



SACRED STORY COMMUNITY

Small-Group Evangelization
For Young Adults & Adults

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ABOUT SACRED STORY INSTITUTE



Sacred Story Institute is at the forefront of dynamic applications of classic Ignatian Spirituality. William Watson's research on the conversion process of St. Ignatius was informed not only by a life of study, spiritual direction and Ignatian program development, but also by research in neuroscience, medicine and psychological theory. He breathes new life and understanding into the process of spiritual growth. His research can be found in his book, *Sacred Story ~ An Ignatian Examen for the Third Millennium*.

Top Ignatian scholars from around the world hailed Fr. Watson's research and new insights into one of the Church's most important saints and the spirituality that takes his name.¹

The spiritual methods discovered in St. Ignatius' Exercises and his unique Examination of Conscience have guided millions of Catholics and Christians over the last centuries. Sacred Story provides the tools for holistic spiritual development, taking what scientists call a "systems approach" to integral human development. We understand that individuals are not reducible to just their moral faults and weaknesses, hopes and desires. Each person's graces and defects are situated within a whole history and linked to a multiplicity of issues developed over time that are spiritual, physiological and emotional.

Our methods allow individuals to access the "archeology of their life history" to better understand the things that block integral human and spiritual development and how to navigate a graced path forward using the tools of spiritual discernment. Those tools are provided to the world and the Church by God through the genius of St. Ignatius' conversion process.

Sacred Story incorporates this integral, holistic, systems approach in all the multiple programs we have created for children, young adults and adults. There are no easy fixes, and our methods for spiritual advancement do require sustained life-long work, but they are effective and bring insight, hope, greater peace and interior freedom.

It is this "interior freedom" that is a hallmark of Ignatian Spirituality. St. Ignatius

said his “exercises” were to help an individual organize his or her life in such a way that no choice or decision was made under the influence of an “inordinate attachment.” Thus, the goal of each individual is to “freely” choose the path of life that most perfectly conforms to their deepest nature and desires—which are always aligned with the will of God.

Because God’s role in Christ is to “free and unbind” us, he stands by our side as the Divine Physician who will gradually lead us to interior freedom and peace and one day, release us from all bonds and raise us with him to eternal life.

Advancing our systems approach to integral healing, SSI in 2023 will collaborate with The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) to study the impact of trauma on faith belief and practice. Fr. Watson discovered doing his doctoral work that early life trauma can have significant impact on faith and belief. All SSI programs have been geared to help people explore their past to find healing to things that block interior freedom and holistic development.

It is our hope to find many more insights on how best to fine tune our systems approach to integral, spiritual healing. We hope to continue breaking new ground in the application of classic Ignatian spirituality as we launch the Sacred Story Community Course.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST FOR PERSONAL AND WORLD SANCTIFICATION



Throughout its centuries of service to the Church, the Society of Jesus has created various structures to implement its foundational Spiritual Exercises which have provided means of moving youth, men, women, religious and clergy closer to God's will and service of one's neighbor.

JESUIT EVANGELIZATION TRADITION



Since the times of St. Ignatius Loyola, Jesuits have instilled in the laity and clergy the importance of establishing the daily Examination of Conscience and monthly confession as an important means towards spiritual sanctification. These Marian focused small faith communities became a world-wide movement of young adults, women, men and priests forming millions of engaged Catholics. The basic structure of using the Ignatian Examen and frequent confession is still a most effective evangelization model.

SACRED STORY COMMUNITY



Fr. Watson has spent nearly fourteen years to research and create the tools of formation and conversion for the essential elements that make possible successful small faith communities. They will be called Sacred Story Community. SSC will enable parishes and dioceses to form intentional communities of engaged disciples so that they may move ever closer to the heart and will of Christ for the world's sanctification and service of one's neighbor.

SACRED STORY COMMUNITY CAN SYNERGIZE YOUR EVANGELIZATION EFFORTS



Do you use Amazing Parish, Parish Catalyst, Word on Fire Institute, Dynamic Parish, Renew or Rebuilt? Do you want to really take full advantage of what you are doing with these different platforms to help people develop a daily relationship with Christ in small intentional faith groups?

Sacred Story Community provides the daily relationship formation tools that augment any of these initiatives to help you to form intentional communities within your larger parish of engaged or missionary disciples. The small-disciple group formed in a daily faith training/disciplines together goes back to method

Jesus used in gathering his main apostles.

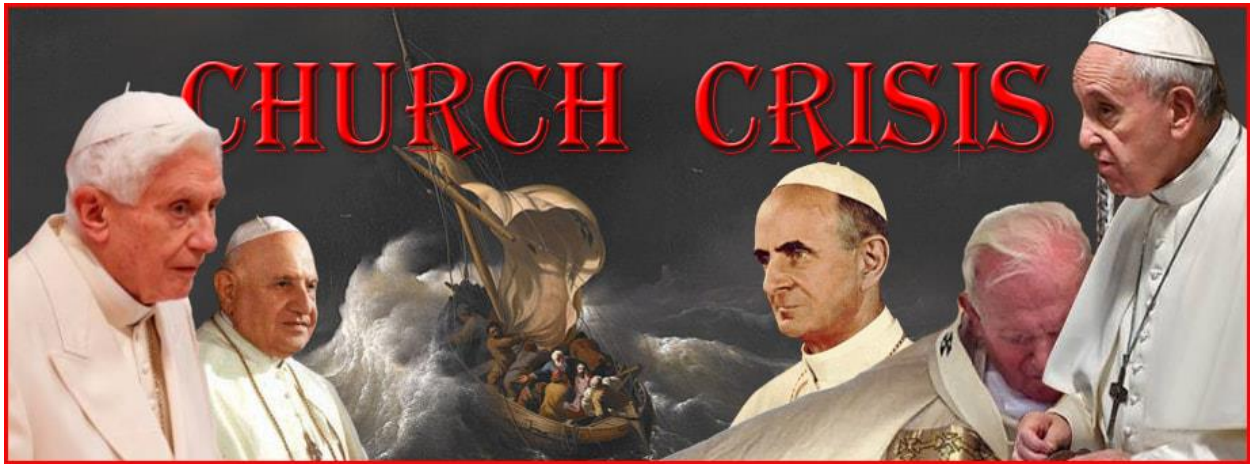
SSC is also inspired by the principal mission of the Society of Jesus as stated in the General Examen of the Jesuit Constitutions: 1 [3]: "The end of the Society is to devote itself with God's grace not only to the salvation and perfection of the members' own souls, but also with that same grace to labor strenuously in giving aid toward the salvation and perfection of the souls of their neighbors."

