

# IBC Newsletter

Friends,

Welcome to Advent, the winds of winter, and dark nights! It is a time when the angel says, "Do not be afraid." (Luke 1:13) We are entering an enchanting time of year when serendipity happens! (See article) And we are invited to enter a storied world more symbolic and sacramental than our rational, empirical, and scientific world.

I have just returned from co-leading a small group of Ignatian Wisdom Fellows on the Ignatian Camino (by bus) from Bilbao to Barcelona and then finishing in Rome. We were tracing the footsteps of Ignatius as he developed from a child, through his "cannonball conversion" to a senior leader, and making connections between his life and our own. The similarities and contrasts were revelatory—most so as we explored the art and architecture of the times. The art in Spain and Rome is reflective of a wild religious imagination. There are angels and cherubs and saints and popes and devils and villains; there are crosses and flowers and mountains and rivers. We visited mystical places such as Monserrat and Manresa and encountered the Black Madonna and Our Lady of Arantzazu. Rome was full of pilgrims in this jubilee year. We went to the Vatican and saw the Pope during his Wednesday audience in a capacity crowd in St. Peter's Square. To see the faith that brought pilgrims from all over the world to the eternal city was inspiring.

Now, coming home to the holiday season—Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year—festive times with memories and stories of surprise, kindness, joy, and laughter. Do not let your troubles douse the hope of the season, the light that casts out darkness, and the love offered in a manger. This is a time of giving and receiving gifts. Do not miss what is offered as generations connect and collide. Listen deeply to your heart and the hearts of family and friends.

My reading recommendations for December are by Doc Seuss: *The Grinch* for Christmas and *You're Only Old Once* for those approaching or immersed in retirement. And read Christmas classics, watch Christmas movies. Catch, embody, and extend the Christmas Spirit!

Pray for our new Pope Leo; for families affected by violence; for the homeless, immigrants and refugees; for the Church; and for peace and the end of violence around the world, and for our democracy! Gather them in and have a Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year!

Pax,

John Fontana



## MISSION

The Mission of the Ignatian Business Chapters is to establish and lead a national and international network of business executives to explore their respective religious traditions in order to help the individual executives

- integrate faith, family, and professional life,
- develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and values, and
- exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large.

The chapters, grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, welcome believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious traditions. They are committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.

## SCRIPTURE READING:

### Luke 1:8-17

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

## ARTICLES

### "Connecting the dots in an uncertain world"

by Suvarchala Narayanan, *strategy+business*, September 16, 2020

### "Relationships and the Holidays,"

by Vinita Hampton Wright, *IgnatianSpirituality.com*





## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

**Be attentive:** What have you discovered in the article about serendipity? When have you experienced serendipity in your work and personal life?

**Be intelligent:** Why is having a serendipity mindset important, particularly at this time of year?

**Be reasonable:** How are you reacting to “what can businesses do to help their people develop a serendipity mindset”?

**Be responsible:** What were key insights that surfaced in today’s discussion? Any food for further contemplation? Any action steps? What are the implications for you at work, in your community, and at home? Leverage the conversation for good!



## CLOSING PRAYER

### Personal Prayer of Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

Grant me, O Lord, to see everything now with new eyes;  
to discern and test the spirits that help me read the signs of the times;  
to relish the things that are yours, and to communicate them to others.  
Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave Ignatius.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen!

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