

Manresa

Good News LETTER



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Chairman's Reflection

Alvin C. Miester III

Lay Down Your Sword!



When you receive this newsletter, we will be well into the season of Advent. While in high school, I was taught that Advent is a season of metanoia or change. During this season, we are called to prepare for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We are called to change.

As Men of Manresa, we are all familiar with the life of Ignatius of Loyola. Iñigo, as he was called, was born in the castle at Loyola in Azpeitia, Spain to noble parents. Iñigo dreamed of being a soldier and a courtier. Desiring fame and honor, he became a page. While a page, Iñigo took up dancing, fencing, gambling, womanizing, and dueling. He was a dandy dresser preferring to wear the tight-fitting hose and boots that were the fashion of the time.

He joined the army at seventeen. In 1521, he was seriously injured during the Battle of Pamplona when a cannonball crushed his right leg. Iñigo returned to the family castle for surgical treatment and recovery. He underwent several surgeries to repair his leg and allow him to return to military duty and wear the fashionable attire of the day to which he had become accustomed. These painful surgeries were unsuccessful. His leg remained disfigured and he would limp for the rest of his life.

He returned home to recover. While recovering, he asked for books on romance and chivalry, his favorite topics. Instead he read “The Life of Christ” by Rudolph, a Carthusian theologian, and “Flowers of the Saints.” His mind was filled with thoughts of both chivalry and sanctity.

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Potpourri

Continued from page 2

on the website to learn about the different ways you can give to Manresa at www.manresala.org Click on the button on the upper right corner titled: Donations.

Fiscal Year end numbers for 2024-2025

Total operational costs less maintenance: \$2,720,758.02 / total number of retreatants 6,202 = **\$438.69** per retreat on what it costs to feed and house each retreatant.

Total maintenance costs: \$718,275.27/ total number of retreatants 6,202 = **\$115.81** per retreatant to cover maintenance and improvement projects around the Manresa campus.

Total costs incurred by Manresa per retreatant in 2024-25 is: **\$554.50**

The Manresa Board recommends a donation of **\$430** to cover costs for room and board for a Manresa Retreat in 2026.

NS81

REQUIRESCANT IN PACE		RETREATANTS		RETREATS	
25	Ronald W. Allen	27	July 3	110	Lance Ciambelluca
27	Gerald Boudreaux	28	10	108	Michael Abbate
39	Alfred R. Bourgeois	29	17	110	Steve Panepinto
51	Nester J. Bourgeois	30	24	112	Gerald Jackson
32	David J. Colomb	31	31	111	Ted Magee
25	Timothy B. Curren	32	Aug 7	113	Thomas Moore
32	Thomas Flynn	33	14	111	Glenn Bodin
32	Clifton M. Guillot	34	21	112	Frank Muscarello
9	Stephen W. Hicks	36	28	97	Patrick Lobos
33	Clifford D. Jouenwy	35	Sept 4	114	James Richard
35	Roy Kliebert	37	11	111	Manny Gagliano
29	Robert John Lanchis	38	18	111	Charles Miller
3	Norman Major	39	25	109	Jack Uhle
10	Anthony Monaco	47	Edmund E. Prestidge	11	Leroy Plaisance
18	William O'Brien	11	13	1417	Retreatants
11	Chris Moody	12	12	132	Other Faiths
28	Fred N. Salvo	12	12	1417	Retreatants
28	Thomas Sandeman	12	12	1417	Retreatants
7	Louis Sardenaga	12	12	1417	Retreatants
12	Harold Schexnayder	12	12	1417	Retreatants
20	Louis T. Toups	12	12	1417	Retreatants
28	Philip D. Voss	12	12	1417	Retreatants
24	Louis M. Watigney	12	12	1417	Retreatants
18	Raymond E. Weidenbacher	12	12	1417	Retreatants
26	John F. Wemple	12	12	1417	Retreatants

THIRD QUARTER STATISTICS		REQUIRESCANT IN PACE		RETREATANTS		RETREATS	
2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
16	April 3	13A	6	109	110	109	110
105	Mike McCloskey	105	105	105	105	105	105
107	Robert Peek	109	109	109	109	109	109
110	Leon Raymond	111	111	111	111	111	111
110	Mark Normand	110	110	110	110	110	110
105	Joe Preskitt	110	110	110	110	110	110
108	Michael Fitzgerald	112	112	112	112	112	112
108	Jim Danner	94	94	94	94	94	94
19	8	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	15	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	22	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	Raymond Theriot	22	22	22	22	22	22
29	Alan Melancon	22	22	22	22	22	22
110	June 1	22A	22A	22A	22A	22A	22A
108	Leonard Bankston	111	111	111	111	111	111
108	Dr. Craig Parker	112	112	112	112	112	112
108	Jonny Bordelon	111	111	111	111	111	111
110	Michel Champagne	111	111	111	111	111	111
110	Buddy Ledet	108	108	108	108	108	108
111	26	111	111	111	111	111	111
1507	1521	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507	1507

