

Sunday 29 July 2018: Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The hand of the Lord feeds us



...As we become familiar with the style of John's gospel, we recognise that today's account of the feeding of the crowd – the introductory section of this long meditation - has strong overtones of the Eucharistic celebration: it is announced that the 'feast of Passover' is approaching; Jesus 'gives thanks' as at the Last Supper; Jesus himself distributes the loaves to all present.

This incident reminds us that the Saviour, whose Paschal Mystery we share in as we celebrate the Mass, is concerned for the welfare of God's people at every level. We must have a concern for our brothers and sisters that is more than words and pious thoughts, if we are to show in our lives the true fruits of the Paschal Mystery. It has often been pointed out that, in the miraculous feeding of the crowd, Jesus called upon the generosity of collaborators...

Extract by John Thornhill sm - read more at [The Emmaus Series](#) | Image courtesy of [Herman oleon Clipart](#)

31 July: Feast of St Ignatius

Jesuits celebrate the Feast of St Ignatius as their family feast. We also speak of the Ignatian tradition to which many Jesuit institutions belong. Some of those who work within them are Catholics active in their church communities. Others were brought up Catholic; still others are from many religious traditions or none. But Ignatius of Loyola has brought something to the way all of us work and see the world.

Jesuit works often try to crystallise that 'something' in mission statements and slogans. At Jesuit Social Services we describe our Ignatian inheritance in the words, Welcoming, Discerning, Courageous. We try to make our relationships with the vulnerable young people we serve, our relationships to one another, and all the decisions and institutional frameworks of our organisation welcoming, discerning and courageous. Of course, we often fail, but even our failures keep our compass pointing to these qualities.

The words in which we choose to embody any tradition are rooted in people, in stories and in a history of reflection. The Ignatian tradition is rooted in the story of St Ignatius and in his dealings

with others and his world. The outlines of that story are well known. A war injury first gave space for an ambitious young courtier to reflect deeply on his life, led him to find in the life of Jesus inspiration to live poorly, to guide others to live well, to study for the priesthood in order better to help them, to gather young men around him to serve people, and finally to found an international religious congregation.



Each of the words adopted by Jesuit Social Services are anchored in Ignatius' life. He was welcoming in giving his time to simple people who sought his advice, in engaging with the students at the University of Paris and inviting them to share his dreams, and in making the resources of the congregation he founded available to people of different nations. He was discerning in recognising the movements of the heart that bless or spoil important enterprises, and in focusing on what really mattered: the service of God and of other human beings. He was courageous in travelling dangerously and hanging in in the face of internal conflict and obstacles put in his way by church and society.

Welcoming, Discerning and Courageous name qualities essential in the relationships we develop with the people whom we accompany, with one another and with our environment. They are part of our Ignatian heritage.

Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