Using the Ignatian methods tested for centuries, SSC helps you offer individuals in your faith community, who are ready, the means to take a deep dive into their faith. This will be a boost in support of their own growth, the growth of the faith community and the Church. It provides parishes the means to accomplish this primary goal of the Christian Life. It is these individuals, forming small groups, willing to do the "more" that will really provide the leaven to transform your whole community.

Sacred Story Community offers pastors/parishes dynamic relationship tools for achieving in small groups the Core Christian Goals of:

- ✦ Perfection/Sanctification of the Individual and Group
- ✦ Execution of Evangelization for New & Non-Practicing Catholics
- ✦ Execution of Apostolic Goals in Service to Those in Need

SACRED STORY COMMUNITY IS EFFECTIVE EVANGELIZATION
IN TIMES OF CRISIS OR PEACE



The Church and the world stand at an important inflection point in history. Chief among the challenges facing both is the need to reestablish human nature as divinely created specifically to participate in the life of the Holy Trinity. Each human person is destined for eternal life with Christ due to his supreme sacrifice. His life, passion, death and resurrection are the turning point of cosmic history. The Roman Catholic Church is graced with the fullness of Truth and the means of sanctification and holiness, and has the honor of sharing it with all people in the world (LG#8). Our Catholic Faith has always been about a relationship with Christ and sharing him with our sisters and brothers.

The Sacred Story Community will offer both evangelization and discernment resources using the time-tested methods of Ignatian Spirituality. Sacred Story Institute has proven new ways to deliver the power of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and St. Ignatius' discernment principles. Sacred Story Communities will teach individuals how to open daily to Christ, becoming discerning, evangelizing and socially engaged people of faith.

Evangelization and discernment must be grounded in a living relationship with Jesus Christ whom individuals and faith communities worship as present in their midst. Only this sacred relationship with Christ can create engaged disciples. Sacred Story Community provides means for lay faithful to deepen their belief and to act on that belief that Christ is present to his people and still working powerfully and miraculously in our lives and in our world.

Sacred Story Community will hold out a model of simple faith and belief in Christ

proposed by the Gospels and that has provided a successful model of evangelization throughout the Church's history. As such, Sacred Story Community will be under the patronage of The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Both of these foundational devotions are ones that the Church and the Society of Jesus have offered to individuals and faith community to consecrate themselves to in order to accomplish the holy work of God in the sanctification of the world.²



ARTICLE 1

SSC Candidacy Application Process



Candidates are invited by a pastor or a faith formation leader/minister to consider joining the Sacred Story Community. Candidates should feel drawn to be part of an intentional small faith community that calls one to a daily relationship with Christ that also reaches out to serve those most in need.

A candidate will know she/he is right for this commitment by having a desire to fulfill the obligations of both a candidate and a full member once initiated into the SSC following the initiation period.

We are encouraging SSC communities to organize by male and female gender for this initial test. Our research indicates this is the most effective way to create the strongest bonds and to have sustained success with group retention.³

The end goal and purpose for joining a Sacred Story Community is to join with others who, like you, desire to live your Catholic and Christian faith to the fullest extent and to be supported and to support others who desire the same goal.



Sacred Story Community Candidacy Application

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

SCC GROUP: Adult Young Adult

GENDER Female Male

Please Write briefly why you feel called to enter the candidacy for Sacred Story Community. State that you have the desire to fulfill the spiritual obligations of a candidate. Write briefly what you hope to gain in your life by joining the candidacy of SSC. Finally state what draws you to become a full member of a Sacred Story Community after the candidacy period.

(Parishes would do well to make this application available on-line in something like a Google Form document).

ARTICLE 2

SSC Spiritual Disciplines for candidates



—Candidates are invited by the Pastor or the SSC Director to join a SCC.

- ❖ High School SSC
- ❖ Young Adult SSC
- ❖ Adult SSC

—All Adult Candidates must take the Forty Weeks—An Ignatian Path to Christ journey: completing it and the Whole-Life Confession in the first part of the journey plus Consecration to the Immaculate Heart and Sacred Heart.

—All Young Adult Candidates must take the TRUE HEART—A Way to Selflessness journey: completing it with the final 8-hour all night Eucharistic Adoration and Consecration.

—All Candidates have a regular sacramental life of weekly Sunday Mass and Monthly Confession

—Adult Candidates begin the daily practice of the Examination of Conscience in part two of Forty Weeks and Young Adult candidates at the end of TRUE HEART.

