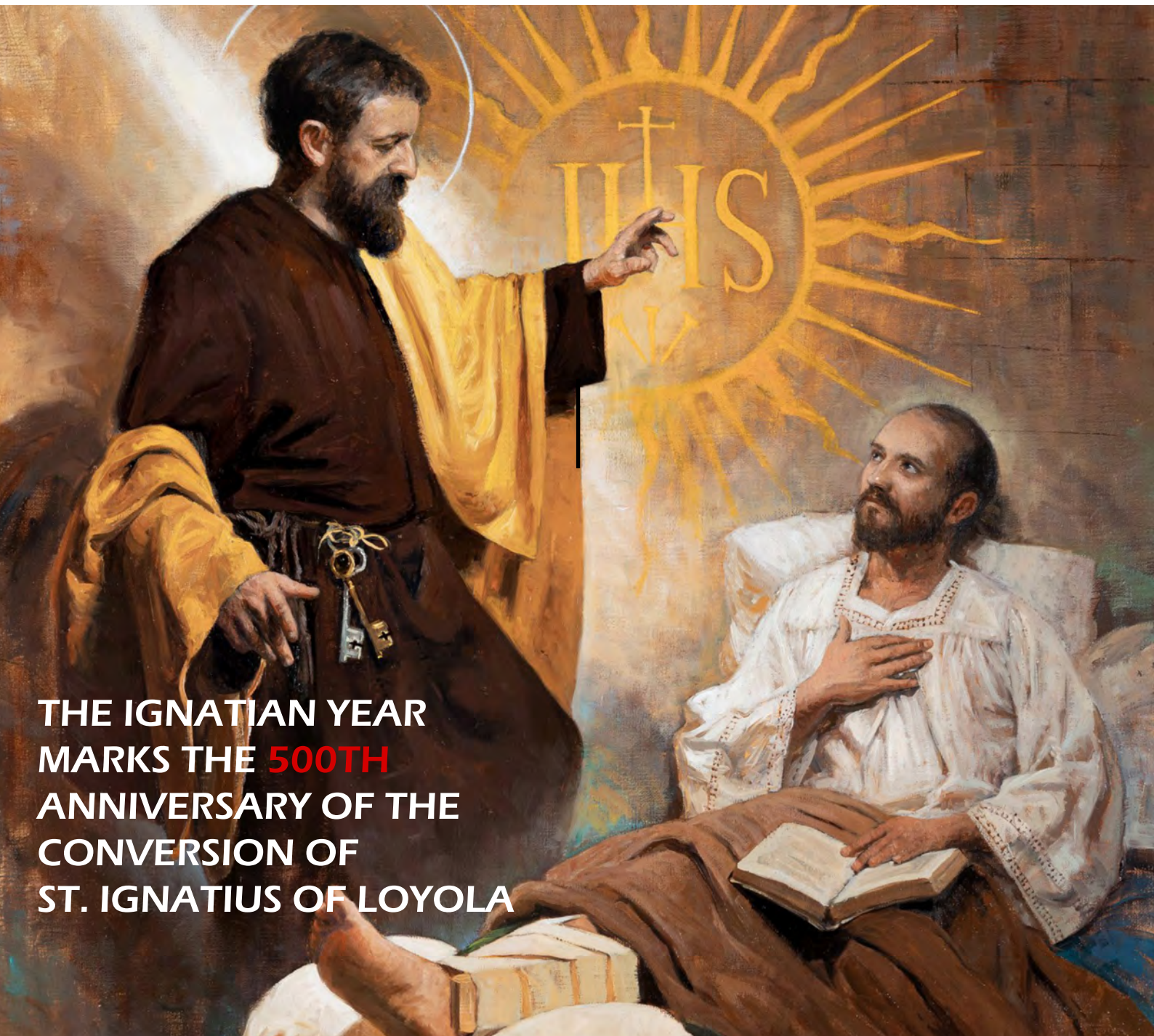


SPECIAL ISSUE FOR
THE IGNATIAN YEAR | 2021-2022

THE

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CANNONBALL



THE IGNATIAN YEAR
MARKS THE **500TH**
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
CONVERSION OF
ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

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To see all things anew in Christ

There's no denying the extent of the crisis that we are living through. The pandemic has made us very anxious and worried, uncertain about what is going to happen next, uncertain about what to do and how to act. A lack of vision from the political and religious leaders: loss of jobs, hunger and indefinite closure of schools have created even more uncertainties and anxieties. In one sense, life continues as normal – and yet it's not normal at all. Should I take the bus? How long will the pandemic last? Will we face a recession? Will we ever get back to normality again? These are questions that bother us. The anxiety of daily receiving COVID 19 updates is as contagious as the virus itself, spreading fear and nervousness in the community. Our securities no longer seem so secure, and many don't know whom to turn to.

It is under these circumstances the Society of Jesus celebrates the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of Jesuits in a special way from May 2021 to July 2022, a year to mark five hundred years since the conversion of St Ignatius. It is a time 'to see all things new in Christ.' The Jesuits will also mark the 400th anniversary of the canonization of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier on 12 March 2022. The Society of Jesus encourages everyone to draw inspiration from the life example of St. Ignatius and his inner struggle towards conversion which led him to a close familiarity with God. This familiarity, in turn, led him to find God in all things and to see all things new in Christ.

We are reminded that St. Ignatius of Loyola was a survivor. He survived a major life-threatening injury and convalescence, a life of begging on road and times of great uncertainty. He mastered the art of living through challenging times aided by his own inner life and certain life lessons that he had developed. Primarily St Ignatius invites us to accept every new reality as it is. The Ignatian catchphrase 'Finding God in all things', challenges us to find peace in living through different phases of our lives and experiences.

