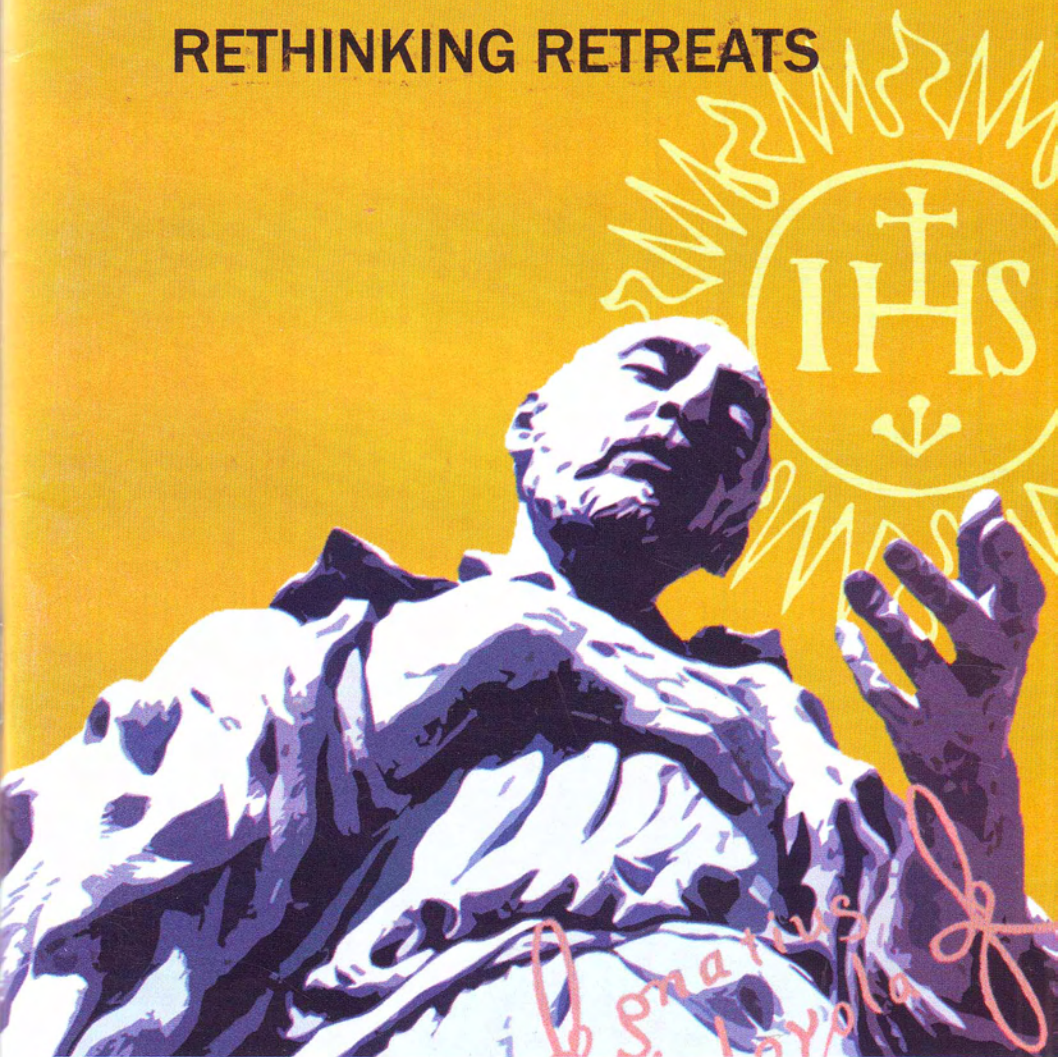


ignis

Quarterly / No. 2011.3 / Vol. XLI No.III

RETHINKING RETREATS



IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY: South Asia

Ignis – Ignatian Spirituality: South Asia

Quarterly / No. 2011.3 / Vol. XLI No.III

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Articles for publication to be sent to:

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email: mamaladoss@hotmail.com

For subscriptions write to:

The Publisher, Ignis,

Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, St. Xavier's Road, Anand - 388 001 Gujarat, INDIA.

email: booksgsp@gmail.com

Annual Subscription:

Rs. 100.00 for India.

Pay by M O / DD in favor of 'Gujarat Sahitya Prakash', Anand / Bank transfer as below

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Annual Subscription: US \$ 20 for Foreign Countries by electronic transfer

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SWIFT CODE: IOBAINBB001
Address of the Bank: Station Road, Anand, 388 001
Gujarat, INDIA

Published by: Jerry Sequeira, SJ, Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, St. Xavier's Road, Anand Gujarat-388 001

Printed by: Agnelo Vaz, SJ, Anand Press, Gamdi-Anand, Gujarat - 388 001.

Ignis

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FROM THE EDITOR

Personal retreats repeated year after year and preached retreats many times a year may tend to become monotonous if we are afraid of straying from the framework set by the Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius himself would have appreciated originality. Our experiential needs and creative efforts are more important than rigid frameworks.

This issue of IGNIS brings you two papers from two well known Jesuit theologians who are provoking us into rethinking our retreats. Focusing on the 'climatic exercise' of the Ignatian retreat, *Contemplatio ad amorem obtinendum*, Aloysius Pieris explores its roots in the life and teachings of Jesus. He shows how this 'last and lasting' exercise in mindfulness summarises the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises. Aloy shows yet again how Ignatius is more Asian than Greco-Roman in his approach to spirituality, focusing on experience rather than on reason and knowledge. His insights and suggestions can help us to restructure the retreat into an exercise in mindfulness leading us into a process of personal, social and cosmic transformation. The emphasis is on gratitude and grace rather than on sin.

When we plan for a retreat we normally think of a shortened form of the Spiritual Exercises. Peter Schineller is offering us an eight-day retreat in which we walk along the life-pilgrimage

of Ignatius himself as he narrates it to us in the Autobiography. Setting it in the context of our recent General Congregations and their challenges and keeping a constant link to the Spiritual Exercises and the Constitutions, especially with regard to the formative experiments that Ignatius proposes for the Novices, Peter leads us to a conversion and a commitment that Ignatius himself lived. He suggests that the life of Ignatius, as the life of Jesus Christ, is paradigmatic for us. The Ignatian path can inspire and facilitate the life-pilgrimage, not only of Jesuits, but of all Christians and even all people of goodwill.

I hope that these two creative efforts at rethinking retreats will be useful to many and will inspire them to make their own imaginative efforts to refashion the retreat experience in a relevant way.

Michael Amaladoss, S.J.

“Contemplatio ad Amorem Obtinendum”
(or more precisely)
An Exercise for Growing in Love

Aloysius Pieris, s.J.

(Aloysius Pieris is an internationally known and honoured Asian theologian. His prolific and creative writings cover Buddhism, Asian theology, dialogue, liberation and spirituality. He is the founder-director of the Tulana research and media centre at Kelaniya near Colombo, Sri Lanka. This is an expanded version of a talk given by him to the Jesuit Community in Colombo on 30th July 2009 in preparation for our Founder’s feast. This version has incorporated the clarifications that the speaker offered during the ensuing discussion.)

This “climactic exercise” of the Ignatian retreat, which you have kindly invited me to speak on, reveals its fuller sense (*sensus plenior* so to say), when exposed to the Word of God in the Scriptures. In the spirit of Vatican II, I have tried to anchor the Ignatian charism in the charism of our First Founder, Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God. This has been my *mode of proceeding* both in making and giving the Exercises; and I am going to share a bit of that experience with you today in my presentation of this *last and lasting* meditation of the Ignatian Retreat.

In PART ONE I clarify some concepts we meet in this meditation in the light of God’s Word. In PART TWO I offer a scripture-based reflection on the manner in which this meditation on Love develops from the dynamics of the *First Two Weeks*; and in PART THREE I indicate why and how the *Final Two Weeks* of the exercises culminate in what we are all accustomed to refer to as the “contemplation to obtain love”.

Part I A Scripture-based Clarification of Four Ignatian Expressions

My first submission is that the phrase “contemplation to obtain love” is an infelicitous formulation of a very important feature in Christian spirituality. It would be more scriptural to re-word that phrase as “an exercise to **increase** our love for God or an exercise to **grow** in the love of God” as I have anticipated in the title of this discourse. For we can never *obtain* love by contemplation. Never! Love, like faith and hope, is a theological virtue which is infused by God gratuitously. What St Paul says about faith, therefore, is valid also for love. Paul teaches that God gives each one of us a “measure of faith”, *metron pisteos* (Rom 12:3), which must, therefore, **grow** within us. So should our love, too, increase. Paul tells the Thessalonians that he renders thanks to God on finding out that both their faith and their love are ever growing, **increasing** (2 Thes 1:3).

In Jesus’ vocabulary “little faith” or ungrown faith is a bad word. He deplores little faith (Mt 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; Mk 4:40 ; Lk 12:28; 8:25). What he admires is “great faith” (Mt 8:10, 15:28; Lk 7:9), i.e. “faith that has grown big”. Furthermore Jesus has never said anywhere that faith “as little” as a mustered seed, or “of the size” of a mustard seed is enough to move mountains, as we often read in vernacular mistranslations of the gospels, and hear from over-enthusiastic evangelists. The word “little” is not found

in the original Greek text. Little faith cannot move mountains. What Jesus said was that “a mustard-seed-like faith” (*pistin hos kokkon sinapeos*) can do the humanly impossible (Mt 17:20; Lk 17:6). A mustard seed is a small thing that **grows** into a gigantic tree as Jesus has explained (Mt 13:31; Mk 4:31). So the “measure of faith” infused into us, must grow *like the mustard seed* into a gigantic faith before it can perform miracles. No wonder the disciples prayed “Lord, *increase* our faith” (Lk 17:5).

So also Ignatius wants us to *increase our love*. Little love, the little that is infused, is sufficient neither for our personal spiritual life nor for the “the mission impossible” which is entrusted to us. We have to *grow* in love. The Ignatian exercise we are dealing with today in this reflection is a humble human effort to be **mindful of God’s love towards us** so that we may **grow** in our love for Her. (Underscore mindful and grow for reasons given below). Just as faith gratuitously given is increased by believing, so too love that is infused in us is increased by loving. In this Ignatian exercise we strive to grow in love by loving God [more through deeds than words] gratefully mindful of the wonderful way in which She *works* hard for us every single moment to make us live, and live *happily* (EE, 236).

My second clarification is about the prayer with which we conclude this meditation, the prayer in which we ask for God’s “love and grace”. Love, being gratuitous, is also called Grace. They are almost synonyms in some contexts. In fact the verbal root *han* in Hebrew seems to make that association. Now the petition in which we ask for God’s love and grace, in this prayer, is preceded by an act of offering back to God our *liberty, memory, understanding and will* (EE, 234). I have heard over-zealous retreat directors suggesting that this prayer makes us “renounce” our faculties of mind and memory as well as will and liberty “in exchange” for God’s love and grace !!! This is impossible. If we renounce our *mind, will, memory and liberty*, we forfeit our capacity to love. Neither God nor we can love without them! According to Ignatius’

own wording, we merely put these faculties *at the disposal of God's will* (EE, 234). Hence what we really *mean* and what we *should mean*, when we make this prayer, is that our mind, our will and our memory should, at any given moment, be *permeated with love for God*, which is Her gratuitous grace. For our mind, our will, our memory are almost always full of ourselves!

The third scriptural observation of mine might sound too radical at first hearing, but it is the Jesuit Cardinal Thomas Spidlik, the most renowned authority on Spirituality today, who draws our attention to it in his authoritative work on Eastern Christian Spirituality, namely, that St Basil the Great [who is hailed as the Father of Consecrated Religious Life] had virtually banished the word “contemplation” from the Monastic vocabulary (*a fortiori* from the Christian vocabulary in general) not merely as non-biblical but as anti-biblical. His argument was that the word “contemplation” is saturated with the Greek impatience to “see” God (More about this in my fourth observation below). If you see God, you die, say the Scriptures! The biblical word for our rapport with God in our day-to-day spiritual praxis is not contemplation or vision, insists St Basil, but “remembrance”, “memory”, or “mindfulness”.

Let me put it this way: God always remembers us; that is why we exist. God did not simply “call” us into existence, but literally “recalled” us (remembered us) into being. “Remember O Israel” is the leitmotif of God’s Word. “Do not forget us O Lord” is Israel’s incessant response to that Word. For God and we are bound by a *loving covenant of mutual mindfulness*.

Hence this conclusion: we are summoned *to remember God and all that She has done and is doing for us so that we may grow in our love for Her through deeds of love*. In other words this final Ignatian meditation is an *exercise in mindfulness* that guarantees a *growth in God’s Love and Grace*. Ignatius himself is explicit about it in when he says: “**I will call**

back to memory the gifts I have received....” (EE, 234). Hence the term “contemplative” in Nadal’s oft-quoted expression “contemplative also in action” means incessant *mindfulness of God* in all things and of all things in God, a spirituality of *non-stop grateful God-awareness*. This is the essence of Ignatian spirituality, which this last meditation inculcates in the Exercitant as she or he returns to active life.

