

# LEADERSHIP TASKS AND ROLES - 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 direct our leadership tasks and roles towards a good purpose

**Context:** A few years before Ignatius died, a Portuguese Jesuit called Luis Gonçalves da Câmara came to work in Rome as one of his assistants, and recorded in a diary the different ways Ignatius acted. Here are a few extracts.

[Ignatius] was asking the buyer of food to tell him every day if he had given the infirmarian everything he had asked him for, [...] and ordering the rector to let him know immediately when someone had fallen ill (31)

To the petition of Cardinal Viseu, who requests a preacher, our Father [Ignatius] replied that he must be excused from getting involved in these matters, and that we should speak to Fr. Nadal who takes his place (41). When a request is made which our Father [Ignatius] cannot grant, he usually likes to keep out of the matter, in order to maintain his friendship, which it is important to keep in relation to the head rather than to any of the members (42)

I had hardly thrown myself on to my bed when I received a message that our Father was calling for me. He received me with a very severe expression and, not even asking me the reason for the delay, said, "You don't want to be obedient, and I don't know what to do with you! Don't come to see me any more! Go to the College and we shall see if you can be obedient there. Don't eat or drink anything today, and tell your companions to do the same."... (54)

"The great joy and pleasure he experiences in talking about, and listening to, news of the doings of the brethren. (...) He took great pleasure in this, wanting to learn details of how they ate, slept, what they wore and many more small and trivial details, so much so that one day while he was questioning me about India he said, "Indeed I would love to know, if it were possible, how many fleas bite them every night." (86)

One thing astounds me at times about our Father [Ignatius]: it seems from his manner of speaking that he holds a good opinion of everyone, as though he presumes that they are perfect or have serious intentions of becoming perfect. Still, when it comes to finding employment for them, he places each in what suits him best. But this does not mean that he always gives confidential tasks to those who have been well tested; rather in Rome he sometimes gives people tasks to test them, whereas outside Rome he very rarely allots confidential tasks to anyone about whom he is not certain. (112 [n.d.]

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

In what tasks and activities am I the most absorbed lately?

What grounds me and gives me energy and life when faced with challenges?