

## Reflection Thursday Week 1 Advent 2020

**St Francis Xavier** was born in the Basque country of Spain in 1506. He met Ignatius Loyola as a student in Paris and was ordained priest in 1537. In 1541 the Pope sent him to India, and he spent the rest of his life in the East, preaching the Gospel in Goa and Malacca. He made many converts and fought against the exploitation of the native population by the Europeans. He spent two years on a successful mission to Japan, laying the foundations of many Christian communities; and in 1552, after entering China secretly to preach the Gospel there, he died of fever and exhaustion on the Chinese island of Shangchwan.

Not only did Francis Xavier have complete trust in God as expressed by Isaiah in the first reading, he also heeded the words of Jesus in the Gospel: *'It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord," who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father.* The spread of the gospel in Asia owes much to the commitment and perseverance of Francis. The readings today could have been specially written for him. Let us place our trust in the Lord and continue to do the will of the Father. Then the Good News will spread to places unknown including among those who live around us. As much as we look forward to being vaccinated against Covid 19 and trust in its protection, far greater is the protection that God offers us throughout the whole of our lives.

Be encouraged by Francis' wisdom:

*It is impossible to find a saint who did not take the "two P's" seriously: prayer and penance.*

*It is not the actual physical exertion that counts towards a person's progress, nor the nature of the task, but the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken."*

*As to the numbers who become Christians, you may understand that it often happens to me to be hardly able to use my hands from the fatigue of baptizing: often in a single day I have baptized whole villages. Sometimes I have lost my voice and strength altogether with repeating again and again the Credo and the other forms.*

*In you, O Lord, I have put my trust, never let me be confounded!*

*After these your day can only get better!*

- ***I don't trust stairs.*** They're always up to something!
- ***I don't trust elevators...*** I've taken a lot of steps to avoid them!
- ***Why should you always trust an audio engineer?*** Because they give sound advice!
- ***I knew a man who didn't trust his hands.*** He had to keep them at arm's length!!