Though fear, anxiety and worry are normal responses to the current situation, it's important not to let them overwhelm us. Ignatius recommends acting directly against unhelpful forces such as fear that can manipulate us to make poor decisions. His term for this is 'agere contra', which means 'to act against'. Ignatius urges us to be proactive and not to give up.

Above all Ignatius of Loyola provides us with wonderful ways of caring for people that we can so well adopt to the current scenario. We need to care for each other, paying attention to the individual needs and challenges, and cultivating respect for individual circumstances and concerns.

In his book *Let Us Dream*, Pope Francis writes: 'I see this time as a reckoning.... To enter into crisis is to be sifted. Your categories and ways of thinking get shaken up; your priorities and lifestyles are challenged.... The basic rule of a crisis is that you don't come out of it the same. If you get through it, you come out better or worse, but never the same... In the trials of life, you reveal your own heart: how solid it is, how merciful, how big or small.... You have to choose. And in making your choice you reveal your heart... When people's hearts are tested, they become aware of what has held them down.' Therefore, as Pope himself noted in his *Urbi et Orbi*, delivered on March 27, 2020, 'Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them... This is God's strength: ... He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies.'

This magazine, 'Cannonball Moment' is an attempt to share with one another reflections and personal encounters of God who calls us towards servant leadership similar to St Ignatius' experience at La Storta. This also marks the beginning of the Ignatian year. I hope that the year ahead would be a time of soul searching journey and an opportunity getting our relationship with God more felt and reflected in our daily lives. I wish to thank all the contributors and for the Ignatian Year Team and the Editor of this magazine.

The Ignatian year "is a call to allow the Lord to work on our conversion," said Fr. Arturo Sosa SJ, Superior General of the Jesuits. "We ask for the grace to be renewed by the Lord. We wish to discover a new apostolic enthusiasm inside ourselves, a new life, and new ways to follow the Lord. That is why we have chosen as our theme for the year: to see all things new in Christ."

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, pray for us.

May the Lord bless us as we follow Him along the way, poor and humble, this *minima compañia colaboradora*.

Rev. Fr. Dexter Gray SJ
Provincial Superior
Society of Jesus.

Celebrate
Ignatius500 
500 years after the cannonball struck...

EDITORIAL

Over one year on, from the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, developing countries are facing critical shortages of oxygen, medical supplies and vaccinations to cope with COVID-19 cases. Yet the majority has been unable to administer even a single dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to their people. In contrast rich nations have vaccinated their citizens at a rate of one person per second over the last months.

As we see COVID-19 vaccination campaigns accelerate in the world's wealthiest countries. The Society of Jesus joins calls for concrete efforts to ensure an equitable and just vaccine allocation framework. As we know the Jesuits' Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat in Rome has added its voice to the growing calls, advocating for equity and justice in the production and distribution of vaccines. In fact, low-income countries have received only 0.2% of available vaccines while 87% of administered vaccines have so far gone to high-income or upper-middle income countries.

Jesuit all over the world have been providing emergency aid to poor people within their capacity. The Sri Lanka province has helped around 5000 covid19 victims. As a Province we have identified that in Sri Lanka, the poorest are the day labourers and when they are unable to work during lockdowns, they simply cannot afford to feed their families. Emergency food aid which has been arranged by the Jesuits, has been a great relief to many families during a difficult time in their lives.

As we celebrate the feast of Ignatius in the context of Covid19, we should be able to feel the pain of the poor, the excluded and those whose dignity has been violated. We have to walk with the poor and needy to eradicate the unjust structures that have become so evident in the current world crisis. Humanity is not only facing a health and economic crisis but also a social and political crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the international disorder and the causes of ecological imbalance can also now be seen.

Science has failed us on many occasions and we have lost so many people in the process of fighting the pandemic but we have one weapon to heal the world, and that is the love of Jesus that brings definitive healing and peace. We can be witnesses of that love only if we are closely united to Him, among ourselves and with those who have been thrown aside by the world and considered the least and most vulnerable. We are true sons of Ignatius who find God in all things so let us inspire others to form a just society that is nourished by the Gospel values and Ignatian Spirituality so that the world can become a better place where the cry of the poorest can be heard.

On May 20, 500 years ago, St Ignatius was wounded by a cannonball while defending the city of Pamplona. For him, it was a major failure in his life and this experience forced a change of plans from the riches and worldly exploits he envisioned for his future. However, this failure also started a process of conversion, which led Ignatius to bigger dreams, and no longer centered on himself, but rather on God. It helped him to see all things anew in Christ. The cannonball experiences that you are going to read in this booklet are very simple but very authentic and they would change your perspective of looking at the world. I would like to thank all the contributors for their valuable writings through which they have shared their personal experiences with God, and how they were transformed after encountering Jesus in their life through Ignatian Spirituality and became men and women for others.

On our founder's feast day, we share with all of you a number of articles that will help you to recognize your personal encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ. To all of our friends; the Sri Lanka Province wishes you a Happy Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.

COVID 19 – A Message

Fr. Eustace Fernando SJ

“This Congregation is deeply convinced that God is calling the entire Society to a profound spiritual renewal”.

*I*n the 20th century, there has been a tremendous advancement of science and technology. Various industries cropped up and medical services, transport and communication improved. Man was able to go to the Moon, and even send missions to other planets. This globalization however did not bring peace and unity among human beings. Instead it brought in two world wars, revolutions, numerous civil wars, mass migration and widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The creation of monopolies and a few billionaires not only further impoverished the masses, but also oppressed them with military forces and political structures. Moreover the pollution of water and atmosphere, the destruction of forests, have ruined the natural environment.