—All Candidates agree to pray daily by name for all their fellow candidates

—All Candidates are asked to pray a Rosary once a week

—All Candidates attend a 60-minute meeting with their SCC group weekly

ARTICLE 3

SSC Spiritual Disciplines for Full Members



- Weekly Sunday Mass
- Weekly One-Hour Meeting (Limit to one hour)
 - Opening Prayer (led by one of the members)
 - Spiritual Check-In (how are my daily, weekly, monthly spiritual disciplines and what are my main takeaways: positive and/or not so positive?)
 - Presentation on some specific spiritual/religious theme/topic that can help members become closer to Christ and understand their lives as Catholics better (10-15 minutes).
 - Discussion on presentation (10-15 minutes)
 - Conversations and motions on the groups apostolic/service work(s).
 - Conclusion Prayers—Consecration to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary
- Daily Examination of Conscience
- Daily Mass & Communion as is possible
- Monthly Confession
- Monthly one-hour Eucharistic Adoration (more is optimal)
- Weekly Personal and/or Sacred Story Community Rosary
- Individual Consecration to the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart
- SCC APOSTOLATE--Monthly Service to Those in Need
 - Each SSC should select an apostolate to which they commit themselves and do a minimum of one-hour (individual or group) service.
 - The apostolate could be to the materially or spiritually poor
 - A Priority Spiritual Apostolate is out-reach to non-practicing adult and young-adult Catholics to invite them to Sunday Church with you.
 - Corporal Works of Mercy (visiting the sick, shut-ins, prisoners)
- Invite Fallen-Away Catholics to the Whole-Life Confession Journey or Eucharistic Adoration
- Commit to guide new SCC candidates through the Forty Weeks and/or TRUE HEART

ARTICLE 4

Sacred Story Community Theological Framework

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE BLESSED MOTHER OF OUR SAVIOR



Christ formed the Church at the foot of his cross, with the Blessed Mother and the Beloved Disciple. With the glorious Ascension of Christ Jesus, the new Body of Christ, the Church, has Mary in the center as the gift of the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the first disciples. The Blessed Mother is at the forefront of the Church and at the forefront of showing us how to surrender our lives to Christ, her Son. So, we consecrate ourselves to her and ask for her maternal protection in our fight against evil and sin in our own lives, in the Church and in the world. We ask her to lead us to her Son, whom we also consecrate ourselves to.

We offer two articles on the central role of the Blessed Mother in our lives, our Catholic Faith and in Salvation History. The first is a sermon by St. Anselm, that the

Church puts forth for our reflection on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother of Christ.

O VIRGIN, BY WHOSE BLESSING ALL NATURE IS BLESSED! BY ST. ANSELM

Blessed Lady, sky and stars, earth and rivers, day and night – everything that is subject to the power or use of man – rejoice that through you they are in some sense restored to their lost beauty and are endowed with inexpressible new grace. All creatures were dead, as it were, useless for men or for the praise of God, who made them. The world, contrary to its true destiny, was corrupted and tainted by the acts of men who served idols.

Now all creation has been restored to life and rejoices that it is controlled and given splendour by men who believe in God. The universe rejoices with new and indefinable loveliness. Not only does it feel the unseen presence of God himself, its Creator, it sees him openly, working and making it holy. These great blessings spring from the blessed fruit of Mary's womb.

Through the fullness of the grace that was given you, dead things rejoice in their freedom, and those in heaven are glad to be made new. Through the Son who was the glorious fruit of your virgin womb, just souls who died before his life-giving death rejoice as they are freed from captivity, and the angels are glad at the restoration of their shattered domain.

Lady, full and overflowing with grace, all creation receives new life from your abundance. Virgin, blessed above all creatures, through your blessing all creation is blessed, not only creation from its Creator, but the Creator himself has been blessed by creation.

To Mary God gave his only-begotten Son, whom he loved as himself. Through Mary God made himself a Son, not different but the same, by nature Son of God and Son of Mary. The whole universe was created by God, and God was born of Mary. God created all things, and Mary gave birth to God. The God who made all things gave himself form through Mary, and thus he made his own creation. He who could create all things from nothing would not remake his ruined creation without Mary.

God, then, is the Father of the created world and Mary the mother of the re-created world. God is the Father by whom all things were given life, and Mary the mother through whom all things were given new life. For God begot the Son, through whom all things were made, and Mary gave birth to him as the Saviour of the world. Without God's Son, nothing could exist; without Mary's Son, nothing could be redeemed.

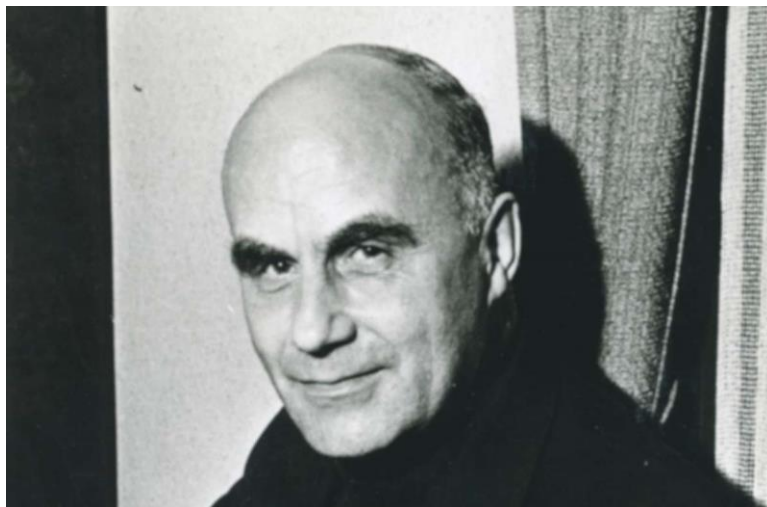
Truly the Lord is with you, to whom the Lord granted that all nature should owe as much to you as to himself.

