guest is addressed as "friend". The future tense that is used in 14:11 ("will be humbled", "will be exalted") points beyond the immediate situation to the reversal of values that is

characteristic of the economy of God's kingdom. When one realises that God accepts one unconditionally, the result is practical humility.

Brother Garate practised this humility all through his life and even in his seemingly simple vocation and ministry won over thousands not so much by his word but by his actions. In his case, like in the case of his master Jesus, actions spoke louder than words.

Will your actions like that of Francisco Garate speak louder than your words?

SEPTEMBER 17, ST. ROBERT BELLARMINE

Wis 7:7-14; Mt 5:17-19

Robert Bellarmine was born in 1542 and entered the Society of Jesus in 1560 when he was 18 years old. His intellectual ability led him to earn a reputation as professor and preacher. His spiritual depth was so much that many lay people, Priests, Bishops and Cardinals flocked to him for solace and advice. He was available to all.

In 1592 he was made Rector of the Roman College, and in 1595 Provincial of Naples. In 1597 Clement VIII recalled him to Rome and made him his own theologian and likewise Examiner of Bishops and Consultor of the Holy Office. Further, in 1599 he made him Cardinal-Priest of the title of Santa Maria in viâ, alleging as his reason for this promotion that "the Church of God had not his equal in learning".

His spirit of prayer, his singular delicacy of conscience and freedom from sin, his spirit of humility and poverty, together with the disinterestedness which he displayed as much under the cardinal's robes as under the Jesuit's gown, his lavish charity to the poor, and his devotedness to work, had combined to impress those who knew him intimately with the feeling that he was of the number of the saints.

Among many activities, he became theologian to Pope Clement VIII, preparing two catechisms which have had great influence in the Church.

Bellarmino died in 1621. The process for his canonization was begun in 1627 but was delayed until 1930 for political reasons, stemming from his writings. In 1930, Pope Pius XI canonized him and the next year declared him a doctor of the Church.

The readings for the feast of this great Saint contain what are commonly known as the "theme" of the Sermon on the Mount. In these verses, the Matthean Jesus makes explicit that he is a law abiding Jew. His attitude towards the Jewish law is fundamentally positive. However, Jesus also makes explicit here, that he has come not merely to confirm or establish the law, but to fulfil or complete it. This means that he will go beyond a purely legal interpretation to a broader perspective. He will remove the focus from the mere external and concentrate on the internal. The focus will be more on the attitude than merely on the action. This was exactly the attitude that Robert Bellarmine possessed.

While laws, rules and regulations are necessary and help towards order, it is also possible that they can become ends in themselves and not as they are meant to be, means to an end. We might follow in some cases the letter of the law, but miss out on its spirit. We might even follow the rule or law only because we are afraid of getting caught and punished and not because we are convinced of it.

Do you sometimes allow rules to become ends in themselves? Will you recognize that they are means to an end?

OCTOBER 3, ST. FRANCIS BORGIA
Phil 3:8-14; Mk 10:42-45

Francis Borgia was born in 1510 in the Duchy of Gandía, Valencia, Spain. Although as a child he was very pious and wished to become a monk, his family sent him instead to the court of King Charles I of Spain. He distinguished himself there, accompanying the King on several campaigns.

He married Eleanor de Castro in 1529 and they had eight children. In 1539, shortly after experiencing a religious conversion, Francis left the court but continued in public life as viceroy of Catalonia. At this time under the influence of Peter of Alcántara and Peter Favre, he progressed in prayer and the spiritual life.

In 1543, Borgia succeeded his father as duke of Gandia, but when his wife died three years later he decided to become a Jesuit. He provided for his children and joined the society in 1550. While he preferred a quiet life of solitude, he was required by the Society to use his great administrative talents for the church and the Society.

In 1554, St. Ignatius appointed Borgia commissary for Spain, where he founded twelve colleges and a novitiate. He was elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus in 1565. His consolidation of the society and expansion of its ministry has caused him to be recognized as the second founder of the order. He established disciplined novitiates in every Jesuit province, writing regulations and books of spiritual instruction for them.

Borgia created a new Jesuit base in Poland and strengthened the community's work in Germany and France. Between 1566 and 1572 he launched the Jesuit mission to Spanish colonies in Florida, Mexico, and Peru. He maintained contact with Jesuits in distant lands by letter, advising them about their own spiritual lives and counselling them on strategy.

In 1571 the Pope sent Borgia to Spain and Portugal to help build an alliance with Rome. He grew increasingly ill on this embassy and died after returning to Rome in 1572.

He was beatified in 1624 and canonized in 1670.

The choice of the Gospel text from Mark in which Jesus instructs his disciples on his way of life is clearly chosen because Borgia lived out these instructions to the letter. In Jesus' way of looking, authority means service and the one who is leader is servant of all. The positions which are regarded as normal in the world are here reversed. Only those willing to serve others can hope to have a place of honour in the kingdom.

Here is the paradox of the kingdom of God. Instead of being lords, its great ones become servants, and its chiefs the bond-servants of all. One has only to watch the progress and present condition of things, to see that this state of things is coming to pass, but that it is yet far from

accomplishment; and furthermore, that in this respect at least, the field is the world, and not the church.

The Son of Man himself is not exempt from this rule. His kingship is also that of service, and not that of lordship. He is the Head of humanity, and yet he serves people and not the other way round. Thus the last verse of this section points to the Son of man who has come to show the way to the kingdom through his service.

The choice of this text for the feast of Francis Borgia is because he lived it out as Jesus wanted his disciples to do. Borgia never desired positions or titles and when he was conferred them, he used his authority like Jesus for humble and selfless service. In this he was not only a true Jesuit after the heart of Ignatius, but also a true disciple after the heart of Jesus.

If you were appointed Emperor of the Universe for a day, what three changes would you make in our world?

OCTOBER 12, BL. JOHN BEYZYM
Isa 40:1-5; Mk 16:15-20

Jan Beyzym was born in Poland - in what is now modern Ukraine - in 1850 as the eldest of five children. His father served as a freedom fighter and in 1863 was sentenced to death in absentia for his activities. He moved with his mother and siblings to Kiev and studied there from 1864 until 1871.

He completed his education in Kiev before deciding to pursue the religious life; he had thought of being a diocesan priest but his late father had moved him to learn about the Jesuits and pursue a path with them - he decided to join them after a long internal struggle.

Beyzym joined the Society of Jesus in 1872 at Stara Wies. During his novitiate there was a cholera epidemic and he received the permission of his superior to go out into the streets to tend to the ailing victims. He was ordained in 1881.

He served as a teacher after his ordination until 1898 at Jesuit boarding schools in both Tarnopol and Chyrów where he taught the French and Russian languages. His students knew him for his sense of humor. In 1898 he left his native land to join the Jesuit missions to lepers near Tananariwa in Madagascar with the permission of his superiors.

The first radical step that he took was to live with the lepers, something that no one else did. He also put his infirmity experience to work and began to provide medical attention to their sores. And he laboured to improve their houses, prepare food and secure adequate water. The government ration of rice was inadequate, so he went into the city and begged food for them. He fainted several times while tending to the lepers due to the horrible smells. In October 1902 he began to see the construction of a leper hospital at Marana and it was finished and inaugurated in 1911. He became a noted figure for his activism and collaboration with the lepers and became known for his intense devotion to both the Eucharist and the Mother of God while being known also as a lover of all nature.

The hospital stands today as a lasting monument to his dedication. He was a true pioneer at a time when no cure for leprosy was available and those afflicted with the disease were banished from society. He worked to change public attitudes, encouraged poor people to be generous with those who were even poorer and built hospitals to take care of the sick and, above all, to give them back a sense of dignity and hope.

Beyzym died in 1912; his health had declined and he suffered both arteriosclerosis and sores which confined him to bed. His remains were exhumed and relocated back to his native Poland on 8 December 1993 at a Jesuit church. Beyzym was beatified in 2002.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is from the longer ending of the Gospel of Mark and from the last verses of that ending. These verses begin with the risen Jesus commissioning his disciples to go out into the whole world and to all creation. This is an indication that the mission

of the disciples is not exclusive. All and everyone are included in that mission. The good news that God is unconditional love must be both preached and lived out.

The signs that will be associated with the disciples of Jesus and those who believe in him are an echo for the most part of the earthly ministry of Jesus. Like Jesus made people whole so the disciples will also do by their kind word and loving action.

Beyzym took this commission of the Lord to heart and spent his whole life in reaching out to those whom most would want to stay away from. Like his Lord Jesus before him, his kind heart and touch resulted in making so many well.

Will you speak a kind word and perform an enhancing action that will make at least one person whole today?

OCTOBER 19, STS. JOHN DE BREBEUF, ISAAC JOGUES AND COMPANIONS

Heb 11:1,35b-38; 12:1-2; Mt 16:21,24-28

Jean de Brébeuf, was born in 1593 in Condé-sur-Vire, Normandy, France.

He entered the Society of Jesus in 1617, was ordained priest in 1623, and arrived in New France in 1625. Assigned to work with the Huron Indians between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, he lived in danger of death until forced by the English to return to France in 1629. Back again in "Huron" in 1634, Brébeuf laboured for 15 years in primitive surroundings. He was a veteran of 18 missions when, in 1647, peace was made between the French and the Iroquois, who were competitors with the Hurons in the fur trade and their bitter enemies. The Iroquois, determined to destroy the Huron confederacy, continued their fierce war against the Hurons and in 1648-50 destroyed all villages and missions. They seized Brébeuf and his fellow missionary Gabriel Lalemant and tortured them to death near Saint-Ignace. Brébeuf endured stoning, slashing with knives, a collar of red-hot tomahawks, a "baptism" of scalding water, and burning at the stake. Because he showed no signs of pain, his heart was eaten by the Iroquois in the hope that they would imbibe some of his courage.

He was canonized with Lalemant and other Jesuits (the Martyrs of North America) in 1930.

Isaac Jogues was born in 1607, in Orléans, France, into a bourgeois family, where he was the fifth of nine children. He was educated at home until the age of ten, at which point he began attending Jesuit schools. In 1624, at the age of seventeen, he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Rouen in Northern France. As a Jesuit novice, he read enthralling letters from the missionaries in Ethiopia and the Indies. He was especially moved by the account of the martyrdom by fire of Carlo Spinola, SJ, in Japan in 1622. Thereafter Isaac Jogues always carried Spinola's picture with him. This also inspired Isaac's own desire to be sent to the missions. After his ordination in 1636, Isaac Jogues was assigned to be a missionary to the native peoples of New France (Canada).

In the eight years of his initial ministry, Jogues spent six with the Hurons and had considerable success with many conversions. Then in 1642 he was captured by the Mohawks and was brutally tortured. Jogues lost two of his fingers in the torture and spent 13 months as a slave. He was finally ransomed by Dutch merchants in Albany. He was given passage to New Amsterdam (New York) and then to France, where he landed absolutely destitute.

