



ST. PIUS X PARISH

16 Smithville Crescent
St. John's, NL
A1B 2V2
Tel: (709) 754-0170



E-Mail: stpiusx@nl.rogers.com
Webpage: www.spx.ca



OUR PIUS UPDATE
August 3, 2021



THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE...

Jesus' parables offer images to help us see, hear, and understand in our hearts his desire to heal and reconcile us to himself (*cf. Mt. 13:13-17*). Jesus is the one who sows seeds of potential anywhere and everywhere, content to cultivate wheat and weeds until harvest. He is a tiny seed, transforming a scrawny bush into a huge tree strong enough for everyone to find a branch on which to roost. He is yeast (*microscopic member of the fungi family*) worked into flour and water, consumed in rising, becoming our daily bread.

Jesus delights in discovering his siblings hiding under layers of dirt or concealed by a lustrous shine. He gives everything, his very life, with joy and without hesitation that we might be with him in his Kingdom forever.

How can I ever repay this love Jesus shows in finding, feeding, sheltering, and patiently accompanying me through a lifetime of growth?

- **Jenéne Francis** serves as the **Midwest Jesuits' Associate Provincial Assistant for Pastoral Ministries**. She is also a regular contributor to *Into the Deep*, contemplating life through the lens of Ignatian Spirituality.

PRAYER

This is to ask for what I desire.

*Here it will be to ask for an Intimate knowledge of the many blessings received,
that filled with gratitude for all,
I may in all things love and serve the Divine Majesty.*

- **Spiritual Exercises**, #233,

Second Prelude for the "**Contemplation to Attain the Love of God**"
(Puhl translation)

SOURCE: www.jesuitprayer.org



CANNONBALL MOMENTS



My car entered into a spin that left me pressing locked brakes and clutching a wheel that could not be steered. Halfway through the spin, the momentum brought the car onto its outer two wheels — the side where the gas tank is housed. The sounds of the steel arching beneath me as the car fought to right itself inspired my desperate prayer: *“Lord, is this the day I’m going to see you? If it’s ok with you, I would really like to stay longer.”*

430 degrees later, my car landed heavily back down on all four wheels.

I stumbled out of the car. The tears started before I hit the curb — I couldn’t contain them. It wasn’t because my car was totaled or because my body hurt. While both were true, these were tears of gratitude. Just five minutes earlier, I had asked my son to accompany me as I went to pick up his brother. He declined, maintaining that he wanted to stay home and count his pennies.

So, as I sat on that curb, I cried because he had stayed home to count pennies, which meant that he wasn’t in the seat that had weathered the first impact. And, because he was home counting pennies, he didn’t get concussed by the airbag that had deployed. And I cried because God had allowed that I would see that broad, penny-counting smile again from this side of heaven.

I wept too because there are still good people. As I exited my vehicle, two men came running from different directions to catch me. One sat with me as I wept. The other ran to his home to get me water. He asked if I had kids. I nodded. He said, *“Thank God that they weren’t with you. God is watching out for you.”* I nodded and wept some more at the fact that he seemed to be reading my mind. I love that in our often frenetically paced world, people still care.

As I laid recuperating in the days that followed, I thought about what had happened. I wondered how my car had been invisible to the person that had accidentally driven into me.

I wondered why God had allowed me to be there at that particular moment. Why couldn't I have passed through that space just a few moments later or earlier?

These are likely questions that **St. Ignatius** tossed around too as he convalesced after the cannonball hit his leg. Why was he there in that moment? Why wasn't he just a smidge to the left or to the right? The trajectory of that cannonball changed his life. And it changed my life. And, if you're reading this, it likely changed your life too. In retrospect, we can see the outcome of the cannonball: sainthood for Ignatius and the founding of Society of Jesus, an order that has affected history and countless lives within that history.

God knows the "*big picture*", a picture that is impossible for us to see from our limited perspective.

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
For as the rain and snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

—Isaiah 55:8–11

While I can't begin to imagine the way God reasons, I do know that there is nothing like hardship to put priorities in order and to inspire gratitude wrenched from the gut. There is nothing like hardship to open one's eyes to all of the gifts God puts right in front of us every single moment: the beautiful people, the wonders of the earth, the gift of time, and countless other gifts.

And so it was with Ignatius. Ignatius suffered the hardship of injury. The result? A life of gratitude. Eyes that saw God in all things. A life surrendered in trust to a God who has good in store for us even when those cannonball moments hit.

SOURCE: Rebecca Ruiz, www.ignatianspirituality.com

ST. ANNA WANG

1886 - July 22, 1900



Anna was just fourteen when she was among a group of Christians rounded up during the **Boxer Rebellion** and ordered to renounce her faith. She refused to follow her stepmother's example and deny God. The following day, she was given more opportunities and rejected them as well, even as she was struck, losing her right arm. She whispered Jesus's name three times, then lowered her head and was decapitated.

Consider the bravery of Anna, remaining faithful even as she watched others being executed. While few of us will ever face such a dramatic test, our faith is challenged in other ways - when people mock us for our beliefs or challenge us about some of the Church's stances on hot-button issues. Do we stand up for our faith - or let the comments go unchecked?

Inspiration

For I will give words and a wisdom
that none of your opponents will be able
to withstand or contradict.

(Luke 21:15)

Challenge

Think about situations in which you avoid talking about God and your faith to avoid confrontation or ridicule. Ask God for the right words to say and the strength to say them.