SECOND QUARTER STATISTICS

THIRD QUARTER STATISTICS

REQUIRESCANT IN PACE

Director's Reflection

Brother Larry Huck, SJ

The Interconnectedness of Faith, Trust, and Belief



In the gospel Jesus uses the word "faith" many times. Jesus states how someone's faith brought about healing or forgiveness. Another time Jesus states that He has not seen such great faith in a person. On another occasion He encourages someone to just have faith.

In October, while on the Ignatian Pilgrimage in Spain and Rome, I encountered the

deep faith of many people in our group. At the end of the eleven-day pilgrimage, I found my own faith was strengthened and my trust in Christ grew and my belief that I, as imperfect as I am, can better follow the path that leads to God. For I had witnessed that if one's faith is shared and not held in isolation, it grows.

Jesus said that if we just have faith the size of a mustard seed, then we can move mountains. The pilgrimage trip helped me witness just that. The faith of all pilgrims, joined together, was moving mountains by removing the barriers that separate us from God the Father and one another.

I believe that all members of our pilgrimage group experienced an increase in faith. We all brought with us on the trip our faith, along with our physical, spiritual, and psychological limitations. Through and because of our various limitations and through our little mustard seeds of faith we encountered Christ in one another, in Mass, in prayer, in confession, in touching a relic, in visiting a place where Christ was encountered hundreds of years before and is still being encountered at these same holy sites today. We encountered Christ by sharing our very selves with each other.

My faith was increased by the way all people in our group helped one another when they saw another in the group struggling. The same goes for those who struggled in how they opened up and let others help them. Also, my faith was increased

through the sharing of the graces we encountered along the way, in conversations on the bus ride, over a meal, or walking from one place to the next.

My faith increased, while standing in line for 3 hours to enter Vatican Square and while standing in Vatican Square, with over 100,000 other faith-filled pilgrims, listening to Pope Leo XIV. Also, there were many thousands of pilgrims who could not enter the square because it was full. Yet, their faith called them to stand along the outer edges of the square because they, like Zaccheus, desired to see the Lord.

My belief that Christ is always at work drawing myself and others closer to the Father was increased in witnessing that no matter how bad things seem to be in the world, imperfect people are doing good things for others. Seeing God at work throughout this trip increased the hope and

joy within because I felt my heart burning, like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus when they were speaking with the stranger (Christ) whom they welcomed along the road. Know that God is doing the same for you.

If you struggle to see God at work in the world, then be like the woman with the hemorrhage and take a leap of faith. Trust that your faith will lead you to do something bold and believe that you will be healed and saved because you turned your life over to Christ. As Christmas approaches, know that you are worthy to be at the manger with Mary and Joseph. You are worthy to hold the newborn Savior in your arms. If you take that leap of faith, then you will find healing, peace, and joy. Thus, your faith will deepen and your ability to trust will increase, and you will come to believe and know that you are loved by Christ just as you are. You are a worthy gift to be shared, because you were made very good by God.

In Gratitude,
Br. Larry Huck, SJ

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Potpourri

Group 45 had 108 men attend this year, five of whom were deacons and two of whom were priests. During the retreat, the group prayed for Pope Leo XIV on Nov. 8th which marked six months of the Pope's pontificate. A 98-year-old WWII veteran attended the retreat and was the oldest man in the group. Three donors made a combined challenge matching gift of 15K for the Insurance Fund. Group 45 members matched the 15K challenge gift, plus some.

Group 47 enjoyed a retreat given by Fr. Jim Shea, SJ, who gave his first retreat at Manresa. The group hailed

from 10 different states, had 11 first-timers, 13 non-Catholics, 14 doctors, 18 retirees, 4 deacons, and several family combinations. The group remembered two members who passed away since last year: Tom Fitzmorris and Dr. Frank Incaprera.

2025 Maintenance and Improvements Projects – The Camino Ignaciano was completed in the woods between Manresa and the Court House. The front fences were extended downriver along River Road. The cork floor on the 3rd floor downriver wing of St. Mary's was replaced and will continue through the rest of the third floor. Also, two hot water heaters

on the 2nd floor of St. Mary's Hall were replaced. On the 3rd floor of St. Mary's Hall, painting of the bedrooms and the hallways, different colors, have begun. Also, spiritual art is being hung on the walls as well. More improvements are in the works in 2026. Please know that all of these improvements were made possible because of your generosity. Thank you!