Through The Jesuit Relations, all of France had heard of Jogues' capture. Expecting to hear of his death, France instead witnessed the return of a living martyr. He was courted by royalty and could have remained and continued to be celebrated as a hero. But Jogues' principal concern was to receive canonical permission to celebrate the Mass in spite of his mutilated hands. This permission was given to him by Pope Urban VIII. At his first opportunity, Jogues returned to continue his work with the Mohawks.

At first Jogues was able to establish peaceful relations with the Mohawks; the Mohawks, however, considered him a sorcerer and blamed Jogues for the famine and disease that struck

their homes in 1646. They invited Jogues to visit them and crushed his skull with a tomahawk as he entered the chief's cabin. His head and that of his companion John de la Lande were placed on poles facing the trails on which they came.

Isaac Jogues was canonized as one of the eight North American Martyrs in 1930.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is from the Gospel of Matthew. The sayings in these verses are addressed exclusively to the disciples unlike in Mark where they are addressed to the crowds.

The phrase which begins the text "From that time" (16:21), marks a new beginning. There will be no ambiguity now since Jesus clearly states what is expected of his disciples. They are cautioned that following him will mean following him to the Cross and they must be prepared for this. The theological passive "must" (δεῖ) indicates the divinely decreed necessity that Jesus must suffer and die. Nevertheless it is planned by his opponents of their own free will and with their own malice for which they bear full responsibility. God's plan and human responsibility are not mutually exclusive. Jesus is aware of this plan. His announcement already anticipates what his destiny will be. The passive verbs show that it is not Jesus who is the acting agent but his opponents, or, in the final analysis, God. Jesus goes the way assigned him as God's obedient Son.

The instructions to the disciples begin with a call to deny self. This means a conscious decision to count the self as nothing and to regard the Lord as everything. Only after such a denial can the cross be carried as it ought to.

The disciple must be prepared to follow the Master and even to the cross if need be. This is the consequence of confessing Jesus as the Christ. The Son of Man has to suffer, but will also be vindicated by God.

The pronouncement "some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (16:28) has been variously interpreted. Some think it refers to the event of the Transfiguration, others think it refers to the Resurrection and still others that it refers to Pentecost. However, it seems that Matthew's community expected that the Parousia (the second coming of the Lord) would come soon, indeed before the death of some who belonged to the community, and so there are some who think that this pronouncement refers to the Second coming of the Lord.

While denial of self sounds nice to hear and sing in hymns, it requires grace from God if it is to be into practice. Jesus had to constantly overcome this temptation himself and challenges each of us through his words but also through the example that he gave on the cross.

Brébeuf, Jogues and their companions learned how to deny themselves which is why they were able to carry their crosses to the bitter end. They inspire us to do the same.

When the cross you are carrying becomes heavy to bear how do you respond?

OCTOBER 21, BL. DIEGO LUIS DE SAN VITORES AND PEDRO CASLUNGSOD

Wis 10:10-14; Jn 15:9-17

Diego Luis de San Vitores was born in 1627, into a noble family in Burgos, a city in the northern part of Spain. His father had been appointed the city treasurer and had received honours and titles from the king for his service; later he became one of the ministers of the Royal Treasury.

As a boy, Diego was pious. After entering the Jesuits School, he made known to his family that he wanted to join the Society of Jesus. Though initially opposed to the idea, his parents relented and let him fulfil his desire. He joined the Novitiate in 1640. He studied philosophy and theology in Alcalá de Henares and was ordained in 1651.

Despite his desire to be a missionary in China or Japan, he was asked to teach grammar at Oropesa and then tutored young Jesuits studying theology in Madrid. Finally the Jesuit Superior General, Goswin Nickel, assigned San Vitores to the Philippines missions in 1659.

San Vitores departed Cádiz, Spain in 1660 and sailed to Mexico where he waited 18 months before he could continue on to the Philippines. He busied himself in Mexico City giving missions and preaching in the streets as he had done in Alcalá. Once he arrived in the islands, he spent several months learning Tagalog and then became the master of novices and dean at Manila's university. During his five years in Manila, San Vitores also did missionary work in the interior of Luzon and on the island of Mindoro.

In 1664 he wrote to King Philip IV of Spain describing the missionary harvest that was waiting in the Ladrões, a group of islands about 900 miles northeast of the Philippines. San Vitores had stopped there on his way to Manila, and had seen the great potential of the islands. The king approved the new mission and asked San Vitores to lead it.

Work in the new mission began very smoothly partly because of a shipwrecked Spaniard whose friendship with several island leaders opened a path for the Jesuits who imitated the simple life of the natives by walking barefoot, eating frugal meals and wearing a garb made of matted fibers. After six months the Jesuits counted 13,000 people who had been baptized.

Trouble began in 1670 when Father Luis de Medina was martyred in Saipan, another of the islands in Las Marianas. San Vitores began to pray for the grace of martyrdom. In 1672, he set out with his companion Pedro Calonsor (Pedro Calungsod) to save a servant from what they considered a dissolute life. When the two men entered the village of Tumon, they encountered a man named Mata'pang who was one of the mission's first converts. Mata'pang's wife has just delivered a girl child and San Vitores wanted to baptise her as soon as possible. However, Mata'pang had been influenced by the medicine men who despised the missionaries. He was told that the water used at baptism was poisonous. He therefore threatened San Vitores with death if he did not leave the village. San Vitores left, but did not go too far away, because he

was determined to baptise the child. Later when Mata'pang found San Vitores and his companion Pedro Calungsod in the vicinity of the village, he began to throw spears without warning at Calungsod. Calungsod dodged many of the spears, and could have escaped, but because he did not want to leave San Vitores alone, he remained and was felled by a spear. He was then killed with a blow to the head. San Vitores realized his own end was imminent so he grabbed his crucifix and fell to his knees. A companion of Mata'pang struck San Vitores in the head, killing him instantly.

As San Vitores had lived, so he died -- with love and forgiveness in his heart and a prayer on his lips. He had realized his dream of martyrdom and those who knew and loved him everywhere shared the joy of his triumph. San Vitores remains, long after his death an inspiration of the mission just as he had been its founder. He is, in a real sense, then, not only the Apostle of the Marianas, but the Apostle of Micronesia. He was beatified in 1985.

Pedro Calungsod was born in 1654. Historical research, however, identifies Cebu as his birthplace. Few details of his early life prior to missionary work and death are known. It is probable that he received basic education at a Jesuit boarding school, mastering the Catechism and learning to communicate in Spanish. He likely honed his skills in drawing, painting, singing, acting, and carpentry as these were necessary in missionary work.

Calungsod, then around 14, was among the young catechists chosen to accompany the Jesuits in their mission to the Ladrone Islands. In 1668, Calungsod travelled with Spanish Jesuit missionaries to these islands, renamed the Marianas Islands (Las Islas de Mariana) the year before in honour of both the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Queen Regent of Spain, María Ana of Austria, who funded their voyage. Calungsod and San Vitores went to Guam to catechise the native Chamorros.

Trouble for the Jesuits began when a Chinese merchant named Choco began spreading rumours that the baptismal water used by missionaries was poisonous. As some sickly Chamorro infants who were baptised eventually died, many believed the story and held the missionaries responsible. Choco was readily supported by the macanjas (medicine men) and the urritaos (young males) who despised the missionaries.

In their search for a runaway companion named Esteban, Calungsod and San Vitores came to the village of Tumon, Guam in 1672. There they learnt that the wife of the village chief Mata'pang gave birth to a daughter, and they immediately went to baptise the child. Influenced by the calumnies of Choco, the chief strongly opposed; to give Mata'pang some time to calm down, the missionaries gathered the children and some adults of the village at the nearby shore and started chanting with them the tenets of the Catholic religion. They invited Mata'pang to join them, but he shouted back that he was angry with God and was fed up with Christian teachings.

Determined to kill the missionaries, Mata'pang went away and tried to enlist another villager, named Hirao, who was not a Christian. Hirao initially refused, mindful of the missionaries'

kindness towards the natives, but when Mata'pang branded him a coward, he became piqued and capitulated. Meanwhile, during that brief absence of Mata'pang from his hut, San Vitores and Calungsod baptised the baby girl, with the consent of her Christian mother.

When Mata'pang learnt of his daughter's baptism, he became even more furious. He violently hurled spears first at Pedro, who was able to dodge the spears. Witnesses claim that Calungsod could have escaped the attack, but did not want to leave San Vitores alone. Those who knew Calungsod personally meanwhile believed that he could have defeated the aggressors with weapons; San Vitores however banned his companions to carry arms. Calungsod was hit in the chest by a spear and he fell to the ground, then Hirao immediately charged towards him and finished him off with machete blow to the head. San Vitores absolved Calungsod before he too was killed.

He was beatified in 2000 and canonised in 2012.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is part of the Discourse on the Vine and the branches. Jesus uses, in the first verse of Chapter 15, a common symbol of the world at that time: Vine. The focus of the metaphor is interrelationship. If God is the vine dresser, Jesus is the vine and the disciples are the branches. All three are required for the production of fruit.

The interrelationship means that the love which the Father has for Jesus is the same love that Jesus has expressed and shown for his disciples. It is a love that is unconditional, a love without end. It is not merely a verbal expression, or an emotion, but a love that is shown tangibly and in every action that Jesus performs. The disciples have to act in the same manner as Jesus in order to make this love visible. There is only one commandment and that is the commandment to love. If the disciples keep this commandment, it will result in their being like Jesus, their master, who before them, revealed God's love for the world.

This love is expressed in the most perfect of ways in the willingness to go to one's death for the sake of a friend. The disciples are indeed friends of Jesus, as has been manifested in their keeping his command to love. It is important to note that Jesus is not placing a condition for friendship here (you can be my friends only if...); rather he is stating what and who the disciples are (because you are my friends, you do what I command).

The friendship that the disciples share with Jesus is grounded in love. This means that Jesus keeps back nothing from his disciples and reveals to them all that they need to know. His primary revelation to them has been of God as a loving and compassionate Father.

It is Jesus who has taken the initiative in calling and choosing the disciples and this fact reinforces the idea of grace. It is not one's effort that can earn discipleship but the grace of God which, when received, results in one living out the call to discipleship. The living out of the call is not merely a once for all act, but something that is done constantly and with perseverance. This will ensure that the effects of their love are abiding and lasting.

Keeping the commandment of Jesus is thus not a chore or burden but done willingly because one has experienced this love first. The outcome of this sharing and manifestation of love is unbounded joy.

