

GENERAL INTRODUCTION - 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 grow in appreciation of the bond of love that is the foundation for our mission and find ways to deepen and share it.

As we prepare to enter in the increasingly broad and complex interpersonal dimension of leadership, we begin with a consideration of stories of connectedness: Ignatius and the first companions, the calling of the disciples, the journey of the resurrected Jesus with the two disciples of Emmaus. These narratives carry a message for us today and invite us to contemplate how we can build a sense of community, purpose and mission.

Our earliest companions, even though they considered themselves weak and fragile and originating from many different places, found the will of God together amid great diversity of opinion. What enabled them to find God's will was their "decided care and alertness to initiate a completely open way" and to offer themselves fully to it for the greater glory of God. Thus they began a narrative; they lit a fire, which was handed on in subsequent generations whenever people encountered the Society, enabling the personal histories of generations to become embedded in the Society's history as a whole. This collective history formed the basis of their unity; and at its heart was Jesus Christ. [...]

Despite the differences, what unites us as Jesuits is Christ and the desire to serve him: not to be deaf to the call of the Lord, but prompt and ready to do his most holy will. He is the unique image of the unseen God, capable of revealing himself everywhere; and in a tantalizing culture of images, he is the single image that unites us. Jesuits know who they are by looking at him.

GC 35, D2,2

The chief bond of union among them all is the love of God Our Lord; if all are closely drawn to the sovereign goodness they will be easily united among themselves, for this will be achieved by that divine love, which flowing from God embraces all humanity, and in particular the entire Society. So it is charity and, in general, all goodness and virtues, that will make for union of one with the other.

Const. n. 671

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Who are the people I am journeying with? And for what purpose?

What kind of response is this walk evoking in me today? *I recall moments of communion and sharing. I bring to mind moments of struggle or separation.*

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Jesus Calls the First Disciples - Mark 1:16-20

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, ‘What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?’ They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, ‘Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?’ He asked them, ‘What things?’ They replied, ‘The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.’ Then he said to them, ‘Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!’ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The Walk to Emmaus - Luke 24:13-35