The second article is by the great Jesuit theologian, Hugh Rahner. Fr. Rahner wrote this article about the true spirit of the Marian sodality movement. It stands as the clearest expression of the spirit of a Sacred Story Community that is Ignatian, Marian, and anchored in the Christocentric spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Christ.⁴

TRUE SPIRIT OF A SACRED STORY COMMUNITY

TRUE SOURCE OF THE SODALITY SPIRIT⁵

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



By birth Father Hugo Rahner is a native of Baden (Germany) where he was born in May 1900. At the age of nineteen he entered the Upper German Province of the Society of Jesus. For many years, both as a student and as a professor of Patrology and Church History, his name has been

closely linked with Innsbruck in the Austrian Tyrol, where in addition to his teaching he has held two important administrative posts, that of Rector of the University, and Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

In scholarly circles, both in Europe and in America, Fr. Rahner's reputation is one of wide and genuine esteem. The books, the many monographs and articles which have appeared under his name have solidly established him as a theological thinker of originality of depth.

Because of the close parentage in thought between Fr. Hugo Rahner and his younger brother, Fr. Karl Rahner, also a Jesuit, and a renowned professor of Dogmatic Theology at Innsbruck, one is sometimes mistaken for the other.

Father Hugo Rahner's *Ignatius von Loyola und das geschichtliche Werden seiner Frömmigkeit*, available to English readers under the title of "The Spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola", has been held as a masterly contribution to Ignatian studies. It is his competence as an historian and as a master of Ignatian spirituality that makes the worth of the present study on the Sodality spirit.

INTRODUCTION



Many pamphlets have been published on Sodality matters. Many articles in various Sodality magazines, especially after the publication of Pope Pius XII's

Magna Charta of the Sodalities, have dealt with the essential features of the true Sodality in modern times, from a manifold standpoint; historical, theological, canonical, spiritual and technical. Many of these have contributed much towards the contemporary Sodality revival.

Towering above all these, is Fr. Hugo Rahner's present essay on the "TRUE SOURCE OF THE SODALITY SPIRIT", which does not only stir up some artificial enthusiasm from without, but recaptures its inner meaning from within, by re-sourcing it in its true source, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

That the spirit of the Sodality is the very spirit of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, Fr. Rahner shows convincingly, stressing five salient features on the make-up of the Exercises. Their basic inspiration is the loftiest ideal of always seeking for the 'more' and the 'better'; this spirit, so typical of St. Ignatius, admirably suits the Sodality, which appeals to the spiritual élite.

In that search for the 'greater' glory of God, like St. Ignatius, the Sodalist must make his quick decision in the war of the spirits. Having taken sides with Christ, the Sodalist's life, like the first Manresa retreatant's, is one of generosity, a crucified one in the likeness and the service of Christ. Out of this generosity is born in the Sodalist and in the retreatant alike the burning itch to conquer the world with Christ that makes all apostles. This zeal, however, according to the practical Ignatian spirit, does not burn itself out in empty enthusiasm, but materializes in sober, humble service in the Church of Christ, under the hierarchy.

These five features are not only essential to the Exercises, but they also constitute the true youthful and Marian spirit. That is why the Sodality, like the Exercises, is primarily appealing to youth for generosity in the following of Christ, under Mary's mantle. This explains why the true Sodality, no less than the true Spiritual Exercises, is meant for the élite only.

No wonder then that both the *Bis Saeculari* and the Common Rules of the Sodality insist so much on the Sodalists making the Spiritual Exercises. Rule 9 states: "There shall be a retreat every year of some days, closing with a general Communion...Certainly the most fruitful retreat is the kind called 'closed'. If this cannot be done, and if not, even the entire day can be given to the Exercises, it is well to have the retreat last 6 days, with at least two periods daily, morning and evening, with spiritual reading, meditation, conference, Holy Mass and

Beads as the principal exercises." And Pope Pius XII ranks first, among the most useful helps to form perfect and wholehearted followers of Christ, the Spiritual Exercises and the practice of daily meditation. It is from the observance of the Rules, much more than from the increase in its membership, that he expects the Sodality to provide the Church with "tireless heralds of the Virgin Mother of God and fully trained propagators of the kingdom of Christ".

Would Sodality Directors, for whom Fr. Rahner's study should prove particularly inspiring, understand that there is no question here simply of faithful observance of just one more rule among many, but that the very life of their Sodality is at stake! Both historically and spiritually the Sodality depends on the Spiritual Exercises. There can be no more true Sodality without the retreat, than there can be an Ignatius without Manresa. The spirit of the Sodality is the spirit of the Spiritual Exercises. In any Sodality, therefore, renewal can be had only at the spring, through closed retreats.

Facts prove that this is not an Utopian ideal. In November 1952 the Sodality Rally of Wurtzburg University students patronized the closed retreat of no less than 5 days. In 1953 a group of 76 student Sodalists from John Carroll University of Cleveland (Ohio, U.S.A.) made an 8-day retreat in complete silence, after which a good many asked for the privilege of making the full 30-day-long retreat! Austria, Switzerland and Canada are now emulating with them. Besides, for many years past, Sodalities in various countries proved the best promoters of the Retreat Movement. The Retreat Section of the Young Men's Sodality, Bombay, shines as an example in India.

Here, therefore, lies the secret of the revitalization of all Sodalities, by re-sourcing them to their true Spring: The Spiritual Exercises. Allow Fr. Rahner to convince you of this. We are greatly indebted to the West Baden Sodality Academy (U.S.A.) for having given us the free use of the English translation prepared by their members.