My fourth and final comment is on the Ignatian dictum found at the beginning of this same exercise, that “Love ought to manifest itself more by **deeds** than by words”. In fact, in the very first colloquy Ignatius makes us ask ourselves about what we have *done*, what we *do* and *will do* for Christ (EE 53). Let me now insert this Ignatian principle of “doing things for Christ” into the central teaching of the Bible in order to lay a strong scriptural foundation for the apostolic mysticism that Ignatius has imparted to the universal church.

Let me begin with the significant fact that the Greek word for “contemplation” (*theoria*) is conspicuously absent even in the New Testament, wherein the emphasis is entirely on *doing*. The Greeks, on the other hand, disparaged action (*praxis*) and associated it with the *hoi polloi* who were not only unsuitable for but also incapable of contemplation! By contrast, God’s *Word* in the Bible stands for God’s *Will*! When God speaks, God expresses a loving request, to which the response is obedience, i.e. *doing* what is requested. Actually there is no word for obedience in Biblical Hebrew! [Rabbi Jonathan Sacks says that the modern State of Israel had to invent a Hebrew word (borrowing it from Aramaic) for obedience for use in the military!!] The meaning of obedience is conveyed in the Bible through the verb to *listen*. For God’s *Word* is speech-command, and hence to *hear* what is spoken is to *do* what is commanded. Spirituality is *hearing*, which means *doing* (Mt.7:24; Lk 6:47).

As a matter of fact the word obedience comes from Latin *ob-audire* meaning to “hear”. No wonder that the word “hear” occurs 1100 times in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament, where God becomes visible in the Man Jesus for a few years, there are more references to seeing (over 600 times) than to hearing (over 400 times). But with the departure of Jesus after the resurrection, the auditory idiom takes over. To the End-Time question “Lord when did we see you?”, the answer of Christ the Judge will be: in the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the imprisoned and the homeless (Mt 25: 31-46): a seeing that must culminate in *doing* to the least of these His brethren as to His proxies! No other way of ‘seeing God’ is redemptive according this teaching! The bible mentions the possibility of our seeing YHWH of Moses and Abba of Jesus (beatific vision) only as an End-Time grace, reminds Congar. St Basil understood this clearly.

Unfortunately the church on the whole had ignored St Basil’s prophetic insistence that spirituality revealed in the Bible is not *contemplation / seeing* of the Greeks. Consequently, our traditional theology has over-emphasized the interpretation of God’s Word as the Greek *logos*, which stands for *idea* and *reason*. Thus their **contemplation** of Logos-*idea* has influenced our understanding of *spirituality*; and the rational **explanation** of creation in terms of Logos-*reason* has been identified as *theology* ! We have allowed the *Logos* of Greek philosophy (an idea for contemplation or reason for explanation) to eclipse the Biblical *Dabar*, the “word-command” to which our response is **action not contemplation**. And theology is concerned with **liberation not merely with explanation**.

As one 19th century Jewish historian, H. Graetz has put it, “The pagan beholds his god; the Jews hear Him, that is, apprehends His will”, and therefore the Babylonian Talmud has warned the Jews against *hokhma yevenit* “Greek Wisdom”, observes Rabbi Sacks. St Basil was far-sighted in issuing the same warning to the church! Biblical spirituality is not contemplating

God but **hearing/doing God's Will ever mindful of His deeds** (as unambiguously taught in Nehemia 9:16-17); similarly, theology is not simply a rational explanation of the world but a spring board for **transforming this world** into God's Reign with God's love and grace. (More in Parts II and III).

Ignatius, despite his scholastic theology learnt at Paris (to which he yields occasionally) has understood spirituality very biblically as setting aside one's own self-interest in order to do God's will (EE 189)! For God's Will is an expression of God's loving concern for us and therefore our own love is none other than doing Her will; or as Jesus put it : If you love me *do* what I command you. For God expresses Her love through *deeds* of love; and we, too, ever *mindful* of them, respond with our own *deeds* of love.

Part II

A Biblical Reading of this Ignatian Exercise The Dynamics of the First and Second Weeks

There is a scriptural presupposition which is implicit in this "exercise for growing in love", namely, the biblical **spirituality of enjoying God's creation in a spirit of gratitude**. Gratitude is our response to His love-and-grace; for Her love and grace drench the whole of creation to the point of exuding. We cannot help being conscious or mindful of them. Hence our consciously or mindfully **relishing** these gifts of love in creation is our appreciation of the Giver of all things, a thanksgiving prayer, a Eucharist, a banquet in which God is our host, our guest and our food. We relish God in them, and naturally, we must always "*do it in memory of him*" through whom God lavishes them upon us. Our spirituality is an *anamnesis*.

According to Genesis 2:8, this world was created as a *parades* which means "a park" , a park meant for *eden*, which means "pleasure". This world was gifted to us as a *pleasure park*

out of the abundance of God's love and grace. The asceticism of deliberately eschewing life's legitimate delights (e.g., early Christian ascetics mixing ash with food) is a pagan intrusion into Christianity. For the very next verse (Gen 2, 9) clearly states that the trees were created for us as "pleasing to the eye and good for food". The vegetation, in other words, was meant to be a means of pleasure both for our eyes and our tongues: a nourishment for our minds and our bodies; a source of aesthetic and gastronomic enjoyment.

"Eating and drinking" is a dominant theme in God's discourse on salvation, **salvation which is *physical and mental relishing of divine love in and through the created world***. After all it was not a "funeral rite" that Jesus left behind as a commemoration of his redemptive death, but a *festive party* in which we enjoy a meal (I Cor 11:26). We bring God's creation to the altar and consume them in thanksgiving and praise. The Eucharist is a visit to the pleasure park where God walks amongst us! In fact, the Greek Orthodox Church celebrates the Eucharist as an anticipation of the End-Time Banquet!

Of course we have turned this *pleasure park* into a vale of tears. How we did that, and continue to do that, is dinned into us in the FIRST WEEK of the Exercises. There is within us a *serpent*, (which, by the way, is not the devil as we wrongly think, but) a "conative tendency" (*appetitus* of the scholastics, perhaps) created by God within us, which, however, is superlatively "cunning" (Gen 3:1) i.e., capable of being manipulative, deceptive and ambitious. It is not something necessarily evil, for he advises us to be shrewd like serpents (Mt 10:16; cf. also Proverbs 1:4). But it *can* and often *does* act as a thirst for *power-generating knowledge*, i.e., an urge to become *all-knowing and self-sufficient* "like God", only to end up making us "like the serpent itself", i.e., *cunning and naked* according to a Hebrew pun ('*ārūm* = cunning in v,1 and '*ērom* = naked in v,10). To be cunning means to be deceitful; naked means vulnerable.

The Ignatian rules for discernment help us to *identify* the “subtle movements” so to say, of this serpent within us, (or “bad spirits” as Ignatius calls them), and thus resist its fatally ambitious instinct to dominate, overpower and out-do others, so that we may willingly yield to *God’s word* (i.e., invitation) *to become “like God” through love and service.*

In the SECOND WEEK of the Exercises we see how God-in- Jesus *begins* the process, so to say, of converting the desert of pain into a park of pleasure, as foretold by the Prophet Isaiah (Chap. 35). He teaches us how to handle the cunning serpent within us so that already on earth we could *enjoy our Maternal Father’s goodness in the simple joys of daily life*, in gratitude and love, and thus have taste of paradise *at least in our personal and communitarian spirituality.*

His sermon on the mount is his blueprint for a life of happiness, or beatitude. Unlike John the Baptist, his onetime guru, Jesus had no ascetical garb that distanced him from ordinary people nor a forbidding diet like his precursor’s; rather he dressed like others and he ate and drank like the rest of us in the company of the weak and the vulnerable, offering them a glimpse into a paradisiacal universe. In his person, God walked among them as He did in the Garden of Eden. His presence was enjoyable and pleasurable for the socially despised and the repentant sinners ---and would be so also to us *provided* we too join that same crowd! St Ignatius in the Second Week pleads with us that we make that option, namely, that we desire to be counted among the spiritually poor if not also among the actually poor (EE, 98, 146,157)

The secret of *gratefully enjoying God’s goodness in creation* is clearly taught in beatitudinal discourse of Jesus both in Matthew (6:25-34) and Luke(12:22-39). There our Lord gives us two conditions for a beatitudinal life, conditions guaranteeing a gratifying experience of creation:- **no hoarding** and **no anxiety!**

Hoarding (or accumulativeness or acquisitiveness) reveals an *absolute trust in creatures*. **Anxiety** (or fear) is a *lack of absolute trust in the Creator*. According to Jesus, therefore, the opposite of faith is not “doubt” or “reason” as taught in our traditional theology and in the official catechisms; the opposite of faith is hoarding and anxiety ! A life of faith in the all-faithful Father-Mother God is an anxiety-free life such as *enjoyed* by the birds in the air and the lilies in the field!

Now let me spring a surprise on you !

This message of Jesus, which we internalize in the Second Week is **not unique to Jesus**. It is the **common heritage of humankind** proclaimed in theistic as well as non-theistic idioms. It was taught in Israel before the time of Jesus and even outside Israel in many religions. The Buddha, for instance, formulates it within a non-theistic framework. In his vocabulary, this same spiritual posture is named *appicchatā* (“satisfied with the minimum necessary” and nothing more) and opposes it to being *bahubāṇḍika* (hoarding, acquisitive). Hence he defines the liberated person as *mattaññu mātrajña*, “one who knows the proper measure in everything” [or one who knows the *tantum quantum*]. No wonder he equates *appicchatā* with *santutṭhi* (happiness or beatitude).

The reclining Buddha symbolizes a relaxed anxiety-free life that results from non-addiction to anything. Hoarding is addiction to accumulating things. Addiction or *upādāna* takes away the joys of life. An alcoholic never enjoys his drink; greed kills the appetite. The bee who is not *mattaññu* fails to take the honey *tantum quantum*, and hence gets drowned in it through greed, turning a source of life and pleasure into a source of pain and death. It deprives itself of the legitimate delights of Paradise. In the Bible, however, given its theistic framework, addiction or greed is tantamount to absolutizing creatures, or making idols of them. That is why St Paul tells the Colossians (3:5) that greed (*pleonexia*)

is idolatry (*eidololatria*) ! Greedless or non-idolatrous living, therefore, is the practice of authentic faith, i.e., absolute trust in God alone. It is the anxiety-free “happy life” that all men and women of all ages, Christian, pre-Christian and non-Christian, have always yearned for but have expressed in a variety of idioms.

Hence this **two-fold conclusion, never to be ignored** (specially after the Synod of 1971 and GC 32, decree 4), but often not sufficiently emphasized in our retreat apostolate :

- (a) The Second Week brings us only as far as the *common spirituality* which God has revealed to *all humankind*. It is the *minimum* required of Christians! We cannot be satisfied with our personal life of beatitude, individually anticipating in our life the joys of paradise and helping others to do the same. Even the renouncement of riches, honours and pride, and the readiness to face their opposites with equanimity (EE,142), is advocated in some non-Christians ascetical traditions, though the *motive* of imitating Christ is absent in them. Therefore we have an additional task before us and that is what we consider and assimilate in the Third and Fourth Weeks (see Part III).
- (b) The Second Week should also remind us that after preaching this [common] spirituality and confirming it with signs and wonders, **Jesus went through a crisis**, a crisis which we too must pass through, lest we miss what is in store for us in the final two weeks of the Exercises. Some name it the “Galilean Crisis of Jesus”, the crisis which made Jesus move from the initial phase of *reforming lives* to the more radical phase of *transforming the entire society and the cosmos*, with a risk to his life and reputation. It

is this critical change in his evangelical programme that accounts for *God's Grace and Love* exploding on the Cross as the “resurrection of the dead” or the inauguration of Paradise. This is where Christ exhibits his uniqueness vis-à-vis other Religious Founders, just as the latter exhibit their own unique contribution to soteriology in other ways. We who make and give exercises should never gloss over this *dangerous leap* which Jesus took and would have us take, too.

This dangerous leap or radical “option” (or “election” in Ignatian terms) is an essential ingredient of our imitation of Christ and assimilation to him (the main purpose of the Exercises), but it is merely insinuated, and very vaguely too, in the Third Week (cf. EE, 197). For the disposition, which the Second Week advocates in the meditation on the TWO STANDARDS and on the THREE DEGREES OF HUMILITY (in preparation for that radical option), is NOT “suffering with Christ suffering” or “the option for the cross”, which is something conspicuously absent in these exercises, despite there being an unwarranted Jesuit tradition of introducing it into them, perhaps against the mind of Ignatius as some Ignatian scholars (e.g. C.A. Lofy) had pointed out many decades ago. For the disposition fostered by these two exercises of the Second Week (EE, 146, 167) is one of *opting to be “poor and despised” as Jesus was*, by shunning “riches” and “honours”. Of course in the feudal world of Ignatius, honours led to chivalry tainted with hubris, and one would even kill to vindicate one’s honour! Hence it has been suggested that what is more relevant to our times is not “feudal honour” but *the desire to be accepted* (Dean Brackley) or reputation. In any case, let us note that these “three degrees of humility”, in the way Ignatius presents them, are really *three degrees of love*, i.e., **three steps in one’s growth in love!**

Part III

Transforming Love and Redeeming Grace Third and Fourth Weeks taken together

While teaching how to lead a happy life on earth, Jesus tried to open the eyes of all to the **end-time happiness**, the post-resurrectional life on earth, when God's Reign would be fully realized, and paradise restored --something to be anticipated and germinally realized already here and now. Hence he gave a glimpse into that Glorious Future by bestowing holiness on those who had sinned, restoring health in those afflicted by sickness, creating communion through the integration of the ostracised into his divine company, conferring human dignity on the despised and giving back life to the dead.