However in the 2nd half of the 20th century, with the rise of the Pentecostal movement and Pope John XXIII's summoning of Vatican II, another renewal movement set in. In the 21st century Pope Francis wants this movement to continue and the Church to become a Church of the poor, where priests would walk with the poor. Therefore, I think, the world-wide spread of Covid19, is God's call for a conversion of heart and a radical change in our values and attitudes, and ways of the thinking for the creation of new societies, where justice and love would prevail, so that a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1) would come in.

God so loved the world that He sent His only Son twenty centuries ago,

to redeem the world. Born poor as a Man, He lived as a poor carpenter at Nazareth, and then proclaimed the coming of God's Kingdom by word and deed. He suffered an ignominious death on a Cross and was buried. But He rose in glory and is now gone to the Father. However the Risen Lord did not abandon His disciples and all those who believed in Him. He instituted the Eucharist and sent the Holy Spirit, so that the new People of God formed small communities of love and sharing. They frequently met to hear the Apostles teach and preach the Gospel, to break bread and to pray, and were called Christians. They also gathered and wrote the Gospels. In spite of the sufferings they had to face, the life of these early Christians not only attracted many others, but also spread out to many countries, where small communities were organized under the supervision and leadership of Bishops, many of whom were good shepherds of the flock entrusted to them. Thus by the 3rd



century, there were small communities in Asia, Africa and Europe, that were radically different from the larger society or state. When persecuted, many suffered and died as martyrs.

In the 4th century with the conversion of Constantine, Christianity became the state religion in the Roman Empire. With that the conversion of pagans followed, but the association of the Church authorities with the state had also evil consequences.

Moved by the Spirit, however, saints Basil and Benedict began monastic orders which spread both in the East and in the West. So also various renewal movements began later but they too gradually declined in the subsequent centuries. Then in the 11th

This year we commemorate 500 years of St. Ignatius' conversion. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit may move us towards a conversion of our lifestyle.

century the great split between the Eastern and Western churches occurred. In the 12th century, again moved by the Spirit, Saints Francis and Dominic began new religious orders, but these too slowly declined in the following centuries. Thus in the 16th century the Protestant Reformation arose. As a response the Spirit began a Counter Reformation movement with Saints Ignatius of Loyola, Philip Neri, Charles Borromeo and others. However in the 18th and 19th centuries, with the French Revolution and Industrial Revolution, rationalism, capitalism and a bourgeois mentality arose. With that, there was a decline of faith in God, a desire for power and a comfortable life unconcerned about the sufferings of the poor came in. Slowly individualism and a spirit of self-centeredness has grown even in the various religious congregations. Many have forgotten that we Religious are "the salt of the earth" (Mt 5:13). But if the salt has lost its taste, of what use is it? The fear of life that Covid19 could bring, has imprisoned most of us, religious persons consecrated to God.

Only the Holy Spirit will give us

the light, courage and strength to empty ourselves and to grow in the spirit of Other-centeredness to lovingly serve the poor and oppressed. "If you trust in the Lord and do good, then you will live in the land and be secure" (Ps. 37). Therefore let us open ourselves to the Spirit and move forward.

Thanks be to God, in the Society of Jesus, with Vatican II, Fr. Arrupe gave importance to the social apostolate and instituted the JRS. Then Fr. Kolvenbach encouraged inculturation and the parish apostolate. In 2016 we had the 36th General Congregation. "This Congregation is deeply convinced that God is calling the entire Society to a profound spiritual renewal". It also questioned us to examine "What elements in our lives, works or lifestyles hinder our ability to let God's gracious mercy transform us" (GC 36:18). Therefore these questions come to my mind. "Will the people in Sri Lanka believe that we Jesuits are poor?" St. Ignatius and his first companions at Montmartre took only the vows of Poverty and Chastity and lived all their lives faithfully. So I question myself "I also have taken the vow of Poverty am I living this vow faithfully?" I think, every Jesuit today will have to examine himself in a similar manner. Further, I question myself whether my lifestyle is more like that of the Western educated elite or that of the poor Sinhala/Tamil masses? So you also can examine yourself and adjust yourself according to the needs of the place where you live and work. As St. Paul states "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17)

This year we commemorate 500 years of St. Ignatius' conversion. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit may move us towards a conversion of our lifestyle. Moreover let us examine whether the Exercises change us deeply, so that we become real Companions of Jesus and a light to others. Then we can also practice community discernment and work according to the Universal Apostolic Preferences. Gradually the Spirit will transform us from being men of the world to become men of God in the world.



“Cannonball that led St. Ignatius 500 years ago to find God and his true self within”

In light of the Cannonball experience of St. Ignatius, an attempt to recognize my own cannonball experiences.

By: Fr. Kamal Andradi SJ

Jesuits and the Ignatian family around the world are preparing to celebrate the 500th year anniversary of St Ignatius' conversion. At this juncture, I am personally inspired to look back at my own journey in the Society of Jesus for the past 33 years.

Cannonball that changed the destiny of Ignatius.

Ignatius' career at the courts and the worldly desire for wealth, power, position, name and fame ended abruptly on the 20th May in 1521 when a cannonball injured his right leg while he was defending the city of Pamplona. He experienced a spiritual awakening with a great desire to follow Christ by being poor, chaste and obedient while recovering from surgery. When he could walk again, he decided to embark on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In a Benedictine abbey in Montserrat, he confessed his sins, exchanged his expensive clothes for sackcloth, and left his sword before the altar dedicated to Virgin Mary.

Ignatius then walked to Manresa. Having arrived on 25 March 1522, he settled in a natural cave where he would spend the next 11 months. It was there that he underwent the religious experiences that led him to write the Spiritual Exercises, the foundation of Ignatian spirituality. In 2022, Manresa will be the focus of events marking the 500th anniversary of this turning point in the life of Ignatius, who went on to complete his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and then founded the Society of Jesus in 1534.