RETURN TO THE ORIGINS

EVALUATED in the light of its history, its internal structure and its aims, the Sodality of Our Lady is an organization of great importance in the life of the Catholic Church. At the same time, the Sodality has undergone a strange distorted



interpretation in the minds and feelings of many Christians of our day who have come to regard it merely as an association of pious prayer founded mostly for women. For this reason, it will be profitable to try to describe the meaning of the Sodality from two points of view – the spiritual as well as the historical. To understand the nature of any historical organization which in the course of time has evolved, divided and subdivided, and so, as it has aged, become exceedingly complex, we must go back and examine its origins for the valuable information which such a study will yield.

The Sodality is a movement of the Society of Jesus; it has its conception and birth, its supervised growth within the Order. Eventually the hierarchical Church identified itself with the movement and assumed its full guidance. This step, made necessary by the suppression of the Jesuit Order in 1773, bears witness in a significant, though indirect, way to the importance of the Sodality in the eyes of the Church. The Jesuit beginnings of the Sodality are now only remote history. The universal Church has completely absorbed the Sodality. It is still imperative,

however, that we return in our thinking to the Sodality's origins so that we may delineate more accurately the Sodality ideal.

THE SPIRIT OF ST. IGNATIUS - Always “the More” and “the Better”

WE shall start with the fundamental fact that all apostolic forces at work in the nascent Society of Jesus can be explained by the Spiritual Exercises that book authored by St. Ignatius, which has left its impress upon history. This small volume is a remarkable summary of all those forces which made the Founder of the Society of Jesus a saint of the Church even in his own day.

The life of St. Ignatius discloses that basic Christian phenomenon, clearly traceable in the documents, which is at the very heart of the life of grace and which emanates from Christ Himself; the new and constant transition from the good to *the better* that takes place in the individual human heart and soul is the driving force of Christian ‘discontent’ something of that fire which never says: “It is enough.” (Prov., 30, 16.) It is a perception experienced only in a conversion of seismic proportions - one which results in the transformation of a man's whole life into nothing less than a passion for what is *always the greater*. It is the insight, which preserves the creative, the compelling force inherent in the Christian message.

Theologically we can sum up the ideal of the Spiritual Exercises in a simple word and a phrase precious to the heart of the Ignatius from the first moment of his conversion to God: the word “more” and the phrase “to promote the salvation of souls”.

In the Exercises, “more” means an ever-closer identification with the crucified Christ who by this means alone conquered the world. “To promote the salvation of souls” means to be gifted with an insight into the staggering truth that Christ has made the outcome of His salvific work and the destiny of His Church dependent upon man's co-operation. It means an interior realization that the success of God's work is also (though not entirely) measured by that joyful, selfless eagerness to serve so characteristic of those who heed and understand the call of the King of the world and who discern in His summons the challenge to do more in the future.

We may call this theology of the comparative. Cast in plainer, less compact language, it is an affirmation of the Christian phenomenon that in the Church's life there must always be an elevation above the ordinary in order that there may be some gradation. Christian life flows only if the sources of that life are found high in the mountains. As a consequence, there can never be established a common level of the "merely Christian" which all can attain unless everything Christian is to perish in an ephemeral and worldly normality and mediocrity.

It is according to this basic sociological structure that grace is communicated in the Church of Him who has redeemed us by the superabundance of His love (John 13, 1). Such "discontent" dominated St Paul when he wrote: "Not that I have made perfect, but I press on hoping that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me".⁶ The theological foundation is rooted in the deepest essence of God who reveals Himself in Christ. According to St Augustine, God is the *Deus semper major*: "Always He is greater, no matter how much we have grown."⁷ No aspirations of love, however great, can measure up to Him; the measure of our love is always the love of Christ, which knows no limit.

We must realize, too, that the process of salvation operative within the Church presses forward to its goal with ever more vehemence, so that the call given to all members of the Mystical Body of Christ to co-operate in the salvation of mankind becomes ever more emphatic and urgent.

Yet this can be accomplished only by certain souls – those who have come to understand that, ultimately, this salvation is not effected by the masses, nor by an organization, nor is it assured even by the normal and ordinary government of the Church alone. It is achieved only by those souls who have understood what that one little word *magis* means: something more, something greater, something better, something done with more love.

To these men of the *magis* Ignatius belongs. Through the Exercises he would bring men to a living appreciation of the core-meaning of *magis* – all for the greater glory of God – so that their whole life would be stamped by it. The first Jesuits in all humility determined to be a community of such men – men of whom Jesus Christ had laid hold. This was the spirit with which they undertook their first apostolic labours.

In the historical development of the modern Church the Exercises are of first-rank importance. They have captured and kept within reasonable limits the spirit that has shaped modern times. It was the humanistic renaissance that made the tumultuous discovery of the personal "I"; and from this, one fact has become increasingly evident: the conquest of the world for Christ only and always happens at one decisive point – where God's grace meets the soul already aware that it has the power of decision to determine its eternity. To that extent and only in so far as Christ, the Lord of this World, finds souls who will surrender with an unreserved love to the demanding *magis* of God's word, will the return of the world to God become a reality.

A Youthful Spirit



WITHOUT doubt, it is characteristic of a youthful attitude of soul to be always more receptive to that which is greater, to remain forever one who grows (since God is never attained), never to say "it is enough". For all those molded in the spirit of the Exercises that one word *more*, so full of youthful energy, is the criterion of genuineness. What is common to all Sodality at all age levels is Christian "growing". This is a tending toward a state of life still unattained; it is, in simple Christian terms, the striving for the fullness of Christ, a maturing in grace.