The relationship that we share with God because of Jesus is one of sons and daughters. We are Jesus' brothers and sisters, even friends. This is because he has given us everything in all its fullness. He held nothing back, not even his own self. The manifestation of this self-giving, which began with the incarnation, was completed and continued on the cross, and through his resurrection and ascension. He continues to give, even today. However, the giving is only one side of the story. Without a receiver, the gift has no value. This is why, while the grace of God given as a gift in Jesus is first, our reception of that gift is as important if the act of giving is to be completed. We show that we have received this gift when we, like Jesus, also dare to reach out in love. When we speak an enhancing word, perform a loving action, behave a little less selfishly, and a little more selflessly, then the gift is given and received, again and again.

San Vitores and Calungsod experienced this love and wanted to share it with the whole world even it meant giving up their lives. Since they believed that that this gift of love was too precious to be kept to themselves, they went out of themselves to reveal it to others. As a result of this they paid with their lives, but for them it was merely a consequence of loving unconditionally.

How often has fear ruled your actions? Will you dare to act from love today?

Have you received Jesus' gift of unconditional love? Does this show in your sharing of that love?

OCTOBER 30, BL. DOMINIC COLLINS

Rom 8:35-39; Lk 12:4-9

Dominic Collins was born in the seaport town of Youghal, in County Cork, Ireland in 1566. His family was well established and respected and both his father and brother were mayors of Youghal. This was a time in Ireland when Catholics were being persecuted for their faith.

As he grew up, Collins realised that he would not have much of a future as a Catholic in his home town and decided to leave Ireland. He arrived in France at the age of twenty. He enlisted in the army of the Duke of Mercoeus, who was a member of the Catholic League. He had a distinguished military career lasting nine years. He was promoted to captain of the cavalry and later military governor.

In the Lent of 1598, he met an Irish Jesuit, Thomas White, who introduced him to the Jesuit superiors in Salamanca, Spain, after hearing Dominic's desire to do something better with his life. Although he was now 32 years old, the Jesuit Provincial thought it was wise to delay his entrance, perhaps to test the strength of his vocation. He was finally granted admission to the Society of Jesus and decided that he wanted to be a lay brother. He thus entered the Jesuit novitiate in Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain in December 1598 and took his first vows in February 1601.

Seven months later, Collins was assigned as companion and assistant to James Archer, an Irish Jesuit priest who was being sent by the king as chaplain to a Spanish expedition to assist Catholics in Ireland. When they reached Ireland in December of 1601, the English army had laid siege to the town. Some months later Collins found himself (Fr Archer had left for Spain to persuade the king to send reinforcements) besieged inside Dunboy Castle with 143 defenders. In the month of June 1602, the English forces began to attack the Dunboy Castle and the fortifications began to crumble under the heavy bombardment. With the exception of Collins and two others, all the remaining 77 defenders were executed in the castle yard.

Collins was later imprisoned in Cork and, despite several offers to spare his life if he would divulge information about Catholics and to renounce his vocation as a Jesuit and join the established Church, he flatly refused. He also rejected the offer of an honourable position in the English army and offers of ecclesiastical preferment if he would renounce his Catholic faith. Even his own relatives tried persuading him to renounce the faith publicly while inwardly remaining faithful to Catholicism. But this he would not do.

He was finally condemned to death in October 1602 and was taken to Youghal, his hometown and hanged. Before climbing the scaffold, he spoke to the crowd in Irish and English, saying he was happy to die for his faith. He was so cheerful that an English officer remarked, "He is going to his death as eagerly as I would go to a banquet." Bro Collins overheard him and replied, "For this cause I would be willing to die not one but a thousand deaths."

Collins together with sixteen other martyrs of Ireland, who died between 1579 and 1654, was beatified in 1992.

The Gospel text for the feast is one in which Jesus counsels his disciples to fearless conduct and confession in the face of persecution. Encouragement and warning are combined again. Fearlessness is recommended in persecution, and even in martyrdom. Loss of the life known to “the body” may cause fear; but it is nothing compared with that which one should have for him who has authority to hurl one into hell i.e. God himself. Disciples are not to fear loss of physical life at the hands of other human beings; they should rather fear the consequences of apostasy. The death of the loyal martyr is rewarded by God, who recognizes what the person stood for.

The God of Jesus and the disciples is a God who cares even for sparrows which can be bought cheap. If such is the case will he not care for the disciples and friends of his son? This is why there is absolutely no logical reason why the disciples must be afraid of any human being.

Loyalty to Jesus and all that he stands for is the crucial test of the true disciple. The genuine and true disciple will stand firm till the end.

It is easy to profess one’s faith in Jesus when one is not called to account for it. However, in the face of persecution and trials it can be challenging. These trials may be personal like the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, plans going awry and when the result that we expect does not come to pass. They can also be persecutions from without which can include standing up for truth and justice and for what one believes. It is at times like these that faith is truly tested.

Collins was able to stand up for his faith when it mattered. Will you do the same?

OCTOBER 31, ST. ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ
Eph 6:10-13,18; Lk 14:1,7-11

Alphonsus Rodriguez was born in Segovia, Spain in 1533. His father died when he was fourteen years old and he left school to help his mother to run the family business. He married at twenty-three and had a son, but his wife died in child birth. Within a few years his mother and son also died. Alphonsus interpreted these incidents as a message from God and prayed about what these events might mean.

He realised that he was being called to join the Society of Jesus and serve God and people through the Society. Though he was initially refused admission because he was not educated, he returned to Latin School and began his studies. He was admitted to the Society of Jesus in 1571 when he was thirty-eight years old. After his first and perpetual vows, he was sent to Montesione College on Majorca, where he served as doorkeeper for forty-five years.

Whenever a visitor rang the bell of the College, Alphonsus would go to admit the visitor with the words, "Yes, Lord I am coming". Legend has it that on one occasion Jesus and his mother Mary did actually appear to him.

His post allowed him to minister to many visitors. And he became spiritual adviser to many students. He exerted wide-reaching influence, most notably in guiding St. Peter Claver into his mission to the slaves.

In his old age, Alphonsus experienced no relief from his trials. The more he mortified himself, the more he seemed to be subject to spiritual dryness, vigorous temptations, and even diabolical assaults. In 1617 his body was ravaged with disease and he died at midnight, October 30.

The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89) summarized the life of Alphonsus in these words:

Yet God (that hews mountain and continent,
Earth, all, out; who, with trickling increment,
Veins violets and tall trees makes more and more)
Could crowd career with conquest while there went
Those years and years by without event
That in Majorca Alfonso watched the door.

The Gospel text chosen for the feast is from the Gospel of Luke and is set in the context of a meal. It contains instructions on behaviour to guests who were invited. Meals were important social ceremonies, and very little was left to chance. In his instructions, Jesus advocates what may be termed as practical humility, with words from Proverbs 25:6-7. It must be noticed that when the host asks the guest to move down from the place of honour, no term of address, respect or affection is used, whereas when the host invites the guest to move up, the guest is addressed as "friend". The future tense that is used in 14:11 ("will be humbled", "will be exalted")

points beyond the immediate situation to the reversal of values that is characteristic of the economy of God's kingdom.

When one realises that God accepts one unconditionally, the result is practical humility. This is what Alphonsus realised already in his life and now in his afterlife. Alphonsus was a man for whom humility was as natural as anything.

“What does it matter, my God, that I should endure for your love these small hardships? For you, Lord, endured so many great hardships for me.”

NOVEMBER 5, ALL SAINTS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS
Deut 30:9b-14; Jn 12:23-26

The Gospel text for the feast is from the Gospel of John. Jesus introduces teachings about his death with a brief agricultural parable. The seed imagery recalls the parables of sowing found in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 13:3-32; Mk 4:3-20, 26-32; Lk 8:5-15). Jesus uses the imagery here to interpret his own death.

The significance of this parable for understanding Jesus' death lies in the contrast between remaining solitary and "bearing much fruit". In John, "fruit" is Jesus' metaphor for the life of the community of faith. Jesus thus uses the seed parable to show that the salvific power of his death resides in the community that is gathered as a result of it (10:15-16; 11:51-52).

Jn 12:25 is one of the best-attested sayings of Jesus; in addition to this verse, some form of the saying occurs five times in the synoptic Gospels (Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mt 10:39; Lk 9:24; 17:33). While all of the occurrences share the basic pattern of an antithetical parallelism that highlights contrasting attitudes toward one's life, there are also significant differences among the sayings. The significant number of variations within the synoptic tradition and between the Synoptic Gospels and John argues for the authenticity or historicity of the saying. The differences point to the ways each evangelist adapted this saying of Jesus to serve his Gospel.

To love one's life is the opposite of Jesus' own action; it places one outside of the community shaped by Jesus' gift of his life (psyche) and leads to the loss of that life. To hate one's life in "this world" is to declare one's allegiance to Jesus (cf. 15:18-19) and so to receive his gift of eternal life (cf. 3:16; 6:40; 10:28; 17:2).

While the synoptic versions establish a condition for following Jesus ("taking up one's cross"), the Johannine version contains both condition and promise. Since Jesus' ultimate service is the gift of his life in love, he calls the disciples to love as he loves and hence to serve as he serves. What it means to be Jesus' servant will be enacted in the foot washing of 13:1-20.

The prime reason for the choice of the Gospel text is because all of those who are recognised as Saints and Blessed, became like the grain of wheat that was unafraid to fall into the ground and die. In doing so, they became like their Lord and master Jesus.

Will you die to self today and so become that grain of wheat which bears much fruit?

A Litany for the Feast of All Saints and Blessed of the Society of Jesus

Litany of the Saints and Blessed of the Society of Jesus

(in an expanded form of that used first by Jesuits in the concentration camp at Dachau)

Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy, Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us, Christ, graciously hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the World, Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Pray for us.

Holy Mary, Mother and Queen of our Society, Pray for us.

Holy Virgin of Montserrat, Pray for us.

Our Lady of the Way, Pray for us.

Holy Father Ignatius, Pray for us.

St. Francis Xavier, first companion and missionary, Pray for us.

St. Francis Borgia, model of renunciation, Pray for us.

St. Stanislaus Kostka, model and patron of novices, Pray for us.

Sts. Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell and companions, martyrs of Christ in England, Pray for us.

St. Aloysius Gonzaga and St. John Berchmans, models and patrons of our scholastics, Pray for us.

Sts. Paul Miki, James Kisai and John Soan de Goto, martyrs of Christ in Japan, Pray for us.

St. Peter Canisius and St. Robert Bellarmine, doctors of the church, Pray for us.

St. John Ogilvie, martyr of Christ in Scotland, Pray for us.

Sts. Bernardine Realino, John Francis Regis and Francis Jerome, missionaries to people in town and country, Pray for us.

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, model and patron of our brothers, Pray for us.

Sts. Melchior Grodziecki and Stephen Pongrácz, martyrs of Christ in Košice, Pray for us.

