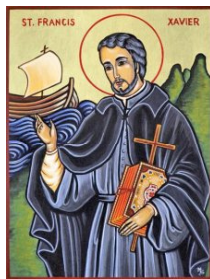


## Day Two

March 5

### Living with Saint Francis Xavier



In 1525, aged 19, Francis Xavier walked from his home in Navarre (Northern Spain) for Paris where he entered the famous university there.

He studied for the next five years to earn his degree. His room-mates were Peter Favre, a Swiss, and Ignatius Loyola, a Basque, from an area of Northern Spain close to Francis' home.

Education was very important to these three early international students who with a few others would found the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

And so with myself. I had already had 4 years of education with the Jesuits at Loyola High School. Then I entered the Society. We Jesuits are slow learners. I began with 2 years of novitiate, followed by 2 years of classical studies; 3 years of philosophy, (a break of 3 years; I'll come back to that) 4 years of theology, another year of spiritual formation, and further down the line studies for a doctor-ate at Columbia University. Whew! Would ordination ever come? Would I ever grow up?

Yet all these years were filled with graces won for me by Saint Francis Xavier. Looking back it is very hard for me to uncover anything which was not, as St. Ignatius would put it, "for the greater glory of God." All was grist for the mill of a young Jesuit priest who wanted to imitate his model and set the world on fire with love for the crucified Christ. All those books over so many years became a bonfire within me to stimulate my whole being into a priest who could help bring the risen Jesus into latter half of the 20th century.

In the 21st century it is even more important for a priest, another Francis Xavier, to be well educated because education is so much more universal than it was when I started out.