Jesus wrought these visible changes merely as "signs" (*semeia*) pointing to the Risen Life of deathless wholeness and endless togetherness, which appeared in the horizon both as a stupendous gift of God and the end-product of a formidable human involvement. Unfortunately, the crowd that followed Jesus, including his closest friends and disciples, got stuck with the signs. They did not see where these signs were leading them to, nor did they perceive their own part in the project of Jesus. Quite naively they tried to make him their King, expecting him to do a good political shake up of the nation and deliver the goods to them, while they would applaud from the sides and reap the benefits!

Gospel writers seem to insinuate that Jesus felt disappointed with this reaction and withdrew for a while from the crowds, only to come back with mustered courage to speak *in a language many people would not buy*. He started losing his popularity. Many, in fact, left him. For, he insisted that a *lasting solution* to the 'paradise lost' cannot be envisaged without a **head-on clash** with the principalities and powers that prevented an overall *conversion* of this universe into what His motherly Father intended it to be. From

then onwards Jesus began to speak in terms of the *socio-political conflict* he would have to face, which in his days was alluded to in terms of the death-penalty symbolized by the Cross. That was his how he overcame his Galilean Crisis.

Contrary to popular belief, Jesus did not directly opt for suffering (for that would be masochism), nor did His maternal Father destin him to the cross (that would be sadism). Jesus felt driven by love, and love alone, to opt for a definite course of action which was a constitutive dimension of his mission, intuitively aware of its dreadful consequences. His disciples protested against his all too radical option for a procedure that would lead him to the Cross, and understandably deserted him when the Cross approached him. He had to *do it alone*, and yet he did it supremely well because from childhood he had been *growing* not only in age but also in *love and grace*. For such love goes far beyond the third degree of humility fostered in the Second Week.

Note also that the Galilean crisis led Jesus to take a *this-worldly decision*, rather than escape into an other-worldly spirituality as the Essenes did! For, according to the Scriptures, our final salvation is not leaving *this* world and going to *another* world called "heaven". There is no universe other than the one we live in, and which God has so loved as to send his only Son to redeem it from the damage we have done to it. Paradise is *this very* universe fully redeemed by Jesus, a universe resurrected from the death and the decay which our sins have wrought upon it.

In Hebrew, the spatial concept "world" (translated *kosmos* in Greek) and the temporal concept "age" (*aiōn* in Greek) are both telescoped into one untranslatable word, *olam*. When Jesus informed Pilate that his Kingdom is "not of this world", he meant "not of this age", for Jesus was ushering in a *new age* for *this world*, the age of the resurrection. This is the greatest miracle that God's **love and grace, i.e. the Holy Spirit**, can perform - to re-create this world into the pleasure park, to

resurrect it into a “new heaven and new earth” (Hebraism for a totally transformed universe) which according to the Book of Revelation (Chps. 21-22) is characterized by the palpable and visible presence of God, with no sickness, no sadness, no aging, no dying, no unhealed estrangement among people, no want (‘thirst’), no sin, no sinners; a universe we all dream of, and which God Herself has dreamt of for us already when She created this world system.

Let us also remind ourselves again that, “Love and Grace” (God’s gift we seek), has been revealed to us as the Third Divine Person, the Holy Spirit. That is why we confess in the Creed that we believe in the Holy Spirit, and immediately add *forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body* among the five essential ingredients of that belief. For this divine Person is God’s *forgiving* love and *reconciliatory* grace, the Power by which God *creates* out of nothing and *raises* the dead. The fruit of redemption consists of being possessed by this Spirit who is God’s *creative and resurrectional love*, the greatest **grace** we can receive - the One in whom we must **grow** if we wish to join Christ in bringing upon this universe the new age anticipated by Him **in his death and resurrection**. This is the content and challenge of the THIRD AND FOURTH WEEKS *taken together*.

In making and giving the Exercises, therefore, I treat these last two weeks as one. For Jesus’ death and his resurrection cannot be separated. In the annals of human history, the Crucifixion of Jesus has registered what he himself has referred to as “*my hour*”. It is God’s timeless moment (*kairos*), when His Son’s death, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost took place as one indivisible event on the cross, although our feeble minds could grasp that moment only through a slow-motion replay, celebrating it liturgically as a series of happenings: Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Ascension and Pentecost. For the Cross was also the place of his Exaltation, i.e., of his triumphant Resurrection (Jn 12:32); there a “new heaven and a new earth” (Rev.21:1) germinated. At that hour

the seed of the risen life sprang in us and amongst us, summoning us to be witnesses to “the age-to-come” (*olam-ha-ba*), which the Jewish teachers of Jesus’ time were expecting!

The message we hear from the place of his death and resurrection, therefore, is that we be so **empowered with God’s Love and Grace** as not only to *preach* fearlessly the end-time happiness, but to *live it* ourselves, anticipating the age-to-come in our own lives so that in our *active engagement* in his programme of restoring God’s Reign on earth, we show ourselves equipped to *pay the price* as he did. Our simply doing symbolic acts of love must sooner or later meet with the Galilean crisis, which will push us to take the next obvious step that Jesus took, provided, of course, we have truly **grown in love and grace**. Only a person who has fully grown in love can join Christ’s mission of transforming [i.e., converting] this world into the paradise which God intends it to be. Since the Holy Spirit is God’s Love and Grace, it follows that whoever has grown in love and grace has reached that *maturity in Spirit* which is a *sine qua non* for partnering Jesus in this pancosmic mission .

By way of **conclusion**, I like to answer a *practical* question that is bound to be raised at this juncture: *how do we monitor our maturity in the Spirit, i.e., how can we assess our growth in love and grace?* Since I have not grown fully in love and grace myself, I cannot speak of such spiritual maturity from personal experience. But having met men and women who have grown in God’s Spirit, i.e., in God’s love and grace, I have come to this conclusion: whoever has acquired the art of living comfortably in the *non-existent margin* between Week Three and Week Four of the Exercises, has grown in love. I refer to persons in whom the cost of redemptive death is borne with a joyous paschal hope.

I cannot express this idea better than the way that two sculptors have captured this mystery of God’s creative and resurrectional love in their presentation of the Crucified Jesus,

one in the medieval Cistercian Abbey at Lerins in France and the other in the Xavier castle in Spain. In both these sculptures, the pain-filled face of crucified Jesus wears a *gentle smile* that constitutes the meeting point of *his death and his resurrection*. This paschal smile reveals **God's resurrectional love** *defying the sting of death*. For those who have grown in love, suffering and death become a glorious weapon of conquest rather than a curse of sin. The paschal smile is a sure index that *Transforming Love* has grown like a mustard seed into something gigantic.

Let me illustrate it with a concrete example, which has affected me deeply. It happened when I was a member of this Colombo community about four decades ago. I made a daily pilgrimage to the General Hospital to see Fr Bernard Haturusingha, o.m.i. He had been suffering from some kind of irremediable brain and nerve damage, which condemned him to a sleepless life of unbearable pain that distorted all his facial lineaments. No medicine was available at that time to relieve him of his chronic affliction. Death was the only remedy and it was not forthcoming. He was kept awake day and night by agonizing torments that refused to be appeased. He was so much disfigured, like the Suffering Servant, that all those who visited him found themselves acquiring contortions on their own faces on merely seeing him.

But there was something that indicated that he had grown in that Love, which redeems and resurrects. His visitors could not be self-centred after seeing and conversing with him. He **transformed** them with that grace which is God's love. One morning as I entered his room, he cried out, "Aloy, one of our Oblates came from Kandy here last evening to see me and brought the sad news that your mother had taken ill yesterday. *The whole of last night I was praying for her*". Though lying on the cross, he showed no trace of a victim-complex or self-pity, but only love. From deep within those muscular contortions on his countenance there sparkled that paschal smile, the full blossoming of God's love and grace in him. His maturity in the Spirit transformed people.

**RE-KINDLING THE FLAME:
RE-LIVING THE LIFE OF ST. IGNATIUS
An Eight Day Retreat**

Peter Schineller, S.J.

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- 8.1 IGNATIUS AND COMPANIONS IN ROME
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CONCLUDING COMMENTS

I. Introduction and Overview The Call, the Need for This

Our most recent General Congregation put special emphasis on the vision of La Storta as described by St. Ignatius in his *Autobiography*. “We Jesuits, then, find our identity not alone but in companionship: in companionship with the Lord who calls, and in companionship with others who share this call. Its root is to be found in Saint Ignatius’s experience at La Storta...”¹ The

¹ *The Decrees of General Congregation 35* (Jesuit Conference: Washington,

Congregation also pointed us back to Ignatius’s conversion and his stay at Manresa, indicating that “this experience is part of every Jesuit’s journey.”² Once more referring to the *Autobiography*, CG35 points us to the vision of St. Ignatius at the river Cardoner, that opened his eyes and “led Ignatius to seek and find God in all things.”³

The Congregation did not simply think of these as historical memories of St. Ignatius. Rather, they point to the way for Jesuits today. “To find divine life at the depths of reality is a mission of hope given to us Jesuits. We travel again the path taken by Ignatius.”⁴ What is that path, and where do we find the map? We do have the *Autobiography* of St. Ignatius. My suggestion is that we might profitably use this precious document as the central and foundational document in one of our annual retreats. I will outline how, over a period of eight days, we might reflect on and pray over key texts from the *Autobiography*.

We have made the *Spiritual Exercises*. We have studied and tried to live the *Constitutions*. We have read various lives of Ignatius, and read his own *Autobiography*. I am suggesting that we take the opportunity of the annual retreat to reflect upon and pray over that document as a document that displays the charism that Ignatius wanted to hand on to us, based on his own pilgrimage and experience. In 1989, Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, inaugurating the Ignatian Year, referred to the *Autobiography* and noted how Ignatius presents his own journey

DC) Decree 2, “A Fire That Kindles Other Fires” No. 20. In *Jesuit Life and Mission Today*, The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 31-35 General Congregations of the Society of Jesus (The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis 2009, John W. Padberg, S.J. Editor).

² Ibid., No. 21.

³ Ibid., No. 22.

⁴ Ibid., No. 25.

as one that Jesuits and others seeking the will of God can learn from. Fr. Kolvenbach explains:

“...the person of Ignatius effaces itself – disappears behind his spiritual adventure which from Pamplona to Rome, the Lord wished to live with him, so that the innumerable Christians, men and women, thanks to the *Spiritual Exercises*, could live personally the same experience of life in the Spirit – and by that, discover in their existence at the same time, their vocation and their mission.”⁵

Indeed, we will see how both vocation and mission, two major themes of Ignatian spirituality, are rooted in the life of St. Ignatius.

II. The Time For This – The Annual Retreat

While the *Autobiography* of Ignatius might be used for private reading or study, it is well suited to provide material for the annual retreat. Normally Jesuits use this time to go through the *Spiritual Exercises*. Yet that need not be the case every year. In fact, some would argue against this, as a misuse of the Exercises! So we read in William Bangert.⁶

The Congregation [Sixth General Congregation] took a basic Ignatian spiritual experience, for which he gave not the slightest inclination of obligatory annual repetition, and encased it in a tight cover of legislation. By its universal application, this legislation offended Ignatius’ respect for wide differences among Jesuits in their modes of prayer. It

⁵ *Acta Romana*, Vol. XX Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, p. 158, inaugurating the Ignatian Year of 1990-1991. The original is in French.

⁶ William V. Bangert, S.J. *Jerome Nadal, S.J. (1507-1580) Tracking the First Generation of Jesuits*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1992) p. 208.

ignored Ignatius' purpose for the *Spiritual Exercises*, which he never intended to be repeated year after year. To the *Spiritual Exercises* themselves it did a disservice, since it squeezed them into an annual format that became vulnerable to routine.

Decree 29 of General Congregation 6 (1608) as Bangert indicates, had mandated "Each year all should devote themselves to the *Spiritual Exercises* for eight or ten consecutive days. So that this can be done effectively and thoroughly, this yearly practice of the *Spiritual Exercises* is made the subject of a decree, and it is given the highest commendation by the congregation..."⁷ This focus on the *Exercises* for the annual retreat was repeated in Congregation 27, in 1923 which states in Decree 55, #1: "In the Society, all are to make the *Spiritual Exercises* for eight or ten consecutive days each year..."

Present Jesuit legislation, in accord with the strong critique of William Bangert, allows more freedom during the annual retreat at least by including reflection on the *Constitutions* as material for the retreat! Thus we read:⁸

All by earnest reading and meditation (in particular, at the time of the annual *Spiritual Exercises*, renewal of vows, monthly recollection, beginning of the year, and so forth) should strive ever to know, esteem, and love better our *Constitutions* and the special nature of our Institute...