End-of-Year Giving – Please remember Manresa in your end-of-year giving, especially the Self Insurance Fund. Please visit Manresa's Donation page

Continued on page 4

Following Ignatius Home

Christopher Dupré

This past October, I was given the unexpected grace of traveling to Spain with men of Manresa to follow in the footsteps of St. Ignatius of Loyola. I have spent many years praying the Spiritual Exercises at Manresa, listening to the stories of Ignatius's conversion, and trying, though imperfectly, to bring those principles into my daily life. But nothing could have prepared me for the experience of encountering Ignatius not only as a saint or a spiritual master, but as a man – wounded, searching, humbled, and eventually set ablaze for Christ.

One of the most moving moments of the pilgrimage came in Loyola, inside the actual bedroom where Ignatius convalesced after the cannonball shattered his leg. For so long, I had heard about his "cannonball moment," that life-altering interruption through which God began to remake his heart. But standing in that room, celebrating Mass in that sacred space, gave the story an intimacy and weight that no 8th Grade Jesuit Theology class or Manresa Retreat could ever truly convey.

The room is simple and quiet and yet, as we prayed there, I understood more deeply that real conversion often begins in places like that: not in dramatic visions, but in the long, interior work God accomplishes when our strength ends and His begins.

I found myself reflecting on the cannonball moments in my own life – the interruptions, disappointments, and unexpected turns that once felt disruptive but were, in hindsight, movements of grace. In that room, I prayed for the courage to allow God to reshape the parts of me still unfinished.

Another moment of profound grace came further along the pilgrimage in Manresa, Spain in the place where Ignatius spent nine months in the cave along the Cardoner River. I stood before the cave where he prayed, fasted, wrestled with scruples, confronted his past, and where God opened his soul so completely that the very foundations of the Spiritual Exercises were born there.

It struck me that the work Ignatius did in that cave – the wrestling, the clarity, the surrender, the pain of seeing himself honestly – is the same work we men continue to do centuries later at Manresa in Convent. The geography is different. The riverbanks look different. The beds are softer (maybe). But the spiritual terrain is the same.

In Spain, Ignatius confronted the truth of his life before God, and in Convent, we do the same.

In that Spanish cave, Ignatius came face-to-face with his wounds, his attachments, and the God who loved him too much to leave him unchanged.

On the Mississippi River at our Manresa, we enter into the quiet where God gently reveals the same truths to us.

Standing in the cave, I realized that every retreat we make at Manresa, every examen we pray, every grace we beg for, is, in

its own way, a continuation of what began in that cave nearly 500 years ago. The Exercises are not a historical document. They are a living work, meant for men like us, in the world we live in now, with the responsibilities God has placed on our shoulders.

Montserrat was another place of clarity. To stand where Ignatius laid down his sword – relinquishing the identity he had crafted for himself – challenged me to examine what I still cling to. I am getting married in May, and throughout the pilgrimage my prayer kept returning to the man I hope to become for Elissa, my fiancée. What does it mean to love with the heart of Christ? To lead with humility? To build a family rooted in discernment, prayer, and generosity?

In that chapel, I asked God for the grace to live my vocation with the same openness Ignatius embraced – to hand over whatever keeps me from loving well, serving generously, or discerning faithfully.

One of the greatest blessings of the pilgrimage was sharing it with my father, Arthur Dupré. Walking those sacred places, praying side by side, and reflecting on Ignatius's journey as father and son was a gift I will carry for the rest of my life. There were moments when I recognized how God weaves together the generations and how the faith of our fathers becomes the foundation upon which we build our future homes.

Throughout the pilgrimage, a line from Fr. Raymond Fitzgerald, S.J., spoken during my senior year at Jesuit High School, resurfaced again and again:

"Harbor no doubts how good you are and can be... for Saints do walk among us... Sainthood is truly how good you are capable of becoming."

Those words reminded me that holiness is not distant or unreachable. It is formed in real places, through real people, in the ordinary decisions of everyday life. It is the slow, steady "yes" that Christ invites us to give Him – not once, but daily.

Spain renewed in me a desire to live as a true "man for others," not only in title but in the quiet choices that form the man I am becoming. It deepened my gratitude for Manresa, for its silence, its Directors, and the brotherhood of thousands of men who return each year hungry for a deeper encounter with God.

And as the Jesuits at Manresa often remind us: Men, pray for each other.

None of us can make this journey alone. So I ask all of us, as brothers following the same Ignatian road, to keep praying for one another. Pray that we may have the courage to face our own cannonball moments, the humility to enter our own caves, and the generosity to live out the Exercises in the world God has entrusted to us.

May we continue to seek God in all things and offer our lives, day by day,

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.