Sts. Roch Gonzalez, Alphonsus Rodriguez and John del Castillo, martyrs of Christ in Paraguay, Pray for us.

Sts. John de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues and companions, martyrs of Christ in North America, Pray for us.

St. Peter Claver, defender of the slaves in South America, Pray for us.

St. Andrew Bobola, martyr of Christ in Poland, Pray for us.

St. John de Brito, martyr of Christ in India, Pray for us.

St. Claude La Columbière, faithful friend and apostle of the Sacred Heart, Pray for us.

St. Joseph Pignatelli, hallowed link of the old and the restored Society, Pray for us.
Sts. Leo Mangin and companions, martyrs of Christ in China, Pray for us.
St. Joseph Rubio, apostle of Madrid, Pray for us.
St. Peter Faber, first companion and apostle of the Spiritual Exercises, Pray for us.
St. Joseph de Anchieta, apostle of Brazil, Pray for us.
St. James Berthieu, martyr of Christ in Madagascar, Pray for us.
St. Alberto Hurtado, agent of social change in Chile, Pray for us.

All you Saints of the Society of Jesus Pray for us.

Blessed Ignatius de Azevedo and companions, martyred while sailing for Brazil, Pray for us.
Bl. Thomas Woodhouse, Ralph Ashley and companions, martyrs of Christ in England, Pray for us.
Bl. Rudolph Acquaviva, Francis Aranha and companions, martyrs of Christ in India, Pray for us.
Bl. James Salès and William Saultemouche, martyrs of the Eucharist in France, Pray for us.
Bl. Charles Spinola, Sebastian Kimura and companions, martyrs of Christ in Japan Pray for us.
Bl. Dominic Collins, martyr of Christ in Ireland, Pray for us.
Bl. Diego Luis de San Vitores, martyr of Christ in Micronesia, Pray for us.
Bl. Julian Maunoir and Anthony Baldinucci, zealous preachers of God's Word, Pray for us.
Bl. James Bonnaud and companions, martyrs of Christ in France, Pray for us.
Bl. John Beyzym, servant of Lepers in Madagascar, Pray for us.
Bl. Miguel Pro, martyr of Christ in Mexico, Pray for us.
Bl. Francis Garate, humble doorkeeper who found God in all things, Pray for us.
Bl. Rupert Mayer, apostle of Munich and fearless witness of truth, Pray for us.
Bl. Tomás Sitjar Fortiá and companions, martyrs of Christ in Valencia Pray for us.

All you Blessed of the Society of Jesus, Pray for us.

Fathers and Brothers, Scholastics and Novices of the Society who have preceded us in the service of the Lord, Pray for us.

Let us pray:

Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, though we are sinners, you have called us to be his companions and to engage in the crucial struggle of our time, the struggle for faith, justice and love. Bring to completion in us the work you began in Ignatius and so many of his followers. Place us with your Son, as you placed them, and take us under the banner of the Cross to serve him alone and his Church.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

http://jesuitscentralsouthern.org/news-detail?TN=NEWS-20131102034847_a_a

**NOVEMBER 6, THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE DEPARTED OF THE SOCIETY OF
JESUS**

Rom 14:7-9,10b-12; Jn 6:37-40

Today the Society of Jesus celebrates the Feast of Jesuit Saints and Blessed, a day when we remember well-known and not-so-well-known Jesuits who lived out their Christian lives heroically. We may believe that the saints and blessed belong to a former age, but at the end of the millennium, Pope John Paul II commissioned a Martyrology for the 20th century, so that we might not forget the exemplary love of God and neighbour shown by so many 20th century Christian men and women. Jesuit provinces from around the world contributed the names of members who suffered and, in many cases, died for the faith during various persecutions.

Over three hundred names were gathered, including familiar names like Blessed Miguel Pro of Mexico, Fr. Alfred Delp of Nazi Germany, and Fr. Ignacio Ellacuria of El Salvador. Thirty Jesuits died in Nazi concentration camps, and almost fifty died at the hands of various Communist governments. In 1997 former Detroit Province Jesuit Thomas Gafney was murdered in India because of his stance against drug lords, and in 2001 Canadian Jesuit Martin Royackers was murdered in Jamaica, defending his parishioners from gang violence and political corruption.

Today we remember especially all those Jesuits persecuted for the sake of righteousness, and we pray that many more men will step forward and answer Christ's call to serve Our Lord in the Company of Ignatius Loyola.

Today's text begins with the last verse that was read yesterday in order to place what follows in context. Jesus has stated that he is the Bread of Life and he invites all who are willing to come to him to be fully satisfied. The words "seeing" and "believing", which appear at 6:36 and again at 6:40 form an inclusion. The crowd has seen and yet has not perceived. They have not seen rightly and thus, cannot come to faith. This lack of proper vision is surprising when one realizes that Jesus' primary purpose is not to hide but to reveal. He will welcome all who come to him. They will not be driven away. The purpose of his coming down from heaven is for the sake of revelation. This is the Father's will and Jesus will do only what the Father commissions him to do. The Father's will is inclusive and no one is to be excluded unless they want to exclude themselves. If one sees rightly and thus believes, what is gained is eternal life and resurrection on the last day. This promise combines both the present and the future.

These verses bring out powerfully the balance between divine initiative and human response. God takes the first step and remains open to anyone who is willing to come and receive the gifts that he wants to pour out. However, there will not be any coercion or pressure on the part of God. Those who come to receive from him must come freely and without reservation. The gift is ever available and free. It is not for a select few but for all.

What is preventing you from receiving the gifts that Jesus gives?

NOVEMBER 13, ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA
2 Pet 1:2-11; Lk 2:41-51

Stanislaus Kostka was born at the castle of Rostkovo (Rostkow) in Poland into a noble and wealthy family in 1550. He received his early education from a private tutor and then was sent, with his older brother Paul, to the Jesuit College in Vienna where he studied from 1564 to 1567. He endured some bullying from his brother as well some misunderstandings with the tutor who accompanied the two boys.

At first, the two boys were boarders in the Jesuit residence at the college but, after seven months, moved to the house of Senator Kimberker. Kimberker was a strict Lutheran who would not allow a Catholic priest into his house. This became an issue when Stanislaus unexpectedly fell ill in mid-December 1565. The boy kept asking for Holy Communion but his brother tried to deter him. Stanislaus prayed to the patron of the sodality to which he belonged, St. Barbara, to intercede with God so he could receive Communion before he died. He then had a mystical experience of Mary visiting him and placing the Christ Child in Stanislaus' arms. Stanislaus understood this as a sign that he was to enter the Society of Jesus.

When he had recovered, he went to the Jesuit provincial in Vienna asking to join the Order. The Provincial was favourable, provided Stanislaus had his parents' approval, something he knew his parents would not give. It was then suggested that Stanislaus go to Augsburg in Germany and ask Peter Canisius, the Provincial there, to accept him.

Stanislaus walked more than 700 kms to Augsburg. Once he reached there, he was informed that Canisius was in Dillingen which was a day's walk from Augsburg. When he reached Dillingen and met Canisius, the latter realised the seriousness of Stanislaus and agreed to accept him after testing him with some menial work. He also arranged for Stanislaus to join two young Jesuits on their way to Rome. It was felt that Stanislaus would be safer from his family in faraway Rome than in nearby Germany.

In late September, Stanislaus and the two Jesuits set off by foot and arrived in Rome in October 1567, where they made their way to the residence of the superior general, Francis Borgia. Borgia had Stanislaus remain at the Gesu residence in Rome for three months before he went to the Roman College and then to the Sant' Andrea novitiate. Stanislaus was just 17 years of age when he joined the Novitiate.

In early August 1568 he had a sense that he had not much longer to live. He developed a fever but the brother infirmarian did not think it was serious and that the boy's fears were unjustified. On 14 August Stanislaus told the infirmarian he would die the next day but again the remark was not taken seriously. Later that day he took a turn for the worse and lost all his strength. He was anointed and prayed with the novices and other Jesuits who were by his bedside. About three o'clock on the morning of the feast of our Lady's Assumption on 15 August, he announced that

Mary was approaching with angels to take him to heaven and soon died. He had been a novice for only about 10 months.

Stanislaus was beatified in 1605 and canonized in 1726. He is the patron saint of Jesuit Novices.

He is remembered for his generosity of heart and, though young in years, for sanctity beyond his years and an iron determination to follow God's call despite numerous challenges.

The choice of the Gospel text which is the only incident narrated by an evangelist in the youth of Jesus is because Stanislaus was a youth and also because of his one pointedness and focus on his Lord which resembled that of Jesus.

'The finding in the Temple' as the incident is referred to is found only in the Gospel of Luke and forms part of Luke's Infancy narrative. It begins by informing us of the tradition followed by Jesus' parents of going up to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover. That they did this regularly seeks to explicate that they were more than law abiding Jews. In New Testament times Passover was one of the pilgrim feasts, when male Jews from other parts of Palestine were expected to make their way to Jerusalem for its observance. Though at twelve years of age Jesus would not be obliged to do this, the fact that he along with Mary accompanied Joseph is in preparation for what is to come.

The family would have stayed in Jerusalem for seven or eight days after which they would have returned home. Luke does not mention how Jesus may have been separated from his parents, but tries to explain it later. The phrase 'after three days,' is used often in Luke as an ordinary designation of time and does not seem to have any reference to the resurrection. When referring to the resurrection, Luke uses the phrase 'on the third day' (9:22; 18:33; 24:7,21,46). The parents of Jesus find him in the Temple where he is sitting not so much as teacher but as student. Here Jesus is depicted as an avid learner desirous to learn by asking questions. To be sure, his questions would have stunned the teachers who would have been amazed at his understanding and comprehension. Jesus' responses would have been penetrating.

On finding Jesus in the Temple, his parents react with hurt. There is also a hint or reproach in the reaction of Mary through the question that she asks of Jesus. Jesus responds to both Joseph and Mary by asking a counter question. This is meant to get them to realise who he is and what his mission will be. Jesus' place is in his 'Father's house' and doing the work of his father. This is where he is always found.

From a very early age, Stanislaus also knew what he was called to do by God. This is why no matter what obstacles and challenges he faced, he overcame all of them to do what he believed was God's will for him. In this he imitated his Lord. It did not matter that he did not live many years on this earth, what mattered was that every one of those years was lived for the Lord.

What do you think God is calling you to do? How will you go about doing this?

NOVEMBER 14, ST. JOSEPH PIGNATELLI
2 Cor 4:7-15; Mt 10:16-23

Joseph Pignatelli was born of a Spanish mother and a father who was an Italian noble in 1737 in Saragossa (Zaragoza) in north-eastern Spain, about half way between Madrid and Barcelona. When his mother died in 1743, his father moved the family to Naples. Four years later his father died. In 1749, at the age of 12, he returned to Saragossa and went to the Jesuit College there. He lived in the Jesuit community house.