The worldly desires of my life experienced before 1988

It is always a learning and spiritually nourishing experience to look at the path we have trod in life. I honestly did not have a clear desire of becoming a

priest in the Jesuit Order when I joined the Society of Jesus in the year 1988 under the guidance of Fr. Aloy Wandawlle- my vocation promotor, Fr. Baylon Perera-my Novice Master, and Fr. Anton Pieris- my then Provincial. My only aim was to learn English, find a good job and to marry a beautiful girl. In fact, while I was doing my O/Ls and A/Ls, I had love affairs with two girls. I was much influenced by the worldly values- wearing stylish clothes and watching musical shows which were the most popular attractions of young people before the era of computers and social media.

The unnoticeable and gradual conversion through ups and downs in my life

Lord had his own way. He inspired me giving a desire to learn English and gradually journeyed with me towards a spiritual conversion. My family members were surprised to see me as a Jesuit returning home after two years in a simple attire. That is how I began my journey in the Society of Jesus.

However, the journey was not always easy. There were challenging moments and many failures. A few times I even lost my heart. I was disappointed and discouraged. I was not so clear and sure of my new journey to priesthood which had so many challenges, difficulties, and hardships along the way. But now, I could see the divine presence, guidance and accompaniment through all the desolations and consolations that I had along the way to being a priest. Having being ordained a

priest in 2002, I started the third phase of my life journey as a Jesuit priest with many plans and desires to serve Lord and the people of God.

Third phase of my journey as a priest in different fields

I was privileged to work in so many different apostolates in the province. In the pastoral field, I had the opportunity of working in three different parishes that belonged to three different dioceses - Chilaw, Kurunegala, and Anuradhapura - in the country. With all the various parish activities, I was trying to be a good pastor by giving inspiring homilies. But I felt, I was not successful in inspiring people with my preaching because the Word of God did not come from my heart but from books and the internet. The reason was that I did not have time for personal prayers in the midst of various parish activities.

Secondly in the field of formation

Next, I was in the field of formation, being a formator at the Novitiate and Juniorate in Sri Lanka and in the Philosophate in Manila, the Philippines. I tried to impress the young scholastics with my teaching of various subjects by spending time reading and preparing lessons. Again, my efforts were not up to the mark. The reason for the unsuccessful ministry in the field of formation was again the lack of personal prayers and a deep relationship with God.

Thirdly in the field of social ministry

In the field of social ministry, I felt I was a hero and a liberator. First, in Tangalle, the city which was devastated by the Tsunami killing hundreds of people, destroying their homes and livelihoods. I was involved in the relief work as the coordinator of JTRRP (Jesuit Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Program) in 2005. Later, in the Wannu region, during the final stage of the Civil War from 2006 to 2010, I served as the Country Director of JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service). I assisted the building, repairing and renovating houses and school buildings while providing all the basic physiological and educational needs. There was no time to rest, sleep and pray. There was a lot of satisfaction, but no inner peace.

Again, I misunderstood my mission in the social ministry. Instead of being a shepherd by spending time with them, talking to them, listening to their stories and building their lives by repairing their broken and wounded hearts and minds, I was just repairing and building their broken houses and schools like a contractor..



The cannonball experience that diverted my direction and revealed my true identity as a shepherd

It was during my Tertianship, the last stage of formal formation as a Jesuit in 2010 that I had a real cannonball experience like St. Ignatius.

It had a humbling experience during the first retreat that I administered to a group of sisters in Manila, Philippines during the Tertianship. I failed to deliver inspiring talks, even after spending a lot of time and energy in reading many books. The talks were so bad that two sisters of the group discontinued the retreat and went away. I was very disappointed and discouraged. It was a blow that really shattered my personality. However, the failure to deliver an inspiring talk to the retreatants opened my heart and mind to understand how weak I was spiritually and psychologically. It was really an enlightenment that I received from Lord to understand the need to heal my broken and wounded heart and mind first, and thus developing a deep relationship with the Lord.

Back to studies at the age of 46 following the example of our Founder

After completing my Tertianship, in 2011 I started an MA degree in Counseling Psychology, in De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines. Thanks to Rev. Fr. Jeyaraj Rasiah, the former Provincial of Society of Jesus in Sri Lanka, I was inspired to study Counseling Psychology. Indeed, it was not an easy task to sit and study in the classroom with very young people in their twenties. I looked like their father. I had to be young in mind, heart and body in order to study well. I still remember how I planned out a well-disciplined life style by paying attention to all the three major dimensions of my life – Physical, Mental and Spiritual – by giving importance and equal time and energy to all. I worked hard to grow physically, mentally and spiritually by jogging, studying and praying well.



Christian and of consecrated life. Mysticism is experiencing God personally and imitating Jesus in every aspect of his life to be a loving, caring, compassionate, merciful and a forgiving person like him, while Prophecy is sharing our personal experiences of God with people.

I have developed this psycho-spiritual retreat in order to help people, both religious and lay, to experience God within and their true self as created by God in his own image and likeness by healing their wounded inner child and the disordered attachments. As a result, they will be able to experience the unconditional love of God once again and the abundant blessings given by God. Without the help of counseling, the Spiritual Exercises and Directions can become a mere pain killer.

Counseling Psychology that complements the Spiritual Exercises (SE) in finding God and one's True Self within.

The Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises (SE) of St. Ignatius clearly tells us that we are created in the image and likeness of God to praise, revere and serve God, and by means of doing this, we save our souls. This is possible only by experiencing God, his unconditional love and our true self within by getting rid of all the disordered attachments. In my retreat ministry for the last ten years, I have observed that with the help of SE alone, it is not easy to detach from the disordered attachments in our life without knowing them and their root causes clearly, which we have gradually developed since our birth. Most of the disordered attachments begin to develop during our childhood as a result of our failure to experience the love of God through our parents.

