

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT - REFLECTION



I ask for what I desire as we begin this topic



I pray that my entire being become open to God's grace



I imagine these texts being addressed to me, and note my response

Grace: That we may find God in all things

“Today, as you well know, the Society is at a very important moment of its history. In the four hundred years of its existence this moment is one of great opportunities, when we can delve deep into the charism of Saint Ignatius and busy ourselves with its practical application. This is no easy task, because our target though very definite, is not stationary but constantly moving. Circumstances of rapid change surround us on all sides and so we have to reflect constantly on our course of action and the application of our spirit.

Saint Ignatius said that the Society was founded for the service of the Church—“*servitium Ecclesiae sub Romano Pontifice*—and this remains true of the Society even in these times when the Church and the world are undergoing so much change.

Changes herald problems, and this is a good thing. Were there no problems in the Society, it would be a sign that it was a calcified body, a dead body. Today's problems need to be approached calmly, with a profound confidence in God who is leading the Church and the Society. The Holy Ghost is responsible for this. [...] We can count on the providence of Almighty God. We can be nothing else but optimistic, positive, trying to contribute to the glory of God and the betterment of the world according to our charism in the best way we can. The Society has a *raison d'être* in that it fosters progress of the world for the greater glory of God. I reply that the Society today has still the living spirit to move the world to Christ.”

Pedro Arrupe, “Relevance of the Society and its Apostolate in the World Today,” (1971)

Serving Christ's mission today means paying special attention to its global context. This context requires us to act as a universal body with a universal mission, realising at the same time the radical diversity of our situations. It is as a worldwide community – and, simultaneously, as a network of local communities – that we seek to serve others across the world. Our mission of faith and justice, dialogue of religions and cultures has acquired dimensions that no longer allow us to conceive of the world as composed of separate entities; we must see it as a unified whole in which we depend upon one another. Globalization, technology, and environmental concerns have challenged our traditional boundaries and have enhanced our awareness that we bear a common responsibility for the welfare of the entire world and its development in a sustainable and living-giving way.

GC35 - Decree 2,20 - A New Context, To New Frontiers

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What difficult situations and changes come to mind as we read the above texts?
2. What invitations might this challenging context carry for us today?