As we will see, using the *Autobiography* for the retreat is not abandoning the *Exercises* or the *Constitutions*. Rather it points us along the path along which God led Ignatius in formulating both the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions*.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *Constitutions and Norms*.... Complimentary Norm 415 of the GC 34.

One further note. The material of this retreat, while intended primarily for Jesuits, might well be adapted and used by lay colleagues and friends trying to understand and live in accord with the Ignatian charism and themes of Ignatian spirituality. Themes of service, discernment, mission, learned ministry, and finding God in all things are all lived by and exemplified by Ignatius in his *Autobiography*. Elements of this retreat might also be helpful for those accompanying young men seeking to discern whether their vocation is to apply to the Society of Jesus.

III. The Method and Texts We Will Rely Upon

We will give references to the *Autobiography* upon which the meditations are based. Thus for the time of retreat, it is necessary to have the complete *Autobiography* of St. Ignatius. The *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Constitutions* and the decrees of CG 34 and CG 35 will also be referred to. One might also do additional background reading from a biography of St. Ignatius, or by reading *The First Jesuits* by John O'Malley, S.J.

A. The *Autobiography* - Its Nature, Goal and Value

The different translations of this work have various titles including "*The Memoirs*," "*Acts*," "*Autobiography*," and "*The Pilgrim Testament*."⁹ These titles point to the special nature of

⁹ Thus for example: *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola* in *St. Ignatius Loyola: Personal Writings*. London, Penguin Books, 1996. Translation by Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean.

--*St. Ignatius' Own Story* translated by William Young, S.J. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956.

--*The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola* translated by Joseph F. O'Callaghan, edited with Introduction and Notes by John C. Olin New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1974.

--*A Pilgrim's Journey. The Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola*. Translation by Joseph Tylenda, S.J. Collegeville, MN. Liturgical Press 1985 A Michael Glazier Book.

the writing. It is not a purely factual account of his life, but rather Ignatius choosing and recalling specific events and experiences of his life for the benefit of the early Jesuits. The work can be divided into eleven chapters. Each chapter recounts not only the experience of Ignatius but his careful reflection upon that experience, its significance in his life and I believe Ignatius' view of its significance for Jesuit life!. We can read it as a series of vignettes or significant experiences that illuminate Ignatius's ceaseless quest for God. While it shows how God treated and led Ignatius, in the mind and intention of Ignatius it becomes exemplary for followers of Ignatius and thus shows how Jesuits can find and serve God.

The three major stages of the *Autobiography* would be¹⁰ 1. Ignatius in quest of the living Christ - his conversion. 2. Ignatius gathers companions to serve God's people. 3. The newly formed Society of Jesus available for missions from the Pope as head of the Church.

Source and Origin of the *Autobiography*. Between 26 January 1555 and October 23, 1555 Ignatius dictated his *Autobiography* to Father de Câmara at the request of Jerome Nadal among others. Father Câmara explains: "Father Nadal bade me urge the Father [Ignatius – to tell his story], telling me many times that the Father could do nothing of greater benefit for the Society than this, and

--*A Pilgrim's Testament: The Memoirs of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*. Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995. Translated by Parmananda R. Divarkar.
 --*Ignatius of Loyola The Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works* - edited by George E. Ganss, S.J.
 New York - Mahwah Paulist Press, 1991 Classics of Western Spirituality.
 Translation of "The *Autobiography*" by Parmananda Divarkar, S.J. In this essay we rely upon the translation by Tylena.

¹⁰ See the essay of Divarkar. "La Storta and Jesuit Identity," in *America*, August 27, 1983, 89-92.

that this was truly to found the Society.”¹¹ According to Divarkar, “Nadal believed and affirmed with great conviction that God dealt with the followers of Ignatius the same way he had with Ignatius, and that they must by all means respond as he did. Hence the crucial importance of having an authentic account of his spiritual pilgrimage.”¹² Polanco too explains that Nadal knew the mind of Ignatius better than anyone else, and Nadal wanted and needed this *Autobiography* in order to give flesh and concreteness to the *Constitutions* which he was commissioned to promulgate. Nadal had this special assignment from St. Ignatius to spread the spirit of the Society and the *Constitutions* throughout Europe and he often did this by reference to the life and experience of St. Ignatius. Nadal needed a story behind and at the basis of the *Constitutions*, lest they remain all too abstract. We see Nadal express this himself in Alcala in 1561 when he writes: “In Ignatius, God gave ‘the first form and grace’ to the Society.”¹³ Camara also noted years later in his *Reminiscences* how precise Ignatius was in what he said while dictating his *Autobiography*, saying exactly what he wanted to say after carefully reflecting back on his experience.¹⁴ Most recently, John O’Malley in his book *The First Jesuits*, puts it succinctly when he notes that in the *Autobiography* we find the “incarnation of the meaning of the Society that could be

¹¹ da Câmara, Preface to the *Autobiography*, No. 4. See Also, Wright, John H., S.J. “The Grace of Our Founder and the Grace of Our Vocation,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* Vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1971).

¹² Parmananda Divarkar, “Ignatian Loyalty, Jesuit Obedience” in *Review of Ignatian Spirituality*, No. 87, p. 51. On this, see also Peter Du Brul, *Ignatius: Sharing the Pilgrim Story* (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2003) 186. In this long study or reading of the *Autobiography*, he writes: “Without it [The *Autobiography*] the *Constitutions* remained too abstract – like legislation without the story which reveals where it comes from.”

¹³ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1993) p. 65.

¹⁴ da Camara Preface to the *Autobiography*, No. 3.

held up for our emulation and appropriation”¹⁵ In spite of its special nature, and the many years before it was available and translated into various languages, O’Malley calls it, “the most reliable source for the essential facts of the early life.”¹⁶

B. The *Autobiography* and the *Spiritual Exercises*

John Padberg writes that “If ever a book was the product of personal experience, the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* is such a book.”¹⁷ He then shows how the *Exercises* are rooted in the life of Ignatius, and that to discover much of his life we can turn to the *Autobiography*. Padberg focuses on eight key scenes or events in Ignatius’ life and shows how themes of the *Exercises* relate to these events. These events – as should be expected – feature strongly in the *Autobiography* of Ignatius, and we will be looking at each of these events among others.

C. The *Autobiography* and the *Constitutions* - The Six Experiments

The *Autobiography* traces the journey of Ignatius and his early companions, ending in Rome where Ignatius labored over the *Constitutions*. These *Constitutions* present the way of proceeding for how to evaluate, accept, test, train, form, educate, and then send forth Jesuits on mission. One key insight of Ignatius in the *Constitutions* are the six experiments for novices and tertians that are spelled out in the *Constitutions*. These, as we will see were solidly based upon the personal experience of Ignatius as found in his *Autobiography*. Thus they will become an explicit part of our retreat experience.

¹⁵ O’Malley, p. 9.

¹⁶ O’Malley, p. 8.

¹⁷ “Personal Experience and the Spiritual Exercises – The Example of Saint Ignatius,” John Padberg, S.J. *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, Vol. X No. 5, (November, 1978) p. v.

These six experiments are found in the General Examen at the very beginning of the *Constitutions*, No. 64-79.

Ignatian scholar and historian, Ravier writes on the significance of the experiments. “There were six of them and it was here that a marvelous parallelism was established between the history of Ignatius, his first companions, and the *life* of the candidate.”¹⁸ Again, “These activities were fundamental and constituted, so to speak, the base of the apostolic life of each companion.” To confirm this, we note that Nos. 81 and 82 of the *Constitutions* make explicit the link between experiments and the experience of the first companions as set forth in the *Autobiography*.

So too, an essay of Michael Buckley on the experiments also points to their rootedness in the life of Ignatius. He calls them “testing experiences” and a daring innovation of St. Ignatius. “These six experiments constitute the Ignatian pattern of religious development into ministerial life.”¹⁹ And “they are a pedagogy, an organic series of experiences, a recapitulation of the life of Christ, in which one can move through devotion, poverty, and humiliation to the self-transcending service of God in others that is *ministerium*.”²⁰ Thus by echoing and retrieving the experience of the first companions, and by recapitulating the life of Christ, they introduce the candidate to our Jesuit life and way of proceeding.

If this is the case, then the spirituality of these experiments

¹⁸ Ravier, André. *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987, p. 252 and 253.

¹⁹ “Freedom, Election, and Self-Transcendence: Some Reflections upon the Ignatian Development of a Life of Ministry,” by Michael Buckley, S.J., in *Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age*, ed. George P. Schner, S.J. SR Supplements Vol. 15, 1984 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984). p.81.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

should be part of the ongoing and everyday life or vision of the formed Jesuit and not only of candidates, novices or tertians. The annual retreat is thus an opportune time to see if we are living in tune with the spirit and goals and vision contained in the six experiments or experiences which every Jesuit is expected to embody.

DAY 1 CONVERSION AND CALL – AT LOYOLA CASTLE

1.1 CONVERSION - IMITATING CHRIST AND THE SAINTS

For each of the meditations we will present references to the *Autobiography*. As Ignatius relates his own conversion after his injury in battle at Pamplona, note the importance of the life of Christ and the lives and legends of the saints in this conversion and his subsequent way of serving Christ. This should lead us to reflect on our own growth in knowing, loving, and following Jesus Christ and in learning from the wisdom and example of the saints. We also note a characteristic of Ignatian spirituality, namely the importance of the imagination. Not abstract theological ideas or virtues, but the life of Christ and the example of the saints stimulates and guides St. Ignatius on his journey. As St. Dominic and St. Francis influenced and motivated St. Ignatius, we might reflect on which saints, for example some Jesuit saints, mean most to us. In the *Exercises* (# 100), Ignatius recommends that we read the lives of the saints and even listen to their stories while at table (# 215). Our Jesuit history has an incredible cloud of witnesses - saints, blessed, and those non-canonized Jesuits who have gone before us.

Ignatius the wounded warrior clearly has the image of the loyal soldier in mind when he sets forth the call of Christ the King in the *Exercises* (#95). As we recall the conversion and call of Ignatius, we might recall with gratitude our own call. Gratitude was always a key, foundational virtue for Ignatius. In an essay entitled “Gratitude for ‘this gift of God to the Church’”

Fr. Kolvenbach urges us to assimilate ever more vigorously the spiritual experience of Ignatius, yet “Discovering him, of course, must never become an end in itself; it inspires us, rather, to share the experience Ignatius himself had...”²¹

The twelve apostles became the model pilgrims for Ignatius. We see this in Ignatius’ *Spiritual Diary*, #12, 15 and 17. The first Jesuits were to go forth like the apostles: “the Son first sent his apostles to preach in poverty” (*Spiritual Diary*, Feb. 11, 1544). The companions saw themselves as “going fishing” and received inspiration from Christ and his apostles even in their manner of addressing one another. (*Autobiography*, #52 and #75).

In *Remembering Inigo*, da Camara explains that “it was with reading the stories of the saints of other religious orders that Fr. Ignatius prepared himself for Our Lord to do with him what he did. The same stories greatly helped the first fathers of the Society, as much for their own edification and desire for perfection, as for teaching their neighbor.”²²

Autobiography 1. Ignatius severely wounded in battle.

Autobiography 2. He returns to his own home.

Autobiography 5. Reading the live of Christ and the saints.

Autobiography 7. Imitating Francis and Dominic.

*Autobiography 9. Doing what saints have done,
with God’s grace.*

1. 2 LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT: ONGOING DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

In the texts below we see the origins of the discernment of spirits. Ignatius believed that God speaks immediately to every

²¹ Kolvenbach “Sharing Ignatius’ Experience,” CIS Vol. XX, Rome, 1990 No. 63-64. p. 7.

²² da Camara, *Remembering Inigo – Glimpses of the Life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, The Memoriale of Luis Gonçalves da Câmara*. St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004. #370, p. 207.

person. Our challenge is to listen. God reveals his presence and will through the various movements in our soul. The daily examen is one important way to reflect on God's presence in our day, as we read in the excellent article of Dennis Hamm, "Rummaging for God." He recommends that we reflect back on the dominant emotion, feeling of the day.²³ So too, Michael Gallagher in an essay on prayer recommends that we should "pray in, not up,"²⁴ that is be attentive to the Spirit dwelling within. According to Ribadeneira, Ignatius "kept the habit of examining his conscience every hour, and asking himself with careful attention how he had passed the hour."²⁵ As part of our reflection, we might review the Rules for Discerning Spirits in the *Exercises*, 313-36.

Autobiography 8. Distinguishing the different spirits.

Autobiography 9. Reviewing his past life.

Autobiography 11. Contemplation leading to action.

Autobiography 21. Attention to the various changes in his soul.

1.3 MEDITATIONS ON DEATH

In his *Autobiography*, Ignatius recounts several occasions where he reflected upon death. This may surprise us until we reflect that meditations on death are also prominent in the *Spiritual Exercises*. See #71 in the First Week; # 186 thinking of death as we make a choice, and #340 how the thought of death influences our decision in giving alms.