When we fail to experience enough love, affection, acceptance and respect from our parents and other important people especially during the early stages of our human development, perhaps due to the deprivation of physiological needs or due to painful and traumatic experiences we have, we begin to feel and think that something is wrong with our personality, and want to become someone else. Thus, we create a False Self with all the disordered attachments. Counseling psychology complements the SE in helping us to find God and one's true self within by recognizing and getting rid of the disordered attachments and their root causes in our life.

Psycho-Spiritual Retreats (PSR)

As all our Founders and Foundresses were mystics and prophets, we are called to recreate their mystical-prophetic charisma in the Church and the world today. Mysticism and prophecy are two essentials, closely connected dimensions of

Psycho-Spiritual Retreats help to know the root causes of our disordered attachments.

The failure to experience the unconditional love of God and our true self through our parents and other important persons during the early stages of life, leads to Low Self-Esteem and to the development of False Self (Ego) in one's life. The Ego is the primary cause of all the pain and suffering experienced later as adults. False Self tends to identify itself with what it has and does than what it is. "Doing" is more important than "Being" for people suffering from low self-esteem. They identify themselves with what they do and have. They feel happy and important only when they have a lot of money and wealth or many degrees and high positions in society or when they do a lot of work like social workers. Once we become aware of our unmet needs and inner wounds which are the roots of disordered attachments, which are mostly in the sub-conscience and heal with the help of counseling, we begin to experience love of God through the Spiritual Exercises leading to a deeper relationship with God, oneself and with others.

Conclusion

I sincerely thank God for all the failures and mistakes that I have made and the pain and suffering that I experienced along the way in my journey. I now recognize them as Cannonballs hitting me at different times, destroying my Ego, False self and self-centeredness. They have helped me to experience the love of God and my true self, making me the person who I am today. A Jesuit is a sinner, yet he is called a companion of Jesus.





Merciful Saviour

A prayer...

By: Fr. Frederick Leon SJ

*B*ringing to mind all our pandemic stricken brothers and sisters we commend them to our merciful Savior. (Short pause).

The Society of Jesus rejoices and gives thanks to God, our Father, celebrating the 500th year of our Father Ignatius' conversion to God.

Visitors to the castle of Loyola in the north of Spain are led to a large room called the chapel of the conversion; it is there in that very place, we are told, that our Fr. Ignatius received the grace of his conversion.

Conversion is rightly called a grace as it is entirely God's work in us. Let us be guided by Ignatius' own narration given to us in his autobiography.

The opening lines give us a valuable insight. 'Up to the age of 26 he was a man given to the follies of the world....' The world referred to here is XVI century Europe well known for its chivalry. Men on horseback, wielding swords or daggers, rushing to the rescue of women in distress was a scene frequently witnessed to. Chivalry was the common theme in many romantic novels of the time. Ignatius imbibed the spirit of his era. His own temperament

pushed him further, to become distinguished in the use of arms. The Pamplona tragedy is too well known to need repetition.

We are at the time of his convalescence in Loyola. Recovery of health can be long and wearisome. So to while away the time he wanted to read. Reading brings dividends. St. Augustine heard the words: 'Tolle, lege', take and read. He began his serious reading of the Bible which led him finally to his conversion. There were no books in the castle to satisfy Ignatius and his hunger for chivalrous deeds. So they gave him what they could find there: a life of Christ and a life of the saints. His firm determination to read got him started. He read and read again and soon began to take a liking for what was written there. When he paused for a little break his thoughts rushed back to his former fantasies. They had such a strong hold on him that breaking away from them was no easy job. During all of his narration Ignatius keeps telling the reader: "Our Lord assisted him" (speaking in the 3rd person) reminding us that the changes that were being effected deep down in his interior were purely the work of grace. He went back to the reading on the saints. With greater relish he began to ask himself: "what if I did what Francis did or what Dominic did?" Doing great deeds of valor was quite typical of him. He began to reflect. Will this new life he was contemplating suit him, suit his own inner dispositions? When he thought of imitating the saints, he felt good. What was difficult and burdensome seemed easy to accomplish. His reading and the reflections he was making were leading him gently into a world altogether new, altogether different from the world of fantasies he was so familiar with. He wouldn't know where it would lead him but he was open and prepared to venture out.

Torn between two ideals: his worldly desires on the one hand and his newly found ideal on the other, he was at a loss to decide which of the two would give him greater happiness. He kept examining them alternately: now one, now the other. It turned out to be a long and tiring exercise which went on for days until one fine day his eyes were opened to see a difference. His worldly ideal though attractive and quite pleasing to him on the surface, it left him dry and dissatisfied deep in his interior. His second choice though less attractive gave him unalloyed peace and joy which was deep and lasting. This gave him light and strength to follow in the way of the saints, a decision that seemed firm and irrevocable.

In this short account of a change of heart in Ignatius found in the narration, not once do we meet the word conversion. However, when one looks intently at the experience he went through, an experience of a painful breaking away from the follies of the world and giving himself to God as the saints did, we have here without any doubt, a true conversion.

Later chapters of the autobiography as they unfold will show how complete his self-giving to God was. His prolonged confessions at Montserrat, his leaving his sword and dagger at the altar of the Virgin Mary, his giving away his knightly outfit and putting on the pilgrim's habit for the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the long hours of prayer, his fasts.... All of these firmly attest how sincere his return to God was.

St. Ignatius pray for us; help us in the giving of ourselves to God and our neighbor, with great generosity as you did for the greater glory of God. Amen.



