

His advice: “Trust in your people.”

In early November 2004, Fr. Provincial Matsumoto called me to tell me about the new Provincial: I was the one chosen by Father General! Like Moses, I asked the Lord, “Who am I, Lord, to do this?” and I began to wonder what I could do for the Japanese Province as Superior Provincial. No sooner had I begun to think about that than I felt restless and lost my inner peace, So I decided to leave this question aside for a while.

Meanwhile I chose to send an e-mail to one of the senior Jesuits, my former Provincial, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás. I asked him, “What are the important things a Provincial must do?” He answered me immediately. In his e-mail, I found a very simple and clear answer: “The job of the Provincial is something to learn as you do it. Trust in your people.”

At first, I was not at all satisfied with his answer because he had not answered my question directly and in details. I had expected rather to be inspired and consoled by this great Jesuit elder. However, in my room, as I was pondering on what he had written, some words suddenly came to mind. They were those God had once said to Moses, “I will be with you.” I understood that these words contained God’s authentic promise to “be with me” as I live the reality of my daily life. My inner tranquillity and peace came back to me.

Till now, I see Fr. Nicolas’ simple words as the best answer to the question I had asked. I believe he must have lived, experienced this authentic enlightenment during the four seasons of his life – spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Needless to say, he certainly lives according to those words in his new life now.

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