He joined the Society of Jesus in 1752 at Tarragona, and went through the normal formation programme of philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest in 1762 and spent the next four-and-a-half years in Saragossa doing pastoral work, including teaching grammar to young boys and visiting the local prison ministering to prisoners awaiting execution.

In 1767, King Charles III of Spain expelled the Jesuits from his territory and seized their property. Overnight 5,000 Jesuits lost everything and were left without a roof over their heads. Pignatelli might have used his aristocratic background to stay on in Spain but he chose to go with his Jesuit brothers into exile.

The elderly superior at Saragossa, anticipating the difficulties ahead, passed his authority to Pignatelli. On arriving in Tarragona, the Saragossa Jesuits found other Jesuits also waiting to be deported. Among them was the Provincial superior, who also passed his authority on to Pignatelli, in effect, making him superior of 600 or so Jesuits.

When Clement XIV suppressed the Society of Jesus in 1773, around 23,000 Jesuits were left with nothing. Since the professed Jesuits were not bound by their vows, some decided to leave the Society. Pignatelli, however, remained. He moved to Bologna and from there maintained contact with his fellow Jesuit brothers scattered in many places.

Though the Society was almost universally suppressed, Catherine the Great of Russia had not allowed the papal brief to be promulgated in her territories. This meant that, technically, the Society of Jesus continued to exist in White Russia. Pignatelli wrote to the Jesuit Provincial there asking to be re-admitted to the Society. Then Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, also wanted to have Jesuits in his territory and began negotiating with the Jesuits in Russia. In 1793, three Jesuits went to set up a Jesuit community in the Duchy. Pignatelli became a member of this group and in 1797, at the age of 60, again pronounced his vows as a Jesuit. Two years later, he became the Novice Master at Colorno, the only Jesuit novitiate in Western Europe at the time.

In 1803 the Russian superior named Pignatelli as Provincial Superior of Italy, although the Society was still suppressed in most of the country (including the Papal States). After 40 years of a life in exile, Joseph was full of hope that the Society would be fully restored, even though he might not live to see it.

During the last two years of his life, his health deteriorated and he suffered from haemorrhages, perhaps caused by stomach ulcers. In October 1811 he was confined to his bed and died peacefully about a month later when in his 74th year. Just three years later, in 1814, Pope Pius VII fully restored the Society of Jesus.

He was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1954.

Joseph Pignatelli is remembered for his kindness, humility, gracious manner, as well as for his undaunted courage in keeping his exiled companions united in spirit. He is, in some respects, almost regarded a second founder of the Order.

The Gospel text for the fest is from the Mission Discourse (10:1-42) of the Gospel of Matthew. The sayings found here are found in the Eschatological Discourse of Mark (Mk 13:9-13). This is an indication that for Matthew, Mission is already eschatological.

The punishment, which is referred to here, is not random, but official punishment from members of organised authority. Even in this difficult situation the disciples are offered encouragement. They will depend not on their own strength, but on the Holy Spirit. They are to be missionaries even in the courtroom. Their imprisonment and trial must be regarded as an opportunity to make mission known. Mission takes priority even over family ties and if family ties have to be broken because of mission then so be it. The affirmation of the coming of the Son of Man is probably meant to provide succour to the missionaries in their distress.

Jesus is not calling us here to be sadists and look for suffering, persecution and pain. Rather he is challenging us to go about doing what we have to do, to be as prudent as possible about it and if despite that persecution, suffering and pain come, to be prepared and ready for it and not to be afraid.

Joseph Pignatelli who is regarded as the Apostle of the ruins of the Society truly understood the meaning of Jesus' words here. He realised that any kind of persecution was only a step toward victory. He would surely have taken consolation in the words of Jesus that the Spirit would indeed guide and act at the most difficult of times. He endured and persevered and truly the Jesuits had not gone through all the towns of Israel before the Society was restored.

Will you like Pignatelli persevere even in the most challenging situation?

**NOVEMBER 16, STS.ROCH GONZALEZ, ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ AND JOHN DEL
CASTILLO**

Phil 2:12-18; Jn 15:18-21; 16:1-3

Roch Gonzalez was born in Paraguay's capital city of Asuncion in 1576. As a young man he studied with the Jesuits but became a diocesan priest. His first assignment was to work with native peoples near Asuncion. He did this so well that the bishop made him Pastor of the Cathedral. In 1609, at the age of 33, he joined the Society of Jesus. While still a novice he was sent to work with the Guarani people, who lived along the Paraguay and Pilcomayao Rivers. Gonzalez became fluent in the language and could preach effectively. Although baptisms were few, the people became friendlier and stopped making attacks on Asuncion.

After spending two years in this mission, he was transferred in 1611 to the St Ignatius Mission which did very well under his pastoral care. These missions were known as "Reductions" because their idea was to bring people to live together in towns. In St Ignatius, Gonzalez laid out a public square, supervised the building of houses, set up a school and built a church. In addition to providing living space, he also taught them how to farm and to raise sheep and cattle. And he continued preaching the Gospel illustrating its message with colour, music and processions.

In 1619 he was the first Jesuit to enter what is now Uruguay, when a chief from there asked Gonzalez to set up a similar Reduction for his people. The invitation was accepted and in 1620 the town of Concepcion (in honour of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception) was founded. Later he set up other missions, including Candelaria, and the Assumption Mission at Iyui, a village of 400 people. He put Juan del Castillo, a recently ordained Jesuit in charge of it. Then, in the company of another Jesuit, Alfonso Rodriguez, he set out for Caaro to set up a new mission.

They arrived in 1628 and called the new mission All Saints. Their preaching and constructive work brought them into conflict with Nezu, the local religious leader, who resented the influence of the missionaries which he felt threatened his own. He decided to get rid of them. As Gonzalez was leaving the chapel one morning after Mass, he went to help some men setting up a bell. As he bent down, some of Nezu's men split the priest's head open with an axe. When Rodriguez came out to investigate, he, too, was struck down. The bodies of the two priests were thrown into the chapel which was set on fire. It was 15 November 1628.

Alphonsus Rodriguez was born in Zamora, Spain, in 1598 and arrived at the Latin American mission in 1616 as a scholastic and, after studies at Cordoba, Argentina, was ordained priest in 1625. He was sent with Juan del Castillo to work as a missionary under Roque Gonzalez. He was Gonzalez' companion to set up the new mission at Caaro where they came in conflict with the local religious leader and were both killed.

John del Castillo was born in Belmonte, Spain, in 1596. He began studying law but then joined the Society of Jesus and became a missionary to Latin America while still a scholastic and, like Rodriguez, studied theology at Cordoba and. He was ordained in 1625. His first missionary

assignment was to Itapua, where Fr Roque Gonzalez found him and took him along to found several new missions.

He was put in charge of a mission at Iyui, named Assumption since it had been founded on August 15, while Gonzalez set off with Alfonso Rodríguez to Caaro. The day after the murder of Gonzalez and Rodriguez, a number of Nezu's supporters went to Iyui. They attacked del Castillo before taking him into the jungle where he was beaten to death and his body set on fire. His remains were later recovered and buried together with his two companions.

These three were canonized in 1988. Gonzalez is the first native-born person from any of the Americas to be canonised as a saint.

They are remembered for their missionary zeal and their fortitude in defending the indigenous peoples against oppressors.

The Gospel text for the feast is from part of the Discourse on the Vine and Branches. These verses focus not on the relationship of Jesus and the disciples, like the earlier verses did, but on the relationship of the disciples with the "world". Here, the word "world" is used to represent, not the physical world, but those who are opposed to God's revelation in Jesus.

The challenge of love will be truly encountered when the community faces the "world". The "world" will hate the disciples because of their relationship with Jesus and because they live out his teachings. If the disciples want the world to love them, they must give up the teachings of Jesus. However, because they have been chosen by Jesus and set apart from the "world", they too, like Jesus, will have to endure the "world's" hatred.

The disciples must realize that following and obeying Jesus, as servants obey their masters, will lead to persecution. What has happened with Jesus will be repeated in the disciples' lives. While the authority of the one sent is the same as the sender, it is also true that the response to the one sent will be the same as the response to the sender. Those who do not accept the word of truth, spoken by God in Jesus, will indulge in persecution. Those who accept the word will respond by living out that word in their lives. Rejection of the disciples means rejection of Jesus because it is Jesus who sends them. Rejection of Jesus means rejection of God who sent him.

Because of this work of Jesus, the disciples will have to face persecution from those who do not accept them. As a matter of fact, those who engage in such persecution will think they are right and, by so persecuting the disciples, will think they are, in effect, worshipping God. This is because they have not understood the meaning of the incarnation and so, have not been able to recognize God's unconditional and gratuitous love made manifest in Jesus. Jesus predicts these happenings, to both prepare the disciples in advance for what is to come and also, to warn them about the consequences of following him. Their perseverance and standing firm, even in the midst of persecution, will reveal their love for him and the Father and will be the tangible expression of their faith.

Believing in Jesus is not easy. It is one thing to verbally profess faith in him and another to live out all that he taught and did. It is especially difficult to follow him when things do not go the way we want them to and when things happen contrary to our expectations. When those to whom we are good repay us with goodness, we are not surprised, because we expect them to do just that. However, when those to whom we have reached out in love are ungrateful and sometimes openly hostile to us, we get shocked at their behaviour, simply because we did not expect them to react in that way. It is at times like these that we must remember the predictions of Jesus made here. His love for the world, shown in the most tangible manner on the cross, was spurned by most of his contemporaries, yet that same love continues to be made new, even today, two thousand years later. We, too, are called not to fall away but to persevere in love.

Will you like Roque Gonzalez and his companions persevere in love today? When you are repaid with ingratitude for your kindness, will you continue to love?

NOVEMBER 23, BL. MIGUEL AUGUSTIN PRO
Acts 5:27b-32,40-41; Mt 10:16-25

Miguel Augustin Pro was born in 1891 in Guadalupe, Mexico, one of eleven children of a mining engineer. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1911; a year after a persecution had begun in Mexico. The Jesuit novices were sent to study in other countries, and Miguel was ordained in Belgium in 1925.

The Provincial sent Pro to Mexico City in 1926, hoping a return home might relieve the priest's chronic stomach ailment from which he suffered much. A few days after Pro arrived in Mexico City; President Calles banned all public worship. Since he was not known as a priest, Pro went about clandestinely—sometimes in disguise—celebrating Mass, distributing communion, hearing confessions, and anointing the sick. He also did as much as he could to relieve the material suffering of the poor. His quick thinking and pranks helped him in many narrow escapes.

