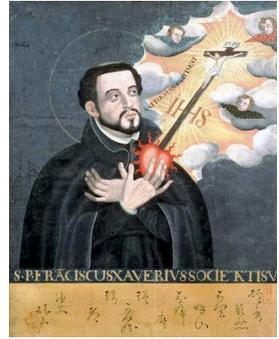


Day Eight

March 11 Living with Saint Francis Xavier

After spending 5 months in Goa, where he tried, unsuccessfully, to learn Tamil, Francis began his travels throughout India and the many islands scattered between India and his furthest destination, Japan. He made converts in Japan but was not as successful as he had hoped. So he changed his style of dress, gave up his tattered cassock and dressed in the formal Japanese style which would permit him to gain entrance to the Emperor. Thus he set the standard for some later Jesuits, notably, Matteo Ricci in China and John de Britto in India.



I did not have the problem with attire such as Francis encountered. But I did give him a run for his money on how much territory he covered. In the second half of the 20th century, refugees were almost everywhere in the world.

I visited refugees in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong and the Philippines. And that's just for Southeast Asia. In Central America I made trips to refugees in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala; in the Near East I visited refugees and displaced peoples in Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, Italy and the former Yugoslavia; in Africa I witnessed the upheaval of people in Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, Zaire (now Congo), Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Burundi. One of the saddest journeys I ever made was to Rwanda, the year after the terrible civil slaughter of 1994. The country was laid waste; the people were frightened of their very neighbors.

In the United States I shared experiences with legal and illegal arrivals on the Texas-Mexico border and in south Florida. And I visited recently-arrived refugees from Southeast Asia in Minnesota, Rhode Island, Virginia, Louisiana and Alabama.