His first near death experience was at Pamplona/Loyola, but

²³ Hamm, "Rummaging for God: Praying Backward Through Your Day," *America*, May 14, 1994.

²⁴ Gallagher, Michael Paul. *Struggles of Faith, Essays by Michael Paul Gallagher*. p. 124.

?September 1990?

²⁵ Charles J. Jackson, S.J. "Something that Happened to me at Manresa." *The Mystical Origin of the Ignatian Charism, Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 38/2 (Summer 2006). 25.

he continued to suffer from various illnesses throughout his life. Thoughts of death seemed never far from him. But these thoughts of death spurred him on to increased dedication to work for the Kingdom. Thoughts of death point us to the value and fragility of life and so urge us to find and serve God in all times and in all places.

In *Remembering Inigo*, da Camara recounts that “when someone says, ‘I’ll do this in two weeks’ time or a week’s time,’ the Father always says, as if astounded, ‘Really? And you expect to live that long?’²⁶ Ignatius echoes this in his *Autobiography*. Facing the temptation to be discouraged, questioning his ability to persevere over the long road ahead, Ignatius reflects on the shortness and precariousness of life: “Can you promise me even one hour of life?” Most often, these thoughts of death lead not to desolation, but to determination and to consolation.

Autobiography 32. In Manresa, having fallen ill with a high fever and being on the point of death.

Autobiography 33. Nearness to death because of a storm and illness leads to reflection.

1.4 Spiritual Exercises #273. THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Third Point. The Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and the voice of the Father testified: ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.’

Jesus is called and sent, with the power of the Holy Spirit. So too, Ignatius is called and gifted with the Spirit. We recall with gratitude that we have been called in Baptism, called into the Society of Jesus, empowered with the Holy Spirit and sent on mission.

²⁶ da Camara, p. 67, No. 111.

DAY 2. TO MANRESA, THE *SPIRITUAL EXERCISES* AND MARY

2.1 MONTSERRAT AND DEVOTION TO MARY

Throughout his life Ignatius maintained a deep, tender devotion to Mary. This is very clear from the Triple Colloquy in the *Spiritual Exercises* and from his own *Autobiography* and *Spiritual Diary*. In the famous incident with the Moor, Ignatius defends the perpetual virginity of Mary, and lets the mule decide the path ahead. Surely this is not the best example of discernment, but at least he entrusted the decision to God. And the incident shows that Ignatius would go to any length in defending the person and privileges of Our Lady. He gives his life completely to God, in the presence of Mary, and obtains the special grace or gift of chastity at Aránzazu and through his all-night vigil before the Black Madonna at Montserrat.

Congregation 35 (No. 140) recalling the life of Ignatius, reminds us of this special relationship to Mary. “Along his pilgrim way from Loyola to Rome, Ignatius prayed unceasingly to Mary, our Lady, asking her to obtain for him the grace to be received under the banner of her Son.” “For this reason, the Society has always seen in Mary a model of obedience.” We might reflect on the Ignatian heritage and tradition of devotion to the Mother of Jesus.

Autobiography 10. Vision of Our Lady.

Autobiography 13. Vigil before Our Lady of Aránzazu .

Autobiography 17. At Montserrat, handing over his sword.

Autobiography 18. All night vigil before our Lady.

2.2 INSIGHT AT THE CARDONER RIVER - MANRESA

According to Jerome Nadal, the reason given by father Ignatius for the whole way of life in the Society was that sublime illumination of his mind by which God’s singular kindness and a great privilege of divine grace he received at the beginning of his

conversion in Manresa.²⁷ He explains that all later graces, such as that at La Storta, were in continuity with that revelation, the light received at the banks of the Cardoner. For an excellent reflection on the meaning of Manresa for Jesuits, see the issue of *Studies* by Charles J. Jackson. Reflecting on the Ignatian charism and its roots in the life of Ignatius he writes:

I would not be so bold as to say that Ignatius's experience became mine, but I came to recognize a remarkable parallel between what he experienced at Manresa and what I was experiencing in trying to give expression to my thoughts. It was clear that the same God who had once been actively at work in the life of Ignatius was actively at work in my own as well."²⁸

So too, we read in CG 35 that at Manresa the Lord showed a way not only for Ignatius but for his followers: "a way [that] freed him from disordered attachments and opened up for an ordered loving of God and of all things in God. This experience is part of every Jesuit's journey."²⁹

Ignatius points to five points, insights, or emphases that came to him with the revelation at the Cardoner, namely devotion to the Trinity, insight into creation, a moderate asceticism, focus on the humanity of Christ, and an understanding of theological truths. Each of these five points should play a part in our Jesuit life and way of proceeding. Thus Ignatius in Rome, as General Superior, while writing the *Constitutions*, most frequently celebrated the votive Mass in honor the Blessed Trinity. Prayer to the Trinity is prominent in the *Exercises*, and Ignatius's insight into creation

²⁷ This is found in the conferences of Nadal on the *Constitutions* as found in the *Monumenta Nadal*. Original in Latin.

²⁸ Jackson, op.cit., 39.

²⁹ Decree 2, No. 4

finds its expression in the First Principle and Foundation of the *Exercises*.

At the Cardoner Ignatius experienced that marvelous interweaving of grace and nature, and prescribed this for his followers in the *Constitutions* (814) where we are to rely upon both nature and grace. This echoes the theme of God directly acting upon the soul - as found in the *Exercises* # 15, or as Ignatius says in the *Autobiography* “as a schoolteacher deals with a child instructing him.” Thus we can understand that when Ignatius was asked once, why this or that detail is in the *Constitutions*, he replied “I simply go back to Manresa.”³⁰

Autobiography 27. Taught by God as Manresa.

Autobiography 28. Devotion to the Most Holy Trinity.

Autobiography 29. Insight into God’s creation, into the Eucharist, into the humanity of Christ, so that he understood and perceived many things.

2.3 1st Experiment. Making the *Spiritual Exercises*

The first experience or experiment for the candidate/novice and tertian is to make the *Spiritual Exercises* for one month. This goes back to the Manresa experience of St. Ignatius, and to Ignatius guiding the first companions (Favre and Xavier) through the *Spiritual Exercises* in Paris. According to Michael Buckley the point of this experiment is not so much to make a choice – a retreat of election – but to find devotion and increase in devotion that is, in our ease and ability in finding God in and above all things.³¹ He

³⁰ Cited in Conwell, Joseph F. *CIS Review of Ignatian Spirituality* 31, No. 1 (2000) “A Foundational Experience,” 27.

³¹ “Freedom, Election, and Self-Transcendence: Some Reflections upon the Ignatian Development of a Life of Ministry,” by Michael Buckley, S.J., in *Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age*, ed. George . Schner, S.J. SR Supplements Vol. 15, 1984 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press,

explains that in the view of Ignatius, novices had already made their election. Making the *Exercises* became a school of Ignatian prayer leading them to devotion.

All Jesuits have made the full *Exercises* once or twice. We might recall these experiences and their place in our lives. We might ask if we are still challenged by and live by the key graces of the *Exercises*, the vision of the Kingdom, the Two Standards, the Three Degrees of Love/Humility, living the Paschal Mystery of the dying and rising with Christ (3rd and 4th weeks) and the vision of the Contemplation to Attain Love. How has the fruit of these long retreats endured in our busy lives?

Constitutions of the Society of Jesus

Constitutions 64. Before he enters the house or college, or after his entrance, six principal testing experiences are required.

*Constitutions 65. The first experience consists in making the **Spiritual Exercises** for one month, a little more or less; that is to say, in the person's examining his conscience, thinking over his whole past life and making a general confession, meditating upon his sins, contemplating the events and mysteries of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ our Lord, exercising himself in praying vocally and mentally, according to the capacity of the persons, as he will be instructed in our Lord, and so on.*

Constitutions 71. Before they enter the second year of their probation which is made in the houses or college, all must spend six months in undergoing the six experiences just mentioned...

2.4 *Spiritual Exercises* # 274. THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

First Point. After He had been baptized, Jesus went into the desert where He fasted forty days and forty nights.

We might recall some of our own retreat experiences - the long retreat(s), or a memorable annual retreat and the graces received. We might recall particularly difficult moments or periods of our lives. Eventually, the grace of God sustained us, as it sustained Jesus Christ (“the angels came and ministered to Him”) and sustained St. Ignatius.

DAY 3 THE PILGRIM, SEEKING JESUS CHRIST IN THE HOLY LAND

3.1 IGNATIUS THE PILGRIM AND THE 3RD EXPERIENCE OF PILGRIMAGE

After his conversion “from worldly vanities” Ignatius resolved to follow Jesus Christ as a pilgrim. He decided to go as a pilgrim to Jerusalem as an individual, fully trusting in God’ providence. Later, after gathering companions, he wanted to return there again as a pilgrim. Note his entire trust in God for support, and his distrust of human support. Later in life Ignatius would shift this somewhat. He would emphasize complete trust in God but also the use of human means as well as divine means. God is to be glorified through natural and supernatural means. This is seen clearly in the *Constitutions* in # 812-814, the beginning of Part X. These texts are well worth our reading and reflection.

Responding to the call of the King (*Spiritual Exercises* 98) the pilgrim follows Christ poor and humble. The pilgrim is open, trusting and ready to respond to whatever might come his or her way. So too, openness and availability are hallmarks of the Jesuit way of proceeding. As Jesuits often say with a sense of humor that we follow closely the way of Ignatius the pilgrim for “Our vocation is to travel...”(*Constitutions* 304 and 308). Indeed, even at the very end of his life, when Ignatius settled into Rome, he calls himself “the pilgrim” (*Autobiography* # 98).

We know the importance of the “composition of Place” in the *Exercises* and in Jesuit prayer: “seeing in imagination the way

from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Consider its length, its breadth, whether level, or through valleys and over hills..." (*Exercises 112*). Ignatius journeyed to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem to see at first hand the sights, places where Jesus lived. He explains that "his greatest desire, after regaining his health, was to go to Jerusalem" (*Autobiography, 9*).

Autobiography 35. The pilgrim who trusts in God alone.

Autobiography 40. Jerusalem at any cost – sharing with the poor.

Autobiography 42. Trusting in God.

Autobiography 44. Confidence in God alone.

3rd EXPERIENCE – ONE MONTH PILGRIMAGE

On one occasion, da Camara asked Ignatius for the reason for pilgrimages. His reply was quite simple. "Because I had myself experienced how advantageous they were, and I found how well they suited me..."³² Da Camara adds that in later years, the Society modified and moderated the practice of pilgrimage. While the form and shape of this experiment necessarily changed over the years, we might recall our own experience of pilgrimage as novices or on other occasions. Has the theme or experience of pilgrimage been a key part of our Jesuit journey? A description of the Jesuit way of life in 1541 states: "The one who is not capable of remaining or going on foot for a whole day without eating, and of sleeping in discomfort, does not seem capable of persevering in the Society."³³

Fr. Kolvenbach has written much about the pilgrim image as used by Ignatius.³⁴ He explains that a pilgrim is counter-cultural, marginal, a person on a ceaseless quest, always forging ahead,

³² *Remembering Inigo*, No. 137.12. p. 84

³³ This is cited by Fr. Kolvenbach in *The Road from La Storta*, "A Certain Pathway to God." (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2000) 210.

³⁴ See Kolvenbach, *Loc. Cit.*, 207-222.

available, open to the new and unexpected – ever ready to respond and move on.

On the significance of this experiment, Ravier says it is a “a test of poverty, humility and confidence in God (the pilgrimage of Ignatius to Jerusalem and the voyages: Paris to Venice and Venice to Rome.)”³⁵ Michael Buckley states that “it was to be a profound experience of poverty”³⁶ in which we experience the reality of providence, that is, God’s care and concern for each individual. In addition, it reminds us that we should feel some effects of poverty as we experience insecurity. Finally, it is interesting to note that at least on two occasions, Ignatius imposed pilgrimages as a penance – to bring about a conversion!³⁷

Constitutions 67. The third experience is to spend another month in making a pilgrimage without money, but begging from door to door at times, for the love of God our Lord, in order to grow accustomed to discomfort in food and lodging. Thus too, the candidate, through abandoning all the reliance which he could have in money or other created things, may with genuine faith and intense love place his reliance entirely in his Creator and Lord.

3.2 MOUNT TABOR, SEEKING JESUS

The incident of Ignatius on Mount Tabor may seem very strange to us with our sophisticated, historical-critical way of approaching Scripture. Ignatius goes back to search for the historical footprints of Jesus. John Padberg reflects on this incident in the *Autobiography* (p. 273) and notes:

“For Ignatius, prayer is not simply an intellectual exercise nor an escape from reality. The imagination ought to enter into

³⁵ A. Ravier, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus* (San Francisco: St. Ignatius Press, 1987) p. 253.

³⁶ Buckley, op. cit., 83.

³⁷ See. da Camara, *Remembering Inigo*, Nos. 58, 95, and 398.

prayer just as all the powers of the body and soul should do.”³⁸ The pilgrim journey of Ignatius to the Holy Land shows how intent he was on seeking, knowing, and loving the person of Jesus Christ. Recently, in GC 34, Decree 26, for Jesuits, “a deep personal love for Jesus Christ” was presented as the first characteristic of the Jesuit way of proceeding.

