

Today is for me one of the best days of the year. It is the Feast Day of one of my two favourite Saints, Ignatius of Loyola. The other is John Vianney whom I really only got to know about three years ago. They both hang from a chain around my neck.

Iggy, as I am permitted to call him, was the first Saint other than the Apostles, four Evangelists and Mary who gripped me with his story. It was before I became a Catholic and I loved his story of conversion and what he went on to achieve. I was taken by his writings on discernment and the Spiritual Exercises even before I got to experience the thirty days journey myself.

I was privileged some years back to visit a number of sites in Spain and in Rome related to Iggy's story including both his homes in Loyola and in Rome (which is why I believe I am entitled to call him by the familiar name, 'Iggy').

I am still to acquire a statue of Iggy. I have not been enthralled with the few I have seen. I would really like a replica of the statue of him that is placed at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles (pity I didn't know this when I went to LA in 2013). If you're interested, the link to the picture is [https://www.ignaziana.org/3-2007\\_3.pdf](https://www.ignaziana.org/3-2007_3.pdf)

It depicts Ignatius, leaning into the wind with his head slightly tilted, seeking to contemplatively hear the voice of God who draws him into the world. He is very much in the place where Jeremiah finds himself in the first reading.

God commands Jeremiah to speak all of God's words that Jeremiah is commanded to. "Perhaps they will listen and each turn from his evil way," says God of the people.

One thing which Ignatius of Loyola taught us was the importance of listening to God. There is some skill required for this. Many have been trained to speak our prayers from our childhood however God is ready for a conversation. We need to take the time to listen and that is hard when we feel we aren't the ones in control of the conversation.

The people of Jesus' home town also had difficulty listening to things they could not control. It really is a skill to be worked on.