In 1927, an assassination attempt was made on a Mexican general. A bomb was thrown from a car that had once belonged to one of Pro's brothers. Police arrested Pro and his two younger brothers. When the man behind the plot heard that Pro had been arrested, he confessed. But to teach Catholics a lesson, with no witnesses and no trial, Pro and his two brothers were condemned to death by officials. One of the officers who had captured Pro led him out of jail to be executed. He begged Pro to forgive him. Pro put his arm around him and said, "You have not only my forgiveness but my thanks." He also softly told the firing squad, "May God forgive you all." Then with arms spread as if on a cross, Father Pro shouted, "Long live Christ the King!" before a bullet silenced him. Although the real criminal and one of Miguel's brothers were also shot, the other brother was pardoned at the last moment. Despite the government's ban on a public funeral, thousands came to Pro's wake.

Pro was beatified in 1988.

The sayings found in Matthew's Mission Discourse here are found in the Eschatological Discourse of Mark (Mk 13:9-13). This is an indication that for Matthew, Mission is already eschatological.

The punishment, which is referred to here is not random, but official punishment from members of organised authority. Even in this difficult situation the disciples are offered encouragement. They will depend not on their own strength, but on the Holy Spirit. They are to be missionaries even in the courtroom. Their imprisonment and trial must be regarded as an opportunity to make mission known. Mission takes priority even over family ties and if family ties have to be broken because of mission then so be it. The affirmation of the coming of the Son of Man is probably meant to provide succour to the missionaries in their distress.

Jesus is not calling us here to be sadists and look for suffering, persecution and pain. Rather he is challenging us to go about doing what we have to do, to be as prudent as possible about it

and if despite that persecution, suffering and pain come, to be prepared and ready for it and not to be afraid.

A parallel is then drawn between the disciples who are sent by Jesus and Jesus himself. The disciples will share the same fate as their master. His response to negative assessment of his mission was equanimity and this must be the response of the disciples' as well. They must not retaliate, but continue to persevere in the firm hope that they will eventually succeed. They are asked to be fearless in mission.

Jesus' suffering is the basic model for the fate of his disciples. It originates in the mission he gives them; everything Jesus says to the disciples in this discourse becomes understandable in terms of his own way. Of special importance is the element of comfort the entire story of Jesus brings to the disciples' suffering. It takes place not only in the master's footsteps; it stands at the same time under the perspective of his own resurrection.

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. What do you make of this statement? Do you give up or give in when difficulties come your way? Do you throw up your hands in despair? Will you continue to persevere like Miguel Pro and trust today?

NOVEMBER 26, ST. JOHN BERCHMANS

Phil 4:4-9; Lk 9:57-62

John Berchmans was born in 1599, in the city of Diest situated in what is now the Belgian Province of Flemish Brabant, the son of a shoemaker. He was the oldest of five children and at baptism was named John in honour of St. John the Baptist. He grew up in an atmosphere of political turmoil caused by religious wars. When he was nine years old, his mother was stricken with a serious illness. John spent several hours each day by her bedside.

He studied at the Gymnasium (grammar school) at Diest and worked as a servant in the household of Canon John Froymont at Malines in order to continue his studies. John also often made pilgrimages to the Marian shrine of Scherpenheuvel.

In 1615, the Jesuits opened a college at Malines (Mechelen) and Berchmans was one of the first to enrol. Immediately upon entering, he enrolled in the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin. When he wrote his parents that he wished to join the Society of Jesus, his father hurried to Malines to dissuade him and sent him to the Franciscan convent in Malines. At the convent, a friar who was related to him, also attempted to change his mind. Finally as a last resort, John's father told him that he would end all financial support if he continued with his plan.

Nevertheless, in 1616, John Berchmans entered the Society of Jesus as a Novice. He was affable, kind, and endowed with an outgoing personality that endeared him to everyone. He requested that after ordination as a priest he could become a chaplain in the army, hoping to be martyred on the battlefield.

On 25 September 1618, he made his first vows and went to Antwerp to begin studying of philosophy. After only a few weeks, he was sent to Rome, where he was to continue the same study. He set out on foot, with his belongings on his back, and on arrival was admitted to the Roman College to begin two years of study. He entered his third-year class in philosophy in the year 1621.

Later, in August 1621, the prefect of studies selected Berchmans to participate in a discussion of philosophy at the Greek College, which at the time was administered by the Dominicans. John opened the discussion with great clarity and profoundness, but after returning to his own quarters, was seized with a fever. His lungs became inflamed and his strength diminished rapidly. He succumbed to dysentery and fever on 13 August 1621, at the age of twenty-two. When he died, a large crowd gathered for several days to view his remains before burial in Sant'Ignazio Church, and to invoke his intercession. That same year, Phillip-Charles, Duke of Aarschot, sent a petition to Pope Gregory XV with a view to beginning the process leading to the beatification of John Berchmans.

He was beatified in 1865 and canonised in 1888. He is regarded as the patron of altar servers because of his love for the Eucharist.

The text for the feast is from the beginning of the Travel narrative of Luke. Luke begins by stating that Jesus set his face resolutely toward Jerusalem. This means that nothing and no one will deter him from this destination. The same could be said of John Berchmans who was determined to serve God as a Jesuit and no one could deter him from this destination.

While part of this text is found also in Matthew, the latter part (9:60b-62) is exclusive to Luke. It concerns the would-be followers of Jesus, and Jesus' warnings about what discipleship will entail.

To the first would-be follower who promises to follow Jesus wherever he goes, Jesus responds by stating clearly that unlike even the foxes that at least have holes, he does not have anywhere he can call his own. If the would-be follower is ready for this insecurity, he may follow.

The second person is called to follow by Jesus, but responds by asking for permission to bury his father. This was a duty that was binding on all devout Jews. Jesus' response is harsh and demands that the disciple be primarily concerned about the kingdom.

The third would-be follower puts conditions to his following namely that he wants to say farewell to his family. However, here too the response of Jesus is clear. Looking back while ploughing leads to a crooked furrow.

While it is not necessary to give up the state of life one has chosen in order to follow Jesus, what is to be understood is that following will necessarily mean changing one's style of life. It will mean a move from selfishness to selflessness, from acquiring material possessions to sharing them with others and from anything negative to everything that is positive.

John Berchmans made no excuses whatever once he had decided to follow Jesus. Every obstacle could be overcome, every difficulty could be bested and every challenge could be surpassed.

What is preventing you from following Jesus unconditionally? What will you do about it today?

NOVEMBER 29, BL. BERNARD FRANCIS DE HOYOS
1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 11:25-27

Bernard was born in 1711 at Torrelobaton, near Valladolid, Spain. He attended the Jesuit school in Medina del Campo in 1721 and a year later entered their school at Villagarcia. As the Jesuit novitiate was next door, he applied for admission after obtaining his widowed mother's reluctant permission. However, Bernard would not be deterred. He continued to pray that he would be accepted by the Society as one of its members. His prayer was answered before he was fifteen. He entered the novitiate on July 11, 1726. He was given many extraordinary graces and favours soon after joining as he would receive mystical experiences in which Christ and Our Lady and the saints appeared to him throughout his short life on earth.

He pronounced his first and perpetual vows in 1728 and was sent to Medina del Campo to begin his philosophy. After completing his philosophy studies, he was sent to St. Ambrose College in Valladolid for his theology. Bernard's extraordinary graces never interfered with his studies and few people knew that he had been so blessed by God as he led a life of a typical Jesuit scholastic, totally given to his studies.

In May 1733, a remarkable change took place in Bernard's life when a Jesuit friend from Bilbao asked him to translate Fr Joseph de Galifet's book on the portion "On Devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus". It dealt with the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi and the friend needed it for a sermon. Bernard borrowed the book from the library and began reading it on May 3. It proved very inspiring and he felt an extraordinary and irresistible impulse to go and pray before the Blessed Sacrament and to offer himself to help spread the devotion to Jesus' Sacred Heart. He later wrote to his spiritual director about this. The following day as Bernard's desire grew; Jesus appeared to him telling him that he had been chosen him to be the one to propagate the Sacred Heart devotion in Spain. The Lord continued to appear to him for several days to reveal to him the treasures of his heart as he had previously done to Margaret Mary Alacoque. Jesus assured Bernard that He would be his guide in the mission.

From then on, Bernard's total concern was in propagating this devotion. He asked priests assigned to parish missions to preach on Christ's Sacred Heart and introduced the Sodality of the Sacred Heart into Spain and other cities. He wrote to the king and bishops, requesting them to petition the Holy See to extend the Office of the Sacred Heart to Spain. He published *The Hidden Treasures*, a book on the Sacred Heart and sent copies to members of Spain's royal family, nobility and to all bishops and higher ecclesiastics. Bernard did all these in parallel with his studies. When it was time for his class to be ordained, Bernard was below the required canonical age of twenty-four but a dispensation was obtained and he was ordained on Jan 2, 1735.

Hoyos began his tertianship in 1735 in Valladolid and shortly after finishing his thirty-day retreat, he contracted typhoid. His frequent prayer during his illness was: "Oh, how good it is to dwell in the Heart of Jesus." He spoke of the Sacred Heart even in his moments of delirium. As his condition worsened, he was anointed on and was able to respond to the prayers. Then he closed his eyes and with a smile on his face he left this world to go to the Father.

He had been a priest for less than a year and never had the opportunity to preach a mission on the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Nevertheless, he is now acknowledged as Spain's first "Apostle of the Sacred Heart."

He was beatified in 2010.

The text for the feast of Hoyos is from the Gospel of Matthew. To understand it fully, two points must be kept in mind. The first is that it is placed by Matthew after three "negative" passages which begin at 11:2. These are the response of Jesus to the disciples of John the Baptist to their question whether Jesus was the Messiah, the exasperation with the crowd who do not recognize John nor Jesus, and the denunciation of the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. Indeed, this entire section of Matthew's Gospel seems to lean on a sense of apparent "failure" on the part of Jesus to measure up to the expectations that all around him had in terms of what a "Messiah" would look like or act like.

The second point is that this text is clearly a Matthean composition and is made of three elements. The first two of these are found in Luke but in different contexts and the third is exclusive to Matthew. In Matthew the audience is clearly the crowds and so the words of Jesus here are meant for all.

The passage appearing as it does in this context seeks to state that despite so much of doubt and negativity, that despite so much of blindness and closed attitudes, this is not the last word. Despite the fact that Jesus' message has been questioned by John the Baptist, rejected by many and especially the wise and understanding and not paid heed to by the cities, yet the invitation and message will find acceptance among the open and receptive of which there are still some left. There is no arbitrariness in this. Rather, it is simply true that for the most part the wise tend to become proud and self-sufficient in their wisdom and particularly unreceptive regarding the new and the unexpected. This is because they have already made up their minds about what kind of Messiah is to come. On the other hand the childlike are most often unself-conscious, open, dependent, and receptive. They are willing to let God work in their lives. They have not decided in advance how God must act and are willing to let God be God. Thus everything comes down finally to the person of Jesus and the nature of the fulfilment he brings. He cannot be understood if he is restricted to preconceived categories; he will not conform to

human conceptual frameworks. He must be understood as God knows him, as the one who on behalf of the Father always does his will.

