

## Reflection 1<sup>st</sup> Week Advent St Francis Xavier 2021

**Francis** 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 with other missionaries 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. In 1552, after entering China secretly to preach the Gospel, he died of fever and exhaustion on the Chinese island of Shangchwan.

Jesus said to the Apostles: *“Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News!”* which is interpreted as an order. Yet ,after Pentecost the apostles and disciples were only too eager to tell others about Jesus and how much God loved them. For these first missionaries it was not so much a command than a permission, an encouragement and affirmation to do what they earnestly wanted to do already. In Baptism we, too, are asked to be missionaries of the Good News. This can be seen as a command but, if Jesus asked you to teach people kindness, courtesy, honour and respect, about caring for others, helping those in desperate need, we would have no problem. We earnestly want to do this and we know that in Baptism Jesus promises to be with us and gives us the Holy Spirit to dwell within us as a guide and support, while the Father looks on encouraging and strengthening us to live the Good News just like his Son, Jesus. St Francis Xavier promises to help!