In 1610 Father Spinelli remarked that the Sodality strives not only to accomplish

faithfully what divine law commands, but also to labour zealously that all Sodalists may the more distinguish themselves day by day in their efforts after piety.⁸ We see at once that every Sodality must be a group of Christians who, far from “retiring”, are still wide awake, who are still receptive to the *more*, (that is, of these constantly increasing demands of Christianity), who are not the drab uninspired citizens, the complacent bourgeois of God’s kingdom.

Without question there are many excellent definitions of the Sodality. They attempt to sketch concisely the essential notes of this organization. But all of them, it would seem, are too much concerned with the “static” elements alone, the Sodality’s statutes. See, for example, Fr. Wernz’s definition set down in the first section of the general Rules. Rather let us try to grasp the “dynamic” nature of the Sodality by going back to the fundamental structure of the Exercises. We must remove the Sodality from the static framework of a mere association and attempt to observe and to analyze some of the youthful enthusiasm which in its first beginnings made the Sodality so great. We shall grasp this ideal of the Sodality most easily if we try to develop in greater detail the fundamental structure of the Exercises.

DECISION IN THE WAR OF THE SPIRITS - *United under Christ’s Standard*

AT the outset of his own conversion to God the first realization that struck St. Ignatius was an insight into the secret conflict between the spirits that direct and determine all history, an insight into the struggle between Christ and Satan. In a gripping and sharply defined illumination Ignatius discerned that some terrible force is at large in the world, but first and last in the depths of the human soul. His autobiography has this to say of his experience: “In this way he gradually came to distinguish between the spirit of Satan and the spirit of God. This was the first discovery he made about divine things. Later on, after making the Spiritual Exercises, he began to draw light from this experience for his teaching on the discernment of spirits.”⁹

The Sodality, then, is an association of souls who, like Ignatius, realize that, though it is in the disguise of purely visible earthly, political and social affairs, there is a secret struggle of tremendous consequence taking place in this world: the struggle between Christ and Satan, the epic drama of Redemption from the death of Our Lord to His visible and second coming. The Sodality is a union of

souls who understand that “the Devil is at large”¹⁰ and “the Good Friend is present” every day unto the end of time. The world is secretly and forever marching under two standards. “Babylon” and “Jerusalem” are clashing in open battle. The purpose of the Sodality is to unite under one standard those souls who in the heat of combat have come to realize that mere conformism, self-complacency and unaggressiveness will never win the victory.

Ever Alert



FROM a realization of this truth stems one of the essential principles of the Sodality: its membership must be selective; it must be formed from the spiritual élite. Even more today than in the past, the Sodality must be a union of Christians who embody the whole cast of mind, the spirit of the first Christians so often stressed in the Gospels, which is called “watchfulness” or “alertness”.¹¹ “Be sober and watch, because your adversary the Devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.”¹²

This “alertness” is something ever new. It is a readiness to lend a hand whenever something is “awry”. This alertness for everything is an instinct native to youth. If a Sodality is alive and genuine, it fosters this instinct. But in this way youth’s passion is, so to speak, baptized and devotes itself to those causes worthy of a wholehearted dedication. Every educator of youth will testify how surprisingly

alert all youth worthy of its salt is for the great drama, the enrapturing power of the struggle, which Christ the King has inaugurated on this earth with the sword of His spirit. Conversely, every Sodality, even made up of mature Christians, will remain faithful to its spirit only in proportion as its members comprehend by an ever-new alertness for the irreconcilability between Christ and Satan which poses constantly new problems for all living Christians.

With Mary at Our Side

SOMEHOW or other the Sodalist must be like the youthful Ignatius who on his sick bed awoke from his mediocre frame of mind to an awareness of the one necessary decision to be made. Both in his autobiography and in the Exercises, it is in this connection that Ignatius first speaks of Our Lady. At the vision of her sublime appearance the spirits began to discriminate, to take sides within his soul. "He received such unusual and great consolation and yet remained filled with such a disgust for his entire past life, in particular for the things of the flesh, that it seemed to him as if all the images which once filled his soul had vanished from it."¹³

With remarkable clarity these words disclose when and *how* in the secret history of the saint's soul Mary sets into operation that work which in the economy of salvation belongs to her in a singular way as Mother of God. From the Proto-Gospel¹⁴ to the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse she is the sublime Lady of Discernment of Spirits; the great sign of battle between the Word and the Serpent. Whenever there is a question of another crucial turning-point in the battles of God, she is always present. That is why she appears, naturally enough, in the Exercises at the point when the exercitant must make his first real decision: the clear-cut and interior decision to turn away from all that is sinful, deepening into an intimate knowledge of what is sinful, what is worldly, what is opposed to God in its very roots. "The first colloquy will be with our Blessed Lady, that she may obtain from her Son grace for me [of] a deep knowledge of my sins... [and that] I may put away from me all that is worldly and vain."¹⁵ Immediately afterwards, when the exercitant is confronted with the possibility that he can go to hell and when the all-embracing conviction ripens in him that the history of all created spirits is determined by the Incarnation,¹⁶ there, too, the great Lady enters in as a decisive figure. It was she who made possible for us the coming of Christ.



This is, therefore, the first great aspect under which the Sodality presents to its members the image of the Mother of God. Every true Sodalist must become one of those total Christians who has made his decision, who fully appreciates what is involved and what is expected of him. Mary must become for him in very truth the *Domina Mundi*: The Mistress of the world. Above all, he must look upon her and love her as the Conqueror of the Serpent. She is Our Lady of the Discernment of Spirits.

FOLLOWING THE CRUCIFIED KING - *Bearing His Likeness*

THE second thing which St. Ignatius perceived from the very beginning was the burning realization that they alone can claim the victory in this battle who want to distinguish themselves in the service of Christ the King. To do this they must imitate Christ in the way He chose, which is victory by means of the Cross.