Hoyos had a childlike faith in the Sacred Heart which never wavered even when he was ill. He believed that God in Jesus would always act for his good and for God's glory.

Has pride come in the way of your encountering Jesus? What will you do about it today?

DECEMBER 1, STS. EDMUND CAMPION, ROBERT SOUTHWELL

Heb 11:32-12:2; Jn 17:11b-19

Edmund Campion was born in London in 1540. His early education was at Christ's Hospital popularly known as The Bluecoat School and St. John's College Oxford. He received his degree in 1564. He was chosen to give the funeral oration on the occasion of the burial of Sir Thomas White the founder of St. John's College. When Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) visited the College, Campion was chosen to lead a public debate in front of her. He was tipped to be a future Archbishop of Canterbury because of his learning and oratory skills. He was referred to by William Cecil who was one of the principal architects of the reformation as the "diamond of England." It was hoped that Campion would become a defender of the new faith which, though favoured by the temporal power, lacked learned apologists. Yet even as he was ordained to the Anglican diaconate, he was being swayed toward Rome, influenced in great part by older friends with Catholic sympathies.

In 1569 he journeyed to Dublin, where he composed his "History of Ireland". At this point Campion was at the summit of his powers. He could have risen to the highest levels of fame had he stayed his course. But this was not to be. By the time Campion left Ireland, his Catholic leanings were well-publicized, and he found the atmosphere hostile upon his return to England in 1571. He went abroad to Douay in France, where he was reconciled with the Church and decided to enter the Society of Jesus. He made a pilgrimage to Rome and journeyed to Prague, where he lived and taught for six years and in 1578 was ordained a Jesuit priest. In 1580 he was called by superiors to join fellow Jesuit Robert Parsons in leading a mission to England. He accepted the assignment joyfully, but everyone was aware of the dangers. The night before his departure from Prague, one of the Jesuit fathers wrote over Campion's door, "P. Edmundus Campianus, Martyr."

Campion crossed the English Channel as "Mr. Edmunds," a jewel dealer. Upon reaching London, Campion composed his "Challenge to the Privy Council," a statement of his mission and an invitation to engage in theological debate. Copies spread quickly, and several replies to the "Challenge" were published by his opponents, who attached to it a derogatory title, "Campion's Brag," by which it is best known today. Campion and his companions travelled stealthily through the English countryside in the early summer of 1581, relying on old, landed Catholic families as hosts. They celebrated Mass, heard confession, performed baptisms and marriages, and preached words of encouragement to a people who represented the last generation to confess the faith of a Catholic England.

There were close calls. Many homes had hiding places for priests—some even had secret chapels and confessionals—and the Jesuits had to rely on these more than once. Campion took extraordinary risks, never able to turn down a request to preach or administer the sacraments, and more than once he escaped detection while in a public setting.

His fortune changed while visiting the home of Francis Yate in Lyford Grange, which was west of London. Yate was a Catholic imprisoned for his faith who had repeatedly asked for one of the Jesuit fathers to tend to the spiritual needs of his household. Though it was out of the way and the queen's searchers were reportedly in hot pursuit, Campion was unable to resist the request.

He travelled to Lyford, heard confessions, preached well into the night, and departed without difficulty after celebrating Mass at dawn. Some nuns visiting the home shortly thereafter were upset to hear they had just missed Campion, and so riders were dispatched to persuade him to return, which he did. Word of his return reached George Eliot, who was in the pay of the queen; he had a general commission to hunt down and arrest priests. Eliot arrived at Lyford with David Jenkins, another searcher, and attended a Mass. He was greatly outnumbered by the Catholics, and, fearing resistance, made no move to arrest Campion. He departed abruptly to fetch the local magistrate and a small militia and returned to the Yate property during dinner. News of the approaching party reached the house, and Campion and his two priestly companions safely escaped to a narrow cell prepared especially for that purpose, with food and drink for three days.

However, Campion was soon found out and taken to the Tower and tortured. Several times he was forced to engage in debates, without benefit of notes or references and still weak and disoriented from his rackings and beatings. He acquitted himself admirably, all things considered: a testament to his unpatrolled rhetorical skills.

His trial was a farce. Witnesses were bribed, false evidence produced; in truth, the outcome had been determined since his arrival. Campion was eloquent and persuasive to the last, dominating the entire procedure with the force of his logic and his knowledge of the Scripture and law, but in vain. He and his priestly and lay companions were convicted of treason on November 14 and were sentenced to death. His address to the court upon sentencing invoked the Catholic England for which he had fought, the Catholic England which was about to die: "In condemning us, you condemn all your own ancestors—all the ancient priests, bishops and kings—all that was once the glory of England."

On December 1, 1581 the prophecy hanging over his door in Prague was fulfilled: Campion was hanged, drawn, and quartered. The poet Henry Walpole was present, and during the quartering some blood from Campion's entrails splashed on his coat. Walpole was profoundly changed because of this experience. He went overseas, took orders, and 13 years later met his own martyrdom on English soil.

Campion was beatified in 1886.

Robert Southwell was born in 1561 at Horsham St Faith, Norfolk, England. In 1576, he was sent to the English college at Douai, where he boarded at the English College, but studied at the Jesuit College of Anchin, a French college associated, with the university of Douai. At the end of the summer, however, his education was interrupted by the movement of French and Spanish

forces. Southwell was sent to Paris for greater safety as a student of the College de Clermont, under the tutelage of the Jesuit Thomas Darbyshire.

He returned to Douai in 1577. A year later, he set off on foot to Rome with the intention of joining the Society of Jesus. He was initially refused admission, but later admitted in 1578. He pronounced his first and perpetual vows in 1580. Immediately after his vows, he began studies in philosophy and theology at the Jesuit College in Rome. During this time, he excelled at academics and held various academic posts. He was ordained priest in 1584.

Southwell was a prolific writer and poet. His writings, both in prose and verse, were extremely popular with his contemporaries, and his religious pieces were sold openly by the booksellers (at a time when priests were looked upon with suspicion) though their authorship was known.

After six years of missionary labour, Southwell was arrested for being a Catholic priest. He was first subjected to the torture of "the manacles". He remained silent forty hours. The queen then ordered Southwell moved to the Gatehouse, where a team of Privy Council torturers went to work on him. When they proved equally unsuccessful, he was left "hurt, starving, covered with maggots and lice, to lie in his own filth." After about a month he was moved by order of the Council to solitary confinement in the Tower of London. According to the early narratives, his father had petitioned the queen that his son, if guilty under the law, should so suffer, but if not should be treated as a gentleman, and that as his father he should be allowed to provide him with the necessities of life. No documentary evidence of such a petition survives, but something of the kind must have happened, since his friends were able to provide him with food and clothing, and to send him the works of St. Bernard and a Bible. His superior Henry Garnet later smuggled a breviary to him. He remained in the Tower for three years.

In 1595 the Privy Council passed a resolution for Southwell's prosecution on the charges of treason. He was removed from the Tower to Newgate Prison, where he was put into a hole called Limbo.

A few days later, Southwell appeared before the Lord Chief Justice, John Popham, at the bar of the King's Bench. Popham made a speech against Jesuits and seminary priests. Southwell was indicted before the jury as a traitor under the statutes prohibiting the presence within the kingdom of priests ordained by Rome. Southwell replied that his only purpose in returning to England had been to administer the sacraments according to the rite of the Catholic Church to such as desired them. When asked to enter a plea, he declared himself "not guilty of any treason whatsoever," objecting to a jury being made responsible for his death but allowing that he would be tried by God and country.

As the evidence was pressed, Southwell stated that he was the same age as "our Saviour." He was immediately reproved by Topcliffe for insupportable pride in making the comparison, but he said in response that he considered himself "a worm of the earth." After a brief recess, the jury

returned with a guilty verdict. The sentence of death was pronounced — to be hanged, drawn and quartered. He was returned through the city streets to Newgate.

On 21 February 1595, Southwell was sent to Tyburn. Execution of sentence on a notorious highwayman had been appointed for the same time, but at a different place — perhaps to draw the crowds away — and yet many came to witness Southwell's death. Having been dragged through the streets on a sled, he stood in the cart beneath the gibbet and made the sign of the cross with his pinioned hands before reciting a Bible passage. The sheriff made to interrupt him; but he was allowed to address the people at some length, confessing that he was a Jesuit priest and praying for the salvation of Queen and country. As the cart was drawn away, he commended his heart and body to God. He hung in the noose for a brief time, making the sign of the cross as best he could. As the executioner made to cut him down, in preparation for disembowelling him while still alive, Lord Mountjoy and some other onlookers tugged at his legs to hasten his death. His lifeless body was then disembowelled and quartered. As his severed head was displayed to the crowd, no one shouted the traditional "Traitor!"

Southwell was canonised in 1970.

The first reading chosen for the feast is from the fourth servant song in the Book of Isaiah and is apt for the feast. Like the servant before him and his Lord Jesus Edmund Campion chose to be true to his convictions even in the face of the most frightening consequences. Like in the case of the servant and the Lord himself, it is not possible to comprehend fully the extent of Campion's courage and determination. Yet, even this conclusion which at first glance seemed like defeat for Campion but was indeed victory fitted in with God's plan for the world. In the eyes of those around him at that time, Campion was despised and humiliated. He was tortured and beaten. He was bruised and degraded. However, the fact that he is remembered today more than 400 years after his death is testimony to the fact that he was indeed victorious.

This victory was spoken of by Jesus in his priestly prayer which is the Gospel text for today and in which besides asking his Father to protect his disciples from the evil one, he is also aware that they will have trouble in the world and be hated by many because they will stand like him for the truth. This Campion did to perfection.

If the disciples are sent by Jesus into the world, it is for the same purpose for which Jesus was sent into the world—not to change the world but to challenge the world. In each generation there is on earth a group of men and women given by God to Jesus, and the task of the disciples is to separate these sons and daughters of light from the sons and daughters of darkness who surround them. Those given to Jesus will recognize his voice in and through the mission of the disciples and will band together into one.

This community of Christians will be hated by the world, but Jesus does not wish to have them spared, this hostility. So that the depth of his love might become apparent, Jesus himself could not leave the world without facing the hostility of those who did not accept him. Similarly each of

his followers must face this hostility if eventually they are to be with Jesus. Jesus knows that his followers need help in this eschatological warfare which is waged in each person's heart. Consequently Jesus asks God to keep the disciples safe with the divine name that has been given to him.