The Broken Bone

By: Dexter Gray SJ

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abideth alone: but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

- John 12:24

*A*ll of us at some point of time in our lives have experienced life re-defining moments in the guise of challenges and difficulties. They have sparked new ideas and guided through new terrain in life. The gospel verse of John, quoted above, provides a helpful gospel inspiration for those times. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” When I was twenty years old and doing my studies at the Technical Institute (ETI) Batticaloa, an Institute initiated by an American Jesuit Missionary Rev. Fr. Lloyd Anthony Lorio SJ, I had an accident at the grinding stone. A piece of the stone hit my collarbone and I hurt my neck and broke my jaw into two. I was rushed to the hospital and when I was taken to the operation theater I remember telling God, ‘If you save me, I shall do anything for you.’ However, it was after seven years that the Lord called me to be a Jesuit and I am happy to be a follower of our Founder St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Inigo was struck by a cannon ball in the battle of Pamplona and while he was convalescing he experienced a conversion of his life to follow Jesus by imitating some saints like Francis and Dominic. The cannon ball experience is also the experience of everyone. For me it was in a workshop that the so called cannon ball experience took place in which I was hit by a grinding stone thus breaking my jaw into two. It took nearly three months to recover from injuries. After being treated at the dental institute in Colombo for nearly a month, the doctors realized that the only way to heal the jaw was to join the two broken jaw bones together to assist the healing process. I underwent three stages of bone healing that has some similarities to the stages of a spiritual conversion. They are the inflammatory, reparative, and remodeling stages.

The Inflammatory Stage when a bone breaks, the body sends out signals for special cells to come to the injured area. Some of these special cells cause the injured area to become inflamed (red, swollen, and painful). This tells the body to stop using the injured part so it can heal. Other cells that come to the area during this stage form a hematoma (blood clot) around the broken bone. This is the first bridge between the pieces of the broken bone. The reparative stage starts within about a week of the injury. A soft callus (a type of soft bone) replaces the





blood clot that formed in the inflammatory stage. The callus holds the bone together, but isn't strong enough for the body part to be used. Over the next few weeks, the soft callus becomes harder. By about 2-6 weeks, this hard callus is strong enough for the body part to be used. The remodeling stage starts around 6 weeks after the injury. In this stage, regular bone replaces the hard callus. If you saw an X-ray of the healing bone, it would look uneven. But over the next few months, the bone is reshaped so that it goes back to looking the way it did before the injury.

Bernard Lonergan breaks down the human person's inquiry of Truth into three steps: experience, understanding, and judgment. For Lonergan, intellectual conversion is correlated with the person recognizing himself as a "knower," that is, not merely a person that experiences reality but, through this three-part process, discovers the meaning of reality.

The three levels of Conversion: Spiritual/ inner Conversion

Ignatius was confronted with a hopeless situation soon after the cannon ball experience. Ignatius created greater intimacy with God. During the long weeks of his recuperation, he was extremely bored and asked for some chivalrous novels to pass the time by. Luckily there were none in the castle of Loyola, but there was a copy of the life of Christ and a book on the saints. Desperate, Ignatius began to read them. The more he read, the more he considered the exploits of the saints worth imitating. However, at the same time, he continued to have daydreams of fame and glory, along with fantasies of winning the love of a certain noble lady of the court. The

identity of this lady has never been discovered but she seems to have been of royal blood.

A period of experiencing consolation and desolation

He noticed, however, that after reading and thinking about saints and Christ he was at

For me it was in a workshop that the so called cannon ball experience took place in which I was hit by a grinding stone thus breaking my jaw into two

peace and satisfied. Yet when he finished his long daydreams of the noble lady, he would feel restless and unsatisfied. This experience was the beginning of his conversion.

The stage of enlightenment-a most significant moment of St. Ignatius' life.

It was also at the banks of the river Cardonair that he had a vision which is regarded as the most significant experience in his life. The vision was a moment of enlightenment, about which he later said that he learned more on that one occasion than he did during his entire life. Ignatius never revealed exactly what the vision was, but it seems to have been an encounter with God as He really is so that all creation was seen in a new light and acquired a new meaning and relevance, an experience that enabled Ignatius to find God in all things.



Conversion *A reflection ...*

By: Aloysius Vanderwall SJ

Dear brothers and sisters, Peace of Christ be with you.

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the conversion of St. Ignatius, it is my privilege to share with you some reflections.

When I think of CONVERSION the biblical person who comes to my mind is the Apostle Paul or St Paul of Tarsus. His conversion experience on the way to Damascus, I feel, is very significant for us today. When he fell down from the horse, he has had a very powerful experience of the living Christ. This experience not only changed his life and his carrier but also gave him a deeper sense of his identity. It transformed and gave him courage and strength to face many hardships and persecutions. We are very much aware of his missionary adventures which followed. Moreover, whenever some questioned him about his authenticity of being an apostle, he referred to this conversion experience and said that the Lord Jesus himself appointed him an apostle. This experience guided him to be the greatest of missionaries, the apostle to the gentiles.

The conversion experience of St Ignatius has its similarity with that of St Paul. Both are powerful moments of intervention of Jesus in their lives; while for St Paul, it was sudden and dramatic, for Ignatius it was gradual and progressive. God's action that began at Loyola came to its climax at the bank of the river Cardonair, with his vision of the Holy Trinity. The Cardonair event made Ignatius a new person, a mystic, a lover of the Church and a Founder of religious order. Since then, the Cardonair vision become foundational for him in his life. He felt that God guided him to that moment like a school teacher guiding his student. When he was in Rome writing the Constitutions, he had to make many and difficult decisions. When his companions questioned him about the source of inspiration in making difficult choices, St Ignatius humbly replied and pointed out to them that it was the Cardonair experience at Manresa.

