

LEADERSHIP THEORIES AND STYLES - REFLECTION



I ask for what I desire as we begin this topic



I pray that my entire being become open to God's grace



I imagine these texts being addressed to me, and note my response

Grace: that the way we exercise our leadership carries fruits that benefit others

Context: A few years before Ignatius died, a Portuguese Jesuit called Luís Gonçalves da Câmara came to work in Rome as one of his assistants, and recorded in a diary the different ways Ignatius acted in the world. Here are a few extracts.

There is much to reflect on in the way our Father [Ignatius] uses completely opposite means for apparently identical purposes. One he treats with great rigour, another with great gentleness, and after the event one always saw that such was the remedy, although beforehand one had not understood. But he always inclines more towards love, imo [indeed] to such a point that everything appears as love. And because of this he is so beloved by all; there is no one in the Society who does not love him greatly, and does not himself think that the Father loves him very dearly. (86) [n.d.]

The Father [Ignatius] gave penances and rebukes with great ease in light matters, even if there were no blame, and likewise he was often heard to say, "In giving penances it is good to be liberal." (37b)

One admirable thing is how he keeps the rule of the Exercises which says that each person should interpret the statement of another in the best possible sense, so much so that among those who have dealings with him the interpretations of the Father excusing the faults of others - both of those outside the Society and of those who are members - have become proverbial. (92)

When our Father [Ignatius] was angry, no one was feared as much... once when the Father was discussing an important affair with Fr. Laínez who was over-insisting on a certain point, the words our Father said to him were, "Very well, you take over the Society and govern it!", in a way that cut Fr. Laínez short, incapable of uttering another word. (104)

He [Ignatius] himself told me that in order to draw a very distinguished person away from a sin of which he was accused, he gave him an account of things that had happened to himself in the world (79)

Remembering Iñigo – Memoriale Luís Gonçalves da Câmara

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What would I say characterizes my personal leadership style?
What fruits does it carry for my mission and for other individuals?