When in the Exercises Ignatius has Christ the King say: "It is My will to conquer the whole world and all My enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of My Father",¹⁷

then Ignatius' immediate yet amazing conclusion is this: "Those who wish to give *greater* proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves in the service of their eternal King and Lord of all...will act against their sensuality and carnal and worldly love."¹⁸



The corollary to this joyous and noble self-surrender, this offering of loyal service beneath the Standard of Christ the King, is the insight that Christ's victory must begin in the depths of one's own soul. First of all, we must be victorious in defending the frontiers of our own hearts if we would fight side by side with Christ in His conquest of the world for God. In short, we must become men of the

magis possessed of a single passion (in those words, which echo the Foundation): “Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created.”¹⁹ Throughout the Exercises this *more* is revealed unequivocally as an ever greater likeness to the crucified Lord (in the famous third degree of humility,²⁰ the summit of the Exercises) and with it the ardent yet sober realization that there is no victory for the kingdom of Christ which does not depend upon the self-denial of him who has heard the call of the king.²¹

From all this we draw our conclusion. The Sodality enrolls men who have written the word *more* on their standards. They should be Sodalists who in the meditation on the kingdom are called “prompt” and “diligent”, who want to lay at the feet of their King and Lord “offerings of greater value”.²² This oblation consists in a readiness to become like the king who through His labours alone brought the world back to the Father. Basically, this means self-denial, one’s own sanctification through assimilation to the Crucified. Even as early as 1601 we read in the *Manuale Sodalitatis*: “The first aim of a Sodality must be the cultivation of a *more* perfect life like to the life of Christ.”²³

It will be, then, a challenge to a wise pedagogy to determine how to present the correct amount of *selectivity* and of the *more* in a meaningful Christian way, taking into consideration of the age, social status and education of each candidate for the Sodality. It is here, above all, that the élite are distinguished from the masses.

The pre-eminence accorded to the interior life in every genuine Sodality is based on the insight which transforms all thinking and living: the realization that all enthusiasm for the call of Christ the King must be translated into the keen readiness to struggle against the world and sensuality. In his Apostolic Constitution *Bis Saeculari*, Pope Pius XII calls this “the perfection of the spiritual life”.²⁴ The Pope then lists the means which all must use if they would follow Christ perfectly and without qualification. Those means are the Spiritual Exercises, daily meditations and examinations of conscience, a fervent sacramental life and the direction and counsel of a spiritual Father.²⁵ Is this not the way a man lives whose life has been transformed by the Spiritual Exercises? It is through the Spiritual Exercises, or, more accurately through the fundamental insight derived from the meditation on the kingdom that every Sodality must repeatedly renew

itself. That insight is an interior, self- conquering willingness to conform to the Crucified, which is built up and propagated. It is through such a renovation of the spirit of the Exercises, repeatedly made, that any Sodality stands, and through its neglect that any Sodality deteriorates and ultimately collapses.



We do not go too far when we state that every genuine Sodality can compete, humbly yet with a just pride in Christ, with any other organization of the same type within the Church in this matter of according a first-rank importance to the interior life and its cultivation. The spiritual life is not just another phase of the Sodality's programme; it is that thing which the Sodality through daily exercise attempts to foster and to integrate into the daily life of the Sodalist for life. Moreover, the Sodality does this by relying on principles which have withstood all change, which have proven themselves in the face of every criticism and every passing spiritual vogue. In the Church of Him who has conquered on the Cross there is no real choice between action and the interior life, between doing and praying, other than a basic "over"-emphasis on the interior life. They alone are true apostles who have realized that in a vital, prayerful way – that is to say: souls to whom the invisible, but so much more real, actuality of interior things has been revealed, souls who have experienced the genuinely lasting, the genuinely celestial things of the kingdom of Heaven. But these things are

reserved only and always for those who lovingly and joyously devote themselves during the whole of life to the fundamental law of Christ the King: "You must labour with Me and so enter the glory of My Father."²⁶ The formation of this type of soul is the first, the basic task of the Sodality.

Youth Answers Generously



HIGH demands of this kind strike a responsive chord in the mind and heart of youth. To belong to those who are virile lovers, to those who are ready for action, to those who do not always treat themselves delicately, who are willing to make sacrifices, to those who will begin the struggle right within themselves – this is to have the true spirit of youth. Only with this type of soul can Christ undertake anything for the advancement of His kingdom. Every reformation in the Church has always had its origin in this greater demand made on youthful generosity.

We cannot start early enough to form such an élite. This is the reason why the total hope of the Church depends on the constant, the renewed formation of such groups of faithful souls. This is the noblest commission of the Sodality.

Pope Pius XII has called this spirit, so necessary to every Sodality, *generosita*.²⁷ It is exactly what St. Ignatius in his meditation on the kingdom expects of those who, submitting to these noble super- demands upon themselves, are prepared for a joyous and faithful service of the eternal King. If the Sodality succeeds in awakening in the hearts of its members that authentically Christian and stable attitude which the election of the Exercises mentions in these words: "...that in all that concerns the spiritual life, his progress will be in proportion to his surrender of self-love and of his own will and interests"²⁸— then something decisive has taken place in the kingdom of God.