It was the experience of the way to Damascus that gave new life to St Paul and similarly it was Cardonair experience that gave new life to St Ignatius. As we focus ourselves on the experience of St Ignatius on this occasion of the Jubilee, I wonder whether St Ignatius would like us to follow his 'Pilgrim Way' ourselves, to become aware of our own Cardonair experience and to draw profit from it.

Our Cardonair experience may be a pleasant one or an unpleasant one. For St Paul it was an experience of humiliation before the disciples, and for St Ignatius it was an experience of shattered dreams of worldly glory. But they took these events positively and discovered in them what the Lord has been telling them.

Perhaps the process that St Ignatius would be pleased that we should follow, is to reflect deeply on our lives and to become aware of God experiences that are dormant in us. Prayerfully reflecting over them and, guided by the Holy Spirit going deeper into them, we may open ourselves to the Holy Trinity to receive our own Cardonair vision and grace.



IN PRAISE OF A CANNONBALL

by Prabath Sanjeeva Fernando SJ

A sudden flash of lightning from the unheeding dark sky,
an unfeeling Canon of the enemy caused the rupture of the limb.

A voice was heard in Navarre, deep anguish
and the commander's gnashing of teeth,
For the Canon shattered the vanity of vanities.

A Kairos sway did the rupture begin; the touch of the *Divine*
Aha, there are those moments in life, when the foresight penetrates the hindsight
allowing the vibes to quiver through the veins to the perturbed soul; the *voice* of the *human*.

Once a daredevil in battle, now a tenacious Seraph in wining souls;
Saul might be the forerunner of this vainglorious man of a brave array.
The world was and will be a little better because of this limping pilgrim,
covered with tattered clothes, with unkempt demeanor.
Who could fathom this man would strive so hard to fight the invincible foe,
Ad maiorem Dei gloriam,
the living and leaving of a testament of testimony?

The battle cry which hurled an explosion;
The narcissistic wrecking ball inside his head, the insidious allurements inside his heart.
The *soldier* who fought the good fight, yet never sought to heed the wounds.
The *sinner* who never got tired of returning to the Divine Mercy.
The *saint* who toiled and labored so bravely, yet never sought any reward.

The **Cannonball** like a wrecking ball annihilated the bloated ego ball
that springs like a cut Hydra head. They are shape shifters who wear myriad forms of toxic outfits; demonstrating the
attitudes today.

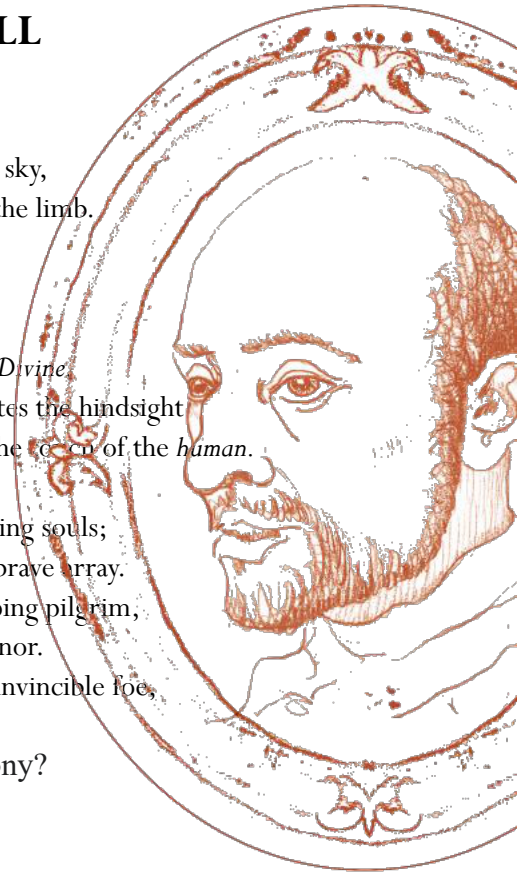
Firstly, the lethal cannons that cut through the optimistic veins; *the energy drainers, pessimists and manipulators.*
Then, wolves in sheep's clothing who play the role of *backstabbers, betrayers and the unfaithful.*
Finally, the werewolves of *spiritual vampires, drama magnets and obsessive-compulsive controllers.*
The everyday cannonballs; need diurnal touch of the Divine to dodge and defy, for they offer us shifting relations.

Companions, chosen from the rank and file; having no significance may be; called to be the broken founders, wounded
leaders of the brave array. Somewhere ages and ages unending, the toxic cannonballs continue to rip the cozy zones of the
deepest recesses of our being, summoning us to row into the deep.

Friends, you and I, the sons of the legend. The founders and visionaries of the modern era.
The Pamplona cannonball continues to rampage the shape of our inner beings, summoning conversion from to
conversion for.

The lumpy, oddly shaped toxic cannonballs impel us to see everything anew in Him.
Can we hear that call, a clarion call; to sing once more the Battle Song, no matter how feeble, frail and fragile?

A sage has once said the path to transformation lies through transmutation. For the grapes must be crushed to make
wine so do the flowers to produce perfume. These are the commanding insignia of the band of soldiers who will always
be touched by the Divine-human interventions and whisper the canticle, "*Take Lord and receive all that I possess, only give me
your love and your grace, and that's enough for me*".



He is a mystery of history

By: Lucien Emil Susantha, S.J.

History relives merely a few
St. Ignatius of Loyola is himself a history;
The completion of the 500th year of his conversion
Galvanizes our inward exploration.

As a lionhearted soldier, he dared
Enduring the cannonball on his leg; he knew
It was not a ball but a call
For transfiguration.

Having the passion for Christ on the one hand,
And the craving for the world on the other,
He embraced the inclination for
The service and conversion

Having had a boisterous, pompous vain glory
For the king, he held a broadsword consequently;
Although, dared enough to be deformed to utter docility,
Thus ensues him a bold nomad.