Autobiography 45. Consolation on seeing Jerusalem. Desire to remain there and help souls.

Autobiography 47. Seeking the footprints of Jesus.

Autobiography 48. Consolation with the presence of Jesus Christ.

3.3 ADVICE FOR THOSE AT THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

We add here a reflection on the letter of St. Ignatius to Lainez, Salmeron, and Jay who would be attending the Council of Trent.³⁹ Peter Favre died on the way to the Council, and Peter Canisius would later join the above three. This instruction could as well be entitled “Guidelines for an Apostolic Community.” It shows Ignatius’s concern for details and concrete directives.

Much of what Ignatius presents on seeking spiritual direction, on conversation and mutual correction, (fraternal correction is very strong in the *Constitutions*) could become topics of discussion in our communities today. In my view, this letter shows Ignatius at his best - linking the longer vision, the larger picture, with the practical down to earth details.

³⁸ John W. Padberg “Personal Experience and the Spiritual Exercises: The Example of Saint Ignatius,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, Vol. X, (November 1978) No. 5, p. 273.

³⁹ In *Ignatius of Loyola, Letters and Instructions* Martin Palmer, S.J., John W. Padberg, S.J. John L. McCarthy, S.J. The Institute of Jesuit Sources, Saint Louis, 2006), pp. 128-131.

To the Fathers of the Council of Trent – (excerpts)
INSTRUCTION FOR THE STAY AT TRENT -
FOR DEALING WITH OTHERS

1. *The following points can be used to help ourselves in our Lord*
2. *I would be slow to speak, deliberate and loving, particularly when expressing a judgment on matters that are or might be treated at the council.*
3. *I would be slow to speak and careful to listen, keeping still in order to grasp and understand the speaker's ideas, feelings and inclinations, so as the better to respond or keep silence.*
4. *In discussions I would mention arguments for both sides, so as not to appear attached to my own judgment...*
5. *I would not appeal to any persons' authority... unless the matters have been very carefully thought through..*
6. *If the points being discussed are so right that one cannot or should not keep silent, I would express my view as calmly and humbly as possible, and conclude with "in the absence of a better opinion".*
7. *... It is very helpful not to take into account my own leisure, lack of time or urgency – that is, my own convenience – but instead to adapt myself to the convenience and condition of the person with whom I wish to deal..*

FOR HELPING SOULS

1. *..Our main purpose is,... to preach, hear confessions, and give lectures while teaching children, giving good example, visiting the poor in hospitals and exhorting our neighbors...*

2. *In preaching,.. I would exhort to virtuous living and the Church's devotions.. I would conclude each sermon with a prayer for it (the Council).*
4. *In every confession I would give them some penance by way of prayers for the Council.*
5. *In giving the Exercises and in other conversations, I would likewise be minded that I speak in public.*
6. *I would teach catechism to children for a suitable time. I would have them pray for the same intention.*
7. *I would visit the hospitals at the hour or hours of the day most suitable for physical health... If there were at least three of us, we could each visit the poor every third day.*
8. *I would urge everyone I could in conversation to frequent confession, communion, celebration of Mass, spiritual exercises and other pious works...*
9. *When expressing a judgment on some point, it helps to speak slowly or sparingly; however, when urging souls to their own spiritual progress, it helps to speak at length, articulately, lovingly, and feelingly.*

FOR OUR OWN GREATER HELP

We will all take an hour in the evening to discuss with one another what was done during the day and what should be aimed at for the next day.

... One man each evening should ask the others to give him any corrections they think needed.... The second man will do the same the next evening and so forth, so that they can all be assisted in greater charity and good reputation on all sides.

We should make our resolution in the morning and examine ourselves twice during the day.

3.5 *Spiritual Exercises* # 91-98 THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

The annual retreat is an appropriate time to renew our acquaintance with the great or grand meditations of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Prominent among these is the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ, the call of the King. It concludes with the offering of oneself (97, 98). This offering finds echoes in the *Autobiography* of Ignatius, as he gives himself to the service of the Lord in several instances (see Nos. 10, 12 and 14).

DAY 4 STUDIES AND PERSECUTION IN SPAIN

4.1 STUDY IN ORDER TO HELP SOULS

“Learned ministry,” much needed today, is a characteristic of the Jesuit way of proceeding and is rightly expected of us not only by the laity but by popes (CG 35 (No. 7)). Popes expect from us “serious and rigorous research in the theological field...” Again the Congregation notes (No. 83 - Global Preferences) that “The *intellectual apostolate* has been a defining characteristic of the Society of Jesus from its beginning” and so it “calls for a strengthening and renewal of this apostolate” (No. 83). If our preaching and teaching is to be alive and effective, we must be continually learning in this complex and constantly changing world.

Ignatius’s own experience of helping souls led him to begin the study of Latin and theology at an advanced age of 37 “lest he lead others into error.” Like St. Teresa of Avila, he knew that piety and learning were both important if one wished to be a good spiritual director. (Teresa notes that if both qualities are lacking, she would prefer the learned over the pious, because of her experience of being misled by pious but unlearned directors!)

It is interesting to note that for Ignatius the desire for studies was not primarily in order to be ordained a priest. Rather it would

enable Ignatius to carry on his ministry as a lay apostle, but with the approval of church authorities. These ministries consisted of spiritual conversation and spiritual direction, and above all, guiding persons through the *Spiritual Exercises*. He had to be ready to defend these against the charge that he was simply one of the “alumbrados.” On two occasions, as we will see, he would go to prison for 17 and 42 days because of accusations against him and his teaching.

One might also see some link between the humility of Ignatius in becoming a school boy at an advanced age and the three degrees of humility or love as found in the *Exercises* (167). Ignatius would go to any length in his desire to serve the Lord and the people of God.

Autobiography 50. Study in order to help souls.

Autobiography 56. Continuing his studies.

Autobiography 63. Formal Study to be qualified to help souls.

Autobiography 71. Winning over more individuals to assist in saving souls.

4.2 PRISON EXPERIENCE

Ignatius was imprisoned by the Inquisition on two occasions, in Alcalá and in Salamanca. He clearly links his prison experiences with those of the early apostles as described in the Acts of the Apostles. Ignatius always held that if we really live the gospel, we will suffer persecution and he feared the absence of persecution more than persecution! In one of his last letters, he writes that “going by what we regularly experience – that where there is much opposition much fruit follows, and the Society is even more solidly founded – it appears that there will be a great and outstanding spiritual edifice there where you are, since such deep foundations of opposition have been laid...”⁴⁰ He reportedly said

⁴⁰ Letter of July 17, 1556, in *Ignatius of Loyola, Letters and Instructions*, 692.

that he implored God never to allow persecution to be wanting to the Society – as it prevented negligence and relaxation. So too, Ignatius was said to fear calm rather than stormy weather, and the greatest danger is not from having adversaries, but from having none. Ignatius noted that the Society has produced more abundant fruit in those places where its members have suffered most. And finally, he tells Ribadeneira that we ought to regard persecution as great happiness. It is an evident sign that our Lord will cause us to reap great fruit in that city [Toledo].

Jesuit history is replete with stories of heroic Jesuits in prison.⁴¹ Fr. Arrupe assembled lists of Jesuit martyrs of the last century, Jesuits persecuted and put to death because of their passion and concern for faith linked with justice. Fr. Arrupe himself spent 33 days in prison in 1941, including Christmas Day. On persecution, he writes:⁴²

If we follow Christ, persecution will come, as we have discovered through experience in so many countries when we try to serve faith and promote justice. Not all of us will witness to Christ by shedding our life's blood in sacrifice, but all of us should unreservedly offer Him our whole lives. The essential thing, the Jesuit way, is always to confess Him before men. As I said to the General Congregation in December 1974: "The thing that counts is that we really resolve to follow Christ even without knowing what sacrifice the following of Him will certainly demand of us.

Even if most Jesuits will not be imprisoned, ministry to those in prison has been a constant and fruitful ministry of Jesuits.

⁴¹ Anderson "With Christ in Prison," by George M. Anderson, S.J. *Jesuits in Jail from St. Ignatius to the Present* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000).

⁴² Pedro Arrupe, cited in *Jesuit Yearbook*, (1977-78) article by Jerome Aixala, S.J. "Violent Death for Faith and Justice," 14.

Autobiography 51. Captured by soldiers.

Autobiography 52. Joy in suffering like Christ suffered.

Autobiography 67. In prison, speaking about God.

Autobiography 69. Remain in prison of open doors.

Autobiography 70. Freed and free to speak about the things of God

4.3 5th EXPERIENCE - TEACHING CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Ignatius and his companions constantly reached out to share their belief in the good news of Jesus Christ. Very often this focused on teaching the catechism. Of course this was prominent in the life of Francis Xavier in the far East, and in the lives of later Jesuits too, including the two Jesuit doctors of the Church, St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Peter Canisius, famed for their catechisms.

So significant for Ignatius was the teaching of Christian doctrine to children or youth that it becomes part of the formula for final vows (*Constitutions* #527 and #535). This catechesis can take place through writing, spiritual direction, retreats, teaching and through preaching. To assure that candidates have the charism for the ministerial life of the Jesuit, Ignatius makes one of the six experiences or experiments to be the teaching of Christian doctrine. This experiment will show the candidate's ability to reach out and be an effective minister.

One interesting note. Jesuits are noted for their contribution to the study of languages. Missionaries studied the languages and composed the earliest dictionaries and grammars of many of the people in Japan, China, North and South America, Vietnam and Africa. But in addition to composing dictionaries and grammars, they most frequently added a third book, namely a translation of the catechism, showing their commitment to "teaching Christian doctrine."

Autobiography 57. Explaining Christian doctrine.

Autobiography 60. Sharing the Exercises.

Constitutions 69. The fifth experience is that of explaining the Christian doctrine or a part of it in public to boys and other simple persons, or of teaching it to individuals, as opportunity offers and what seems in our Lord more profitable and suitable to the persons.

4.5 *Spiritual Exercises*, # 136-148. A MEDITATION ON THE TWO STANDARDS

146, there will be three steps; the first, poverty as opposed to riches; the second, insults or contempt as opposed to the honor of the world; the third, humility as opposed to pride.

According to Michael Buckley⁴³ the six experiences or experiments outlined in the *Constitutions* call for humility, abnegation and poverty and these virtues are precisely also the goal of the Meditation on the Two Standards. The values of the Standard of Christ present and challenge us with a sharp contrast to many of the cultural values and attractions of the modern world.

DAY 5. PARIS - THE FIRST COMPANIONS

5.1 GATHERING COMPANIONS

The pilgrim journey of Ignatius began with him alone. But gradually he began to see the need and advantage of gathering companions as Jesus Christ did, to carry on the work of the

⁴³ “Freedom, Election, and Self-Transcendence: Some Reflections upon the Ignatian Development of a Life of Ministry,” by Michael Buckley, S.J., in *Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age*, ed. George P. Schner, S.J. SR Supplements Vol. 15, 1984 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984). 84-85.

Kingdom. Gradually this evolved into the Society of Jesus, an apostolic body in the Church. Through the *Spiritual Exercises*, Favre and Xavier found their vocation with Ignatius. At Montmartre, on August 15, 1534 Ignatius and six companions pronounced their first simple vows at Mass celebrated by Favre. The first companions in Paris decided to follow the example of Ignatius and together make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But in 1539, with the proposed pilgrimage to Jerusalem impossible, in the *Deliberation of the First Fathers*, “they unanimously decided, after prayerful discernment, to become a body in which each would care for the others, strengthening their bond of union through mutual knowledge and sharing in each others’ lives” (GC 35, No. 91).

In our day, together with efforts to attract candidates to the Society, we see the need for increased collaboration with lay men and women to continue and carry out the enterprises of the Society. Thus CG 34 and 35 had specific decrees on our collaboration with the laity. These are challenging and exciting developments. We must grow both in the union of minds and hearts with fellow Jesuits, and also with our lay men and women collaborators.

Autobiography 71. Gathering companions in Paris.

Autobiography 75. Imitating Christ and the apostles.

Autobiography 82. With Faber and Xavier in Paris, won over by the Exercises

Autobiography 85. Decision to go Jerusalem, or to the Vicar of Christ in Rome.

5.2 CONVERSATION

Ignatius and his first companions quickly saw that a main instrument employed in their apostolic works was the art of conversation. As O’Malley relates, “More characteristic of the Jesuits, however, was a second type of “conversation”

best exemplified by their practice of “going fishing,” usually two by two.”⁴⁴ Both Nadal and Polanco used this expression of going fishing to describe how the first companions went out to the marketplace, prisons, and ships, not to preach to a group but to approach individuals and talk to them about the things of God.⁴⁵

We see the origin of this in the *Autobiography* where Ignatius began this ministry of conversation immediately after his conversion, starting in his own household in Loyola castle (*Autobiography 11*). Conversation is also very much called for by the *Constitutions*. More than being capable of silence, candidates for the Society must be skilled in conversation and the ability to deal with people. Among the qualities of the Superior General, qualities which Ignatius exemplified, should be skill in conversation (*Constitutions # 729*). Further reflections on the importance of conversation in Jesuit life and ministry can be found in *Constitutions* 814, 349, and 648.