The certitude of encountering hostility in the world is not meant to make the disciples sad. Jesus' promise of divine protection will offset sadness and bring the disciples' joy to fullness. Christians are called to rejoice when they are reviled and persecuted, because it means that they are living like their master and lord who was also reviled and persecuted for standing up for the truth.

The disciples have been sent by Jesus in the same manner as Jesus was sent by the Father. As Jesus lived, so must the disciples.

When Jesus speaks of his self-consecration, we are called to look at him not only as the incarnation of God's word consecrated by the Father but also as a priest offering himself as a victim for those whom God has given him.

Campion understood this prayer of Jesus as one made for him and this is why he was able to live it out in his life. As a priest, he was willing to offer not only the bread and wine at the altar, but his own body and blood at the altar of the world.

Are you like Campion ready to LIVE for your faith in Jesus? How?

DECEMBER 3, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
Zeph3:9-10,14-20; Rm 10:8-17; Mt 28:16-20

Francisco de Jaso y Azpilicueta (Francis Xavier) was born on April 7, 1506 in Xavier (Xavier), Kingdom of Navarre (present day Spain). In 1525, having completed a preliminary course of studies in his own country, he went to Paris, where he entered the Collège de Sainte-Barbe. Here he met the Savoyard, Pierre Favre (Peter Faber), and a warm personal friendship sprang up between them.

It was at this same college that Ignatius Loyola, who was already planning the foundation of the Society of Jesus, resided for a time as a guest in 1529. Ignatius soon won the confidence of both Favre first and later Xavier. They offered themselves with him in the formation of the Society. Four others, Lainez, Salmerón, Rodríguez, and Bobadilla, having joined them, the seven made the famous vow of Montmartre, on August 15, 1534.

After completing his studies in Paris and filling the post of teacher there for some time, Xavier left the city with his companions on November 15, 1536, and turned his steps to Venice, where he displayed zeal and charity in attending the sick in the hospitals. On June 24, 1537, he was ordained priest along with Ignatius. The following year he went to Rome, and after doing apostolic work there for some months, during the spring of 1539 he took part in the conferences which Ignatius held with his companions to prepare for the definitive foundation of the Society of Jesus. The order was approved verbally on September 3, 1539, and before the written approbation was secured, Xavier was appointed, at the earnest solicitation of the John III, King of Portugal, to evangelize the people of the East Indies. He left Rome on March 16, 1540, and reached Lisbon about June. He remained there for nine months, and was noted for his apostolic zeal.

On April 7, 1541, he embarked in a sailing vessel for India, and after a tedious and dangerous voyage landed at Goa on May 6, 1542. The first five months were spent in preaching and ministering to the sick in the hospitals. He would go through the streets ringing a little bell and inviting the children to hear the word of God. When he had gathered a number, he would take them to a certain church and would there explain the catechism to them. About October, 1542, he started for the pearl fisheries of the extreme southern coast of the peninsula, desirous of restoring Christianity which, although introduced years before, had almost disappeared on account of the lack of priests. He devoted almost three years to the work of preaching to the people of Western India, converting many, and reaching in his journeys even the Island of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

Many were the difficulties and hardships which Xavier had to encounter at this time; yet he persevered and never gave up. In the spring of 1545 Xavier started for Malacca. He worked

there for the last months of that year, and although he was successful, he was not as successful as he would have liked to be. About January 1546, Xavier left Malacca and went to Molucca Islands, where the Portuguese had some settlements, and for a year and a half he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of Amboyna, Ternate, Baranura, and other islands in that area. It is claimed by some that during this expedition he landed on the island of Mindanao, and for this reason St. Francis Xavier has been called the first Apostle of the Philippines.

By July, 1547, he was again in Malacca. Here he met a Japanese called Anger (Han-Sir), from whom he obtained much information about Japan. His zeal was at once aroused by the idea of introducing Christianity into Japan, but for the time being the affairs of the Society of Jesus demanded his presence at Goa, and so he went there taking Anger with him. During the six years that Xavier had been working among the people, other Jesuit missionaries had arrived at Goa, sent from Europe by St. Ignatius; moreover some who had been born in India had been received into the Society.

In 1548 Xavier sent these Jesuits to the principal centres of India, where he had established missions, so that the work might be preserved and continued. He also established a novitiate and house of studies.

He started with Cosme de Torres, a Spanish priest whom he had met in the Malucca and Brother Juan Fernández for Japan towards the end of June, 1549. The Japanese Anger, who had been baptized at Goa and given the name of Pablo de Santa Fe, accompanied them. They landed at the city of Kagoshima in Japan, on August 15, 1549. The entire first year was devoted to learning the Japanese language and translating into Japanese, with the help of Pablo de Santa Fe, the principal articles of faith and short treatises which were to be employed in preaching and catechizing. When he was able to express himself, Xavier began preaching and made some converts, but these aroused the ill will of the Bonzes, who had him banished from the city. Leaving Kagoshima about August, 1550, he penetrated to the centre of Japan, and preached the Gospel in some of the cities of southern Japan. Towards the end of that year he reached Meaco, then the principal city of Japan, but he was unable to make any headway here. He retraced his steps to the centre of Japan, and during 1551 preached in some important cities, forming the nucleus of several Christian communities, which in time increased with extraordinary rapidity.

After working about two years and a half in Japan he left this mission in charge of Cosme de Torres and Juan Fernández, and returned to Goa, arriving there at the beginning of 1552. He then turned his thoughts to China, and began to plan an expedition there. During his stay in Japan he had heard much of the Celestial Empire, and was anxious to spread the Gospel there. In the autumn of 1552, he arrived in a Portuguese vessel at the small island of Sancian near the

coast of China. While planning the best means for reaching the mainland, he was taken ill, and as the movement of the vessel seemed to aggravate his condition, he was removed to the land, where a hut had been built to shelter him. In these poor surroundings he breathed his last.

One can only wonder at the apostolic zeal of Francis Xavier who in the short span of ten years traversed so many seas and visited so many countries to preach the Gospel. He is regarded as the Patron of Missions primarily for these reasons. He was beatified in 1619 and canonized with St. Ignatius in 1622.

The Gospel text from Matthew is from the last chapter and verses of the Gospel. They contain an appearance of the risen Jesus to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee. The disciples are obedient to Jesus' instructions because at the start of the text they are already at the mountain. The mountain is not named, but is a theological topos in Matthew. The mountain brings to mind the mountain of the temptation of Jesus (4:8) of the Sermon of the Mount (5:1) and of his transfiguration (17:1). In the first of these incidents, Jesus was offered all power and authority by the Devil, but refused to accept it. Now, God has given all power to Jesus. In the second, Jesus taught authoritatively (7:29) from the mountain, here he commands his disciples to teach as he taught. In the third, Jesus gave the three disciples only a glimpse of his future glory, now he reveals himself as totally glorified.

Matthew does not focus on the external appearance of Jesus because he wants the focus to be on Jesus' words. The words of Jesus may be seen to be divided into three parts. They contain a Christological, an Ecclesiological and an Eschatological statement.

The Christological statement is that Jesus' power and authority are now unbounded. The same Jesus, who was for a while mistreated by all, crucified on the cross, abandoned by God even at the point of his death, died and was buried, is now the Jesus in whose hands everything rests.

This statement leads to the Mission command to the disciples and explicates what 'Church' means. The authority of the 'Church' has its foundation in the authority of Jesus. The 'Church' goes out to all nations with the authority of Jesus. No one or place is excluded. This Church is called to 'make disciples' primarily not by baptising people but by teaching them to observe the commands of Jesus. These commands may be summed up in the command to love (22:36-39). When one loves one's neighbour as one loves oneself, then Church becomes present and visible.

The final verse of the Gospel is a promise of the abiding presence of the Lord with his disciples. Jesus, who fulfilled the "Emmanu el" prophecy in his life time, is the risen Lord who assures the disciples of his constant and ever abiding presence.

The manner in which Xavier lived his life and did Mission was one which shows that he had understood the Mission command of Jesus as it was meant to be understood. Through his person he touched the lives of all he came in contact with and revealed God as a God of love. Through his writings, he reached out far beyond the boundaries of his own country, indeed to the whole world.

Will I in imitation of Francis Xavier keep on keeping on or will I give in and give up at the slightest sign of trouble?

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

COMMENTARIES AND OTHER WORKS ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Best, Ernest. Mark: The Gospel as Story. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1983.

Collins, Adela Yarbo. The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Guelich, Robert H. Mark 1-8:26 Word Biblical Commentary 34A. Dallas: Word, 1989.

Kingsbury, Jack Dean. The Christology of Mark's Gospel. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983

Taylor, Vincent. The Gospel According to St. Mark. 2nd edition. New York. St. Martin's, 1966.

Tolbert, Mary-Ann. Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.

COMMENTARIES AND OTHER WORKS ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Davies, W.D., and Dale C. Allison, Jr. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew. 2 volumes. ICC. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988, 1991.

Kingsbury, Jack Dean. Matthew as Story. 2nd edition. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.

Meier, John. Matthew. Volume 3 of the New Testament Message series. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1980.

Gundry, Robert H. The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967.

Garland, D. E. Reading Matthew: a literary and theological commentary on the first Gospel. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2001

Luz, U., & Koester, H. Matthew : a commentary. Minneapolis: Augsburg (2001)

Soares-Prabhu, G.M. The Formula Quotations in the Infancy narrative of Matthew. AnBib 63. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976.

COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Bovon, F., & Koester, H. Luke 1: a commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.

Ellis, E. Earl. The Gospel of Luke. NCB. Greenwood, SC: Attic, 1966.

Evans, Craig A. Luke. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, Massachusetts:Hendrickson, 1990.

Fitzmyer, J. A., S. J. The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: introduction, translation, and notes. New Haven; London: Yale University Press 2008

Marshall, I. Howard. The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text. The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids:Eerdmans, 1978.

Schweizer, Eduard. The Good News Accoding to Luke.Traslated by David E.Green. Atlanta: John Knox, 1984.

Talbert, Charles H. Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel. New York: Crossroad, 1982.

COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Brown, R. E., S. S. The Gospel according to John (I-XII): Introduction, translation, and notes. New Haven; London: Yale University Press (2008)

Brown, R. E., S. S. The Gospel according to John (XIII-XXI): Introduction, translation, and notes. New Haven; London: Yale University Press (2008)

Haenchen, E., Funk, R. W., & Busse, U. John : a commentary on the Gospel of John Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

RESOURCE MATERIAL FOR THE HISTORY OF THE SAINTS

Tylenda, Joseph SJ. Jesuit saints and martyrs.Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1984.

<http://www.jesuit.org.sg/html/companions/saints.martys>

<http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-voices>

<http://www.sjweb.info/saints>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>