The revival of the nomad in Manresa cave
To a life of docility; is also the affinity
With the divinity that converts lives into
Mystic phenomena through Spiritual Exercises

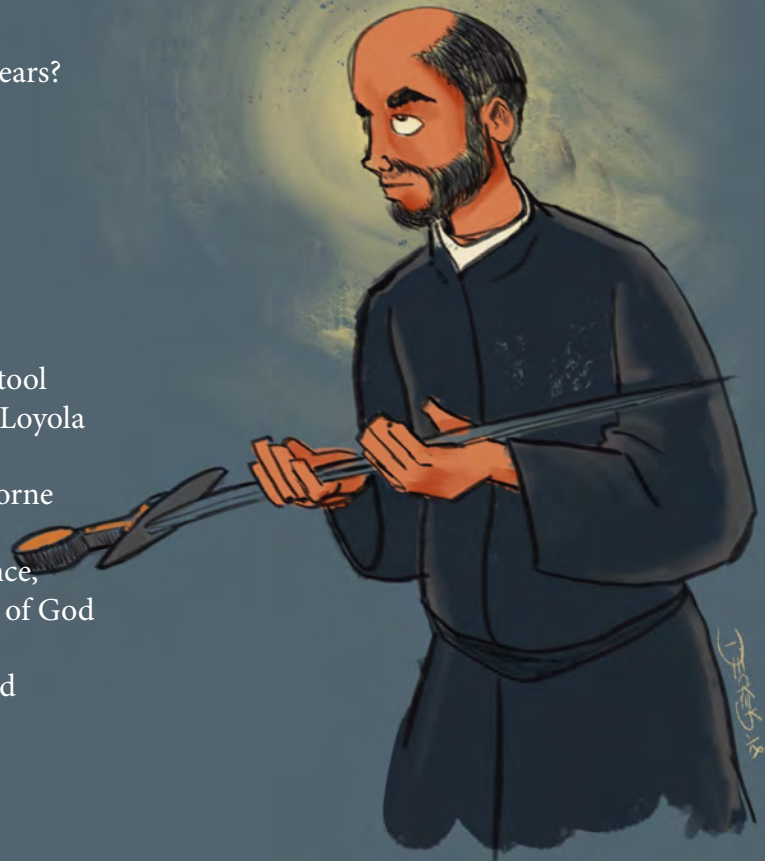
Why is he a history?
Why is he still spoken about even after 500 years?
Because of his remarkable conversion
For the Greater Glory of God

The conversion had escalated him to God,
So God called Jesuits through him,
Hence Jesuits touch the lives and souls
Of people with portent spirituality.
It is proven that even a sinner can become a tool
Of God by virtue of the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola

The enlightenment at the bank of river Cardorne
Explicated the past and the present, thus,
The Almighty favored him in Rome, and hence,
Here we are embodying the name of the Son of God

Under the Mighty Shadow of the Cross, stood
St. Ignatius for the Greater Glory of God,
Following him here we do nothing for
Our sake but for the Greater Glory of God

Invitation, to come together to celebrate
The 500th year of the conversion of
St. Ignatius of Loyola:
Invitation to convert lives to
Serve better for better.



FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS

A Father's love for children
The earth the sky and the sea
Look, in 3-D technicolour
The God you cannot see.

The air we breathe the cooling water
The sun and the shady tree
Flowers that bloom, bees that hum
A spider's sparkling filigree.

A carpet of grass a cap of snow
The bloody sun on a green sea
A smile, a tear, a tiny face
If only you can see.



IÑIGO to IGNATIUS

AN ENEMY WHOM GOD HAS MADE A FRIEND

Roy Fernando SJ

Passionate and a courageous soldier;
Ended his career with a hit of a cannon ball.
Fought to defend their citadel to death;
Rather than to accept the harsh terms of surrender.

Perhaps - the cannonball –not just changed his life
But the course of human history.
The 'No Man' Iñigo became the 'YES man' Ignatius.

Painful surgeries and a long recuperation at the castle in Loyola,
A total conversion at Manresa,
Laid down his sword before the statue of Our Lady of Montserrat,
Tortuous confessions and bouts of scruples, travels to the Holy
Land.
Found the fountain in the wilderness.

A naked man with love his only garment,
A blinded man who helped the world to see,
Strong in his weakness, joyful in his pains,
Bound by love, desired to free others from oppressive chains.

The thing is Union with God can be painful
While remaining ever gainful
Spiritual growth has its cost, as worldly ties are often lost!
Wisdom comes at a price, which involves no compromise
Straddling the fence is not permitted and
Immersing into the world became incarnate
It is through things of earth with the eyes on heaven,
And all enemies must be forgiven
God wants sacrifice to be absolute and the 'yes' resolute.
Make sacrifice without compromise.

This is why he dreamed of a world of service,
He dreamt of love with justice,
He dreamt of generosity without cost
The mind has thousand eyes and the heart but one
Yet the light of a whole life dies when love is done,
It is this man who taught us: TO SERVE AND TO LOVE
An enemy whom God has made a friend.



JESUIT MOBILITY OR IN PRAISE OF ROLLING STONES.

By: Chryso Pieris SJ.

A rolling stone gathers no moss
Free and light it has no boss
It rolls and rolls smooth and bright
Lovely like a kite in flight.

Mossy stones are stumbling blocks
Slippery treacherous heartless rocks
They judge and censure passing stones
Naked lazy shameless drones.

Rolling stones reach the ocean
Tired travellers' blessed vision
Find the ocean's treasure immense
With the pilgrims' aches and pains.

Mossy stones are durable
Steady stable predictable
But so dull and parochial
Like bored frogs in a well.



HAPPY FEAST OF
ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA



SRI LANKAN
JESUIT PROVINCE