We might reflect on the quality of our conversation in our communities and apostolates. Do we remain on the level of superficialities or do we dig deeper and talk, as Ignatius did, with our brother Jesuits and collaborators to converse about the things of God, the things of the Spirit? On the importance of conversation as an instrument for friendship, apostolic work and for building community, based upon his experience as a tertian instructor see the essay of Howard Gray.⁴⁶

Conversation, as a tool of ministry, becomes a means of profound evangelization. As one example, we could look upon the directing of a person through the *Spiritual Exercises* as a series

⁴⁴ O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*. 112.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Howard Gray, “Friends in the Lord” in *CIS* 89 (1998) 41-55.

of guided conversations. This conversation calls for patience and we might note that only after four years of conversation did Peter Favre make the *Exercises*. Francis Xavier too made the *Exercises* only AFTER the vows at Montmartre⁴⁷

Autobiography 26. Helping souls at Manresa.

Autobiography 65. Speaking in a friendly manner about the things of God.

Autobiography 77. Spiritual conversations and giving the Exercises.

Autobiography 88. Conversation, preaching and teaching in his home town.

5.3 4th EXPERIENCE - HUMBLE HOUSEHOLD TASKS

There is at least one reference to humble household tasks carried out by the first Jesuits. In Vicenza, Favre and Lainez lived together with Ignatius “in a building outside the city, that had neither doors nor windows” (#94). Simple living to be sure! It continues: “They usually ate some cooked bread – when they had bread – and the one who stayed at home took care of the cooking. In this way they spent forty days attending to nothing but their prayers.”

We might recall that in our day, Father General Pedro Arrupe and subsequent Father Generals take their turn in serving table at the Curia in Rome. Michael Buckley sees this experiment in low and humble tasks as a repetition and deepening of what the novice has done outside the house in hospital. It is a way to confirm the ability to live a life of abnegation and humility. Jesuit community is not easy or automatic. Many Jesuit communities today are no longer full service communities but call for the active participation of all the members. Time, energy, commitment, and thoughtfulness are called for, if our lives in community are to be enriching, pleasant, and supportive.

⁴⁷ Padberg, op. cit., 288.

Constitutions 68. The fourth experience consists in the candidate's employing himself, after entrance into the house, with all diligence and care in various low and humble offices, while giving a good example of himself in all of them.

5.4 Spiritual Exercises – the Second Week - The Journey to Jerusalem in the Gospel of Luke

Ignatius was firm and steadfast in his intention to journey to Jerusalem. By meditation on the gospel of Luke, we can trace the path of Jesus to Jerusalem, to his rejection, suffering, death and resurrection. We ask for the grace to know, love, follow Jesus Christ especially when the road ahead is difficult.

--Luke 9:51; As the time approached when he was to be taken from this world, he firmly resolved to proceed toward Jerusalem.

--Luke 13:34; Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you slay the prophets... you shall not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'

--Luke 18:31; We must now go up to Jerusalem so that all that was written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man may be accomplished.

Luke 19:41 Coming within sight of the city, he wept over it and said: "if only you had known the path to peace today, but you have completely lost it from view."

DAY 6. NORTHERN ITALY TO ROME: LA STORTA - PLACED WITH THE SON

6.1 THE VISION AT LA STORTA

The Vision at La Storta in 1537 is often considered to be the climax of the personal life of Ignatius and possibly the starting point for the Society of Jesus. Lainez and Nadal understood it in

this manner. In a talk given in 1559, Lainez recounts: “our Father told me that it appeared to him that God the Father was imprinting in his heart these words: “Ego ero vobis Romae propitius” (I shall be favorable to you in Rome)... Then another time he said that he seemed to see Christ with the cross on his shoulder. And the eternal Father was close by, saying “I want you to take this person as your servant”. And thus Jesus took him and said, “I want you to serve us.”⁴⁸ Nadal sees it as “a special grace granted to the Society by God.” He notes that “favorable to you” is the plural YOU and thus refers to Ignatius and the companions and not simply to Ignatius.

Hugo Rahner sees La Storta as the middle point between Manresa and Rome, between the book of the *Exercises* and the *Constitutions*.⁴⁹ Another Ignatian scholar, Herbert Alphonso puts this quite simply: “in Ignatius, all Jesuits have been given the same grace: that is, all Jesuits have been given by God the Father to Christ bearing his cross as his servants and companions – all Jesuits have been “placed with the Son”⁵⁰. So too, Fr. Kolvenbach writes: “The vision of LaStorta has not been given to us that we might stop and gaze at it. No, it is the light in which the Jesuit regards the whole world. ... with this kind of Christ (carrying the cross) has the Father placed St. Ignatius and every one of us who share existentially in the Incarnation...”⁵¹ Thus in CG 35, No. 28 we read:

⁴⁸ Lainez, FN II, p. 133 as cited in Munitiz, *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, 376, note 153.

⁴⁹ See Hugo Rahner, “Die Visio des heiligen Ignatius in der Kapelle von La Storta,” *Zeitschrift für Ascese und Mystik (Geist und Leben)* (1935).

⁵⁰ Herbert Alphonso, S.J. *Placed with Christ the Son* (Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993) 135.

⁵¹ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “La Storta,” in *CIS 57* (1988) 12. See also, “The Grace Bestowed on the Founder for all the Companions,” Gervais Dumeige, *CIS 57* (1988) 62-71.

Saint Ignatius had the most significant experience for the founding of the Society in the little chapel of La Storta on his way to Rome.... It is from Ignatius's encounter with the Lord at La Storta that the future life of service and mission of the companions emerges in its characteristic contours: following Christ bearing his Cross; fidelity to the Church and to the Vicar of Christ on earth; and living as friends of – and thus in – the Lord as one single apostolic body.

Finally, we might note again, the nplace of prayer to Mary. The vision came in response to St. Ignatius “praying Our Lady to place him with her Son.” For this most important grace, he asked the intercession of Mary.

Autobiography 41. Christ appears to him in a field.

Autobiography 96. The Vision of La Storta - placed with the Son.

Autobiography 97. In Rome, ready to face difficulties.

6.2 CURA PERSONALIS OF IGNATIUS

Cura personalis is often presented as a characteristic of Jesuit teaching and indeed of all Jesuit ministry. It should be a virtue found in Jesuit community, in the care of the superior for those in community and the mutual care and concern of Jesuits for one another. Although *cura personalis* is a phrase not used by St. Ignatius himself, the reality is strongly present in his *Autobiography* as we note here, both in his relationship with Jesuits and non-Jesuits.

In the *Constitutions* we discover the great care and concern of Ignatius for the sick (#304). And the extra special care for those near death (#595-96). Senior Jesuits are to be assigned to watch and pray, to keep company with those who were dying. (How ironic that Ignatius himself died almost alone, and without receiving the sacrament of the sick!) In many places, the average age of Jesuits

is rising. We thank God that we are able to take very good care of the infirm in their mission to pray for the Society and the Church. We might ask, however, if we reach out and visit our sick brethren in the infirmaries or communities or hospitals? Do we show special care and concern for Jesuits in restricted ministry? I recall a Sister working in a Jesuit infirmary, remarking rather pointedly to me a few years ago, with disappointment: “You Jesuits are not good in visiting the sick.” For further reflection on *cura personalis* of St. Ignatius, see the essay of Kolvenbach.⁵²

Autobiography 79. Visiting a sick person who had cheated him.
Autobiography 87. After he had completed this (proving his innocence) he mounted the small horse his companions had purchased for him and set out alone for his homeland.

Autobiography 90. Visiting the families of Jesuits.

Autobiography 95. Journey to visit a sick companion.

6.3 2nd EXPERIENCE - HOSPITAL TRIAL

St. Ignatius describes very clearly the goal and purpose of the hospital trial or experiment. Michael Buckley explains⁵³ this experience referring both to the hospital service in Barcelona for Ignatius and to that of the first companions in Venice and in Upper Italy. Hospitals were rough warehouses and places of disease. Could the Jesuit or Jesuit candidate imitate the kenosis of Jesus Christ and find God in a broken world? Could one humble himself and find and serve Christ in the sick? Could he live and serve in solidarity with the sick and the poor - in a word empty himself and be of assistance to others in their need?

⁵² Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “*Cura Personalis*,” See <http://www.sjweb.info/cis/newcis/114padreGenEn.cfm>. He focuses on this Ignatian quality in the *Exercises* in the relation of the spiritual director to the exercitant.

⁵³ Buckley, “Freedom,...” op. cit. pp.82-83.

There is a strong Jesuit tradition of serving as chaplains in hospitals, reaching out to the poor and the needy. As Nadal put it, “The Society cares for those persons who are either totally neglected or inadequately attended to. This is the basic reason for the founding of the Society...”⁵⁴ Do we pray for Jesuit hospital chaplains, support their ministry? Do we imitate Jesus Christ who reached out to the poor, the sick, the marginalized. Do we manifest that radical love, that attitude of kenosis and solidarity in our lives today?

Constitutions 66. The second experience is to serve for another month in hospitals or one of them. The candidates take their meals and sleep in it or in them, or serve for one or several hours during the day, according to the times, places, and persons. They should help and serve all, the sick and the well, in conformity with the directions they receive, in order to lower and humble themselves more, thus giving clear proof of themselves to the effect that they are completely giving up the world with its pomps and vanities, so that in everything they may serve their Creator and Lord, crucified for them.

6.4 Spiritual Exercises -The Third Week: The Passion

In the Third Week of the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius suggests that the exercitant “may use another day to go through the entire passion, either in one exercise or in several, as is deemed best for his greater profit” (209). In his *Autobiography*, Ignatius notes that early in his conversion, “he would normally read the Passion during mass, always going along in a state of serenity” (No. 20). As an alternative to reading through the entire Passion, one might focus on the *Spiritual Exercises* # 297, JESUS DIES UPON THE CROSS. Here Ignatius presents a meditation on the seven last words.

⁵⁴ Nadal, As cited in CG 34, Decree 6, No. 168.

Twice in the *Autobiography*, Ignatius senses the presence of Christ suffering as Ignatius himself suffers (48 and 52). Our own struggles, suffering, diminishment become fruitful and redemptive if linked with the suffering, struggle and passion of Jesus Christ.

DAY 7. ALWAYS APOSTOLIC – IN ITALY AND ROME

7.1 GO OUT AND PREACH 6TH EXPERIENCE – PREACH AND HEAR CONFESSIONS

We have already referred to the first Jesuits going out “fishing” and engaging in conversations about the things of God. But they also went out to preach. We see their apostolic and priestly zeal at work in northern Italy as the companions go out to the town squares to share the Good News. Thus in Venice in 1537, the companions who were not priests, including St. Ignatius, were ordained to the priesthood. Immediately before the ordination, they professed perpetual poverty. The canonical titles under which they were ordained were that of “poverty and sufficient instruction in letters.” They were given broad faculties to celebrate Mass, preach, teach, lecture and hear confessions.⁵⁵ Worth noting is the description of the early Jesuits by Polanco:⁵⁶

Ours had available to them two principal means whereby they could be of spiritual assistance to their neighbors even when they did not have a [skilled] preacher at hand. One was the *Spiritual Exercises*. The other was the sacraments of confession and Communion, although they could give

⁵⁵ See Chapter 3 of Conwell, *Impelling Spirit* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997) for further information on this.

⁵⁶ Polanco, *Year by Year with the Early Jesuits: Selections from the Chronicon of Juan de Polanco, S.J.*, translated and annotated by John Patrick Donnelly, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004) Selections from the year 1554, No. 884, p. 349.

considerable help to other people by good example, private conversations and explanations of Christian doctrine. During the first four months of this year a great throng wanted to make the *Exercises* at our college. It was impossible to satisfy them all, even though the house was large enough. Although there were almost always eight or nine people occupied with spiritual exercises of this sort, more than twenty others were waiting with equal eagerness for a spot to open up when somebody had finished the *Exercises*.”

Autobiography 94. Forty days of prayer at Vicenza.

Autobiography 95. Preaching in the city squares.

6th EXPERIENCE - PREACH AND HEAR CONFESSIONS

According to Jerome Nadal, the early Jesuits were men of two sacraments, namely Eucharist (Holy Mass) and Penance.⁵⁷ They did not become heavily involved with stable parishes where they would be involved with baptisms and weddings. That would be the ministry of diocesan priests. Rather Jesuits would be more on the frontline ministries, reaching out with a message of evangelization and reconciliation. We might ask if we uphold the traditional reputation (deserved or not) of the priests of the Society as excellent confessors and effective preachers? Do we keep some of the benefits of the traditional *casus conscientiae* at least by occasionally informally entering into conversation on moral questions and confessional practice in our day?

While the number of confessions may be down, an increasing number of Catholics are seeking spiritual direction. Are we willing and able to offer such direction, to laity, but also so importantly to diocesan priests and religious women? This would be one way to carry on “the ministry of consolation” so prominent in the early Jesuits according to John O’Malley. In this way too,

⁵⁷ Nadal, in MHSJ, 90, pp. 670, 788 and 850.

we would follow the example of St. Ignatius. As Fr. Kolvenbach explains, “Ignatius’s ‘pilgrimage’ transformed the penitential and devotional journey to a holy place into an apostolic journey ‘to help souls.’”⁵⁸

Constitutions 70. In a sixth experience, the candidate, who now has been tested and found edifying, will proceed farther by preaching or hearing confessions, or in both together, in accordance with the times, places, and capacity of each.

7.2 PRAYER AND DECISION MAKING

Ignatius labored for many years in Rome in writing the *Constitutions*. Thus Polanco writes about events in Rome in the year 1548:⁵⁹ “At this time Ignatius devoted his efforts to both the *Constitutions* and the rules; relying partly on prayer, partly on careful reasoning, and partly on experience, he gradually crafted what he later promulgated as the basic law of our Institute.” Ignatius shows the prayer, the labor, the care that went into their composition. Do we appreciate the practical genius and the world wide vision of Ignatius that comes forth in the *Constitutions*? Are we familiar not only with the *Constitutions*, but now the Norms, inseparable from the *Constitutions*? In my own experience, practically every time I turn to the *Constitutions*, I gain some new insight. When we face major decisions, do we turn to prayer and to Holy Mass (as Ignatius did) to assist in coming to a proper decision?

Autobiography 99. How Ignatius composed the Exercises and Constitutions.

Autobiography 100. Ignatius composing the Constitutions.

Autobiography 101. Daily Mass while composing the Constitutions.

⁵⁸ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, *The Road from La Storta* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2000) “A Certain Pathway to God, 213”.

⁵⁹ Chronicon The Year 1548, No. 230, p. 71.

7.3 IGNATIAN OBEDIENCE

Years ago, many recall that the famous letter of St. Ignatius on obedience was read aloud every month in the refectory. While we are not recommending the renewal of this practice, it might be well to recall a few points of that letter. Decree 4 of CG 35 “Obedience in the Life of the Society of Jesus” might also be the basis of prayerful reading and reflection. Especially today, where individualism is strong, we must more consciously strive for the union of minds and hearts in our communities and in our apostolates. We might also reflect on our attitude to the church and to its leaders. Sometimes we might be a bit quick in being critical of the church rather than sympathetic. We do not sufficiently practice the principle of the *Praesupponendum* of the *Exercises*.

Letter on Obedience - To the Members of the Society in Portugal March 26, 1553⁶⁰

2. *It is more particularly in obedience than in any other virtue that God our Lord gives me the desire to see you distinguish yourselves... To the extent that this virtue flourishes, all the other virtues will be seen to flourish and produce in your souls the fruits which I desire and which are demanded by him who through his own obedience redeemed the world which had been lost through lack of it, “becoming obedient unto death, death on a cross.”*
3. *The superior is not to be obeyed because he is highly prudent, very good, or qualified by any other gift of God our Lord, but rather because he holds his place and authority...*
5. *...The first degree of obedience, which consists in the execution of what is commanded, is quite low. It does not deserve the*

⁶⁰ Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, Op. Cit. pp. 412-421.

name of obedience.. unless it rises to the second degree, which consists in making the superior's will one's own, in such a way that there is not just effective execution but a conformity of wish, an identical willing and not willing.

7. *But whoever aims at making a complete and perfect oblation of himself, must, in addition to his will, offer his understanding. This is a further and the highest degree of obedience. He must not only have the same will as the superior but also be of the same mind as he, submitting his own judgment to the superior's to the extent that a devoted will is able to influence the understanding.*
9. *It is certain that since obedience is a holocaust in which the entire person offers himself without the slightest reserve in the fire of charity to his Creator and Lord through the hands of his ministers...*
20. *I will suggest three specific means that will be very helpful for you in reaching the perfection of obedience of the understanding.*
21. *The first is that you look not to the person of your superior as a human being subject to errors and miseries, but instead to the one you obey in him, Christ – who is supreme wisdom, measureless goodness, infinite charity...*
22. *The second means is that you always be quick to seek out reasons to defend what the superior commands or is inclined towards, rather than reasons to disapprove of it.*
23. *A third means for subjecting the understanding is even easier and surer. It is this: taking for granted and believing... - that whatever the superior enjoins is the command of God our Lord and his holy will, one proceeds blindly to the execution of the command, without any inquiry and with the force and promptitude of the will eager to obey...*

7.4 *Spiritual Exercises* -The Fourth Week 218-225.

Note in the First Contemplation of the Fourth Week, The Fifth Point No. 224:

“Consider the office of consoler that Christ our Lord exercises and compare it with the way in which friends are wont to console each other.” Or we might reflect on the Thirteen Apparitions of the Risen Lord (#299-311) as outlined by Ignatius. These appearances or apparitions have now become a devotion parallel to the Stations or Way of the Cross, and called the Way of Light or the Stations of the Resurrection. Each encounter with the Risen Lord is a renewal of the call and leads to mission.

For the early Jesuits, as for the Risen Lord, the ministry of consolation was a very fitting way to describe their mission and ministry.

DAY 8. MINISTRY IN ROME - ADMINISTRATION

8.1 IGNATIUS AND THE COMPANIONS IN ROME

The brief excerpt from the *Autobiography* shows how Ignatius moved from the life of the individual, lone pilgrim, to be the superior general of the Society of Jesus in Rome. Jesuits in Rome, led by Ignatius, became involved in a number of apostolic works, collaborating with lay men and women. The conclusion of Decree 6, “Collaboration at the Heart of Mission, No.213, of GC 35 refers to this activity. “In his day, St. Ignatius gave shelter to the homeless of Rome, cared for prostitutes, and established homes for orphans. He sought collaborators and with them established organizations and networks to continue these and many other forms of service.” How creative, how collaborative are we in our ministries?

According to Nadal, Ignatius had the special grace from God to find God in all things: “This contemplation was often given to him, but in a special degree during the last years of his pilgrimage.” And

“Our hearts were much comforted by the sight of him, as we were aware that something of the overflow of this grace poured out upon ourselves. That is why we believe that this privilege was not only granted to Ignatius but to the whole Society and that the favor of that kind of prayer and contemplation is offered to all in the Society and we hold that it is bound up with the grace of our vocation.”⁶¹

Devotion, according to Nadal means the ability to find God in all things. This applies not only to our apostolic works, but to our life in community. Thus in the *Constitutions*, Ignatius advises those in formation: “By observing one another, you grow in devotion and praise God our Lord, whom each one should endeavor to recognize in his neighbor as in his image.”

Autobiography 98. Apostolic works in Rome.

8.2 SHARING THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

In addition to the various works of charity, Ignatius and the companions readily shared the treasure of the *Spiritual Exercises*. This is a mission entrusted to us by popes. Thus we read in CG 35 (No. 12) “Aware that they are ‘a gift which the Spirit of the Lord has made to the entire Church,’ we should, as we are called by the Holy Father, ‘focus special attention on the ministry of the *Spiritual Exercises*.’” Again: in CG35 No. 65 “We encourage Jesuits to give the *Spiritual Exercises*, ‘to allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord,’”

The *Chronicon* of Polanco notes the importance of the first Jesuits sharing the *Exercises*, in Rome, in Bologna, # 208 (p. 321) in Valencia #998 (p. 388), to diocesan priests, to Dominicans and Franciscans, #2329 (p. 453); Carmelites #261, (p. 176) and

⁶¹ Nadal, *Mon. Nadal IV*, 651 f. These references are found in Thomas Clancy, “The Proper Grace of the Jesuit Vocation According to Jerome Nadal,” *Woodstock Letters* (April 1957) 114.

to married men and women. It also involved training men and women in turn to share the *Exercises* with others. So prominent is the giving of the *Exercises* that it would seem to be the major ministry of the Fathers in Rome! Ignatius himself – saw the *Exercises* as “the best means I can think of in this life both to help a man to benefit himself and to bring help, profit, and advantage to others.”... “They will help you to serve others beyond anything you ever dreamed of.”⁶²

Fr. Kolvenbach once remarked that a good Jesuit is one who is master of, or who can share the *Spiritual Exercises*. In our preaching and teaching, in our conversation, we might reflect on how creative and zealous we are in referring to and sharing the treasure, the major themes of the *Spiritual Exercises*?

Autobiography 92. Gaining companions through the Exercises.

Autobiography 98. Busy helping souls in Rome, giving the Exercises.

8.3 *Spiritual Exercises*

312. THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST OUR LORD. Ignatius, we recall in his *Autobiography* (No. 47), returned to the Mount of Olives, the place of the Ascension, and this was the high point or climax of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He received “great consolation” there.

In the third point of the contemplation on the Ascension, Ignatius stresses that the apostles should not stand there, looking up to heaven. Rather the mission must be taken up with new vigor. Even though, somewhat surprisingly, Ignatius does not include in the *Exercises* a meditation on Pentecost, this could become

⁶² *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, Selected and Translated by William J. Young, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959) pp. 27-8. Letter to Fr. Miona, confessor to Ignatius in Paris. He eventually makes the Exercises in Paris and joins the Society

an object of our prayer, as we know how important the presence of the Holy Spirit was and is for Ignatian spirituality and mission.

8.4 CONTEMPLATION FOR ACHIEVING LOVE

Spiritual Exercises # 230-237. The final day of the retreat must clearly include the Contemplation for Achieving Love. We look ahead and reflect on how we will live this in the present and future, how we are not only practicing, but growing in the Ignatian understanding of devotion, namely the ability to seek, find, and serve God in all things.

Da Camara writes that Ignatius was “always growing in devotion, i.e. in facility in finding God, and now more than ever in his whole life. And every time and hour he wanted to find God, he found him.”⁶³ Guided by the world view of the ‘Contemplation for Achieving Love,’ we pray for that Ignatian grace to seek, find, and serve God in all things.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

“To find divine life at the depths of reality is a mission of hope given to us Jesuits. We travel again the path taken by Ignatius” (CG 35, Decree 2, No. 8). Reflection on the *Autobiography* has enabled the major themes of Ignatian spirituality to emerge from their context in the life of St. Ignatius. Included here would be the priority of grace, belief in and trust in divine providence, being led by the Spirit, an ordered life, finding and serving God in all things.

One surprise is that there is little or nothing in the *Autobiography* on the *magis* - clearly a major thrust of Ignatius and Ignatian spirituality, but noticeably absent from the

⁶³ For the meaning and importance of “Devotion” in Ignatius, see Michael J. Buckley ““Sempre Crescendo in Devotione...” *CIS* No. 60 (Vol. XX, 1989:1) 63-101.

Autobiography. (Except in one incident (#14) where he wanted not only to imitate the saints in doing penances, but do MORE. But he realized that in light of his increasing desire to be apostolic, this was not God’s will and he grew in moderation and discretion. He accuses himself of a certain blindness in this desire to do great penances). How to account for this? Perhaps the modesty of Ignatius, perhaps emphasis on it came later in his life, since we know that the *magis* is strongly, solidly, constantly found in the *Constitutions* (and Letters). There is also little on chastity. We envy Ignatius who explains that on his sickbed, “he saw clearly a likeness of Our Lady with the Holy Child Jesus... and from that hour until August 1553, when this is being written, he never again had the slightest complicity in matters of the flesh” (*Autobiography*, No. 9). There is nothing on founding or running schools, little on Jesuit community life, and nothing on liturgy.

But the *Autobiography* does present the fundamental experience and insights of Ignatius that led to the formation of the Society of Jesus and shaped its spirituality and gave direction to its mission. We see Ignatius in his various capacities as convert, pilgrim, spiritual guide, creator and master of the *Spiritual Exercises*, organizer, laborer in the Lord’s vineyard – a person of extraordinary world-wide vision, and at the same time, a person of practical genius.

Surely what is present in the *Autobiography* gives us much to ponder as we try to “Rekindle the Fire”(CG 35) by reliving the experience and the journey of Ignatius - the courtier, soldier, convert, pilgrim, mystic, student, gatherer, priest, founder, pastoral agent, and finally, the general superior in Rome where he wrote the *Constitutions* and dictated his *Autobiography*. The same Spirit and fire that guided, empowered, directed Ignatius is available to guide Jesuits today, individually, in communities and in our apostolic works.

2011 : 3

RETHINKING RETREATS

Ignis – Ignatian Spirituality: South Asia

Quarterly / No. 2011.1 / Vol. XLI No.III

GUJARAT SAHITYA PRAKASH

St. Xavier's Road, Anand - 388 001

Gujarat, India.

Editor: Michael Amaladoss, SJ

Articles for publication to be sent to:

The Editor, IGNIS

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Loyola College, Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600 034, India.

email: mamaladoss@hotmail.com

For subscriptions write to:

The Publisher, Ignis,

Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, St. Xavier's Road, Anand - 388 001 Gujarat, INDIA.

email: booksgsp@gmail.com

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Gujarat, INDIA

Published by: Jerry Sequeira, SJ, Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, St. Xavier's Road, Anand Gujarat-388 001

Printed by: Agnelo Vaz, SJ, Anand Press, Gamdi-Anand, Gujarat - 388 001.



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