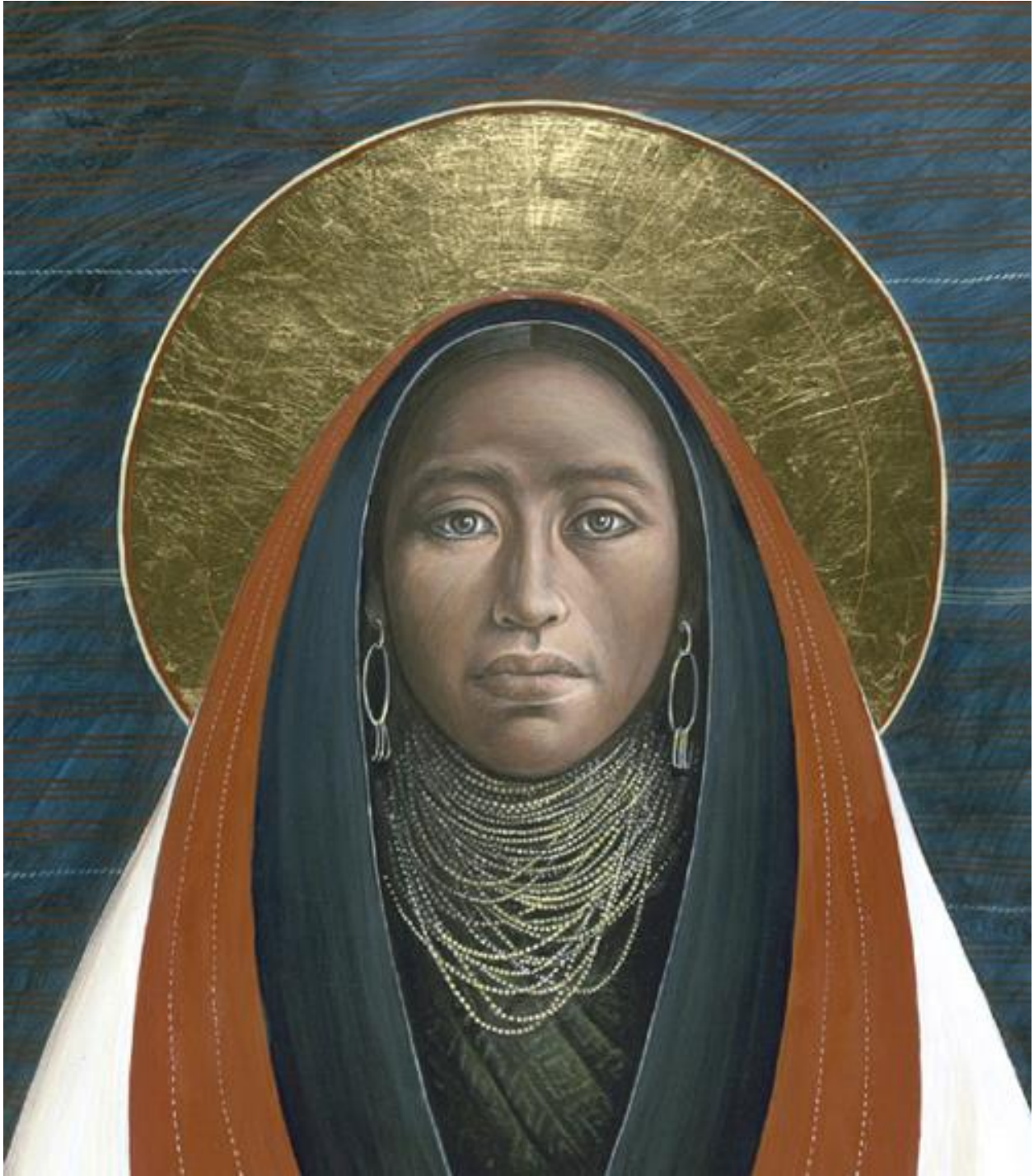
Much has been written, much has been said regarding the question whether or not the age-old words of inspiration in the Sodality's vocabulary such as banner, knighthood, *Acies Ordinata* still strike a responsive chord with modern youth. In Germany at least the more prevalent opinion maintains that such words secretly repel our generation. The quintessence of the Sodality's spirit assuredly does not reside in blue ribbons, nor in fluttering banners, nor in processions and impressive world congresses. On the other hand, the Scriptural truth of the call of Christ to the battle between Jerusalem and Babylon will always retain its reality and release its driving force anew in every generation. Only the skill of the true teacher is needed to translate these fundamental truths into modern imagery for the youth of today. Again and again we will make this astounding discovery. Every Christian who is possessed by the spirit of youth finds these truths most appealing. They are basic in that structuring of the soul which is achieved through the Spiritual Exercises of the Sodality.

Mary Points the Way

SINCE in the Exercises Ignatius intends to inculcate the conviction that only the likeness to the poor, crucified Lord of the world guarantees victory, it is significant that he presents the contemplation on the Incarnation with such a loving wealth of detail, in noteworthy contrast to his usual terse style. The reason is that in the manner of His "coming" Christ reveals the plan by which He wishes to save man, and by it the destiny and the fortunes of men are decided.

At the very centre of this event we discover the humble person of Our Lady. Between the royal throne of the Three divine Persons and hell, in the very centre of the *Divina Commedia*, is the inner chamber of the Virgin of Nazareth, and

within it the most secret decision in all human history was made: *Ecce Ancilla Domini*: Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Before her stands the exercitant struck with amazement. He begs for only one thing: "...grace to follow and imitate more closely Our Lord, who has just become man for me."²⁹



It was no accident of history that the first Sodality in Rome was dedicated to the

mystery of the Annunciation. Nor was it pure coincidence that in 1522 Ignatius at Montserrat made his own dedication to Mary on the feast of the Annunciation. On that occasion he offered his weapons to his Queen and exchanged his worldly garb for pilgrim's dress. Under the banner of his Queen he turned away from the vanity of the world toward the poor Christ. This is the conversion, which must take place in the soul of every Sodalist. This is the realization in the spiritual order of the juridical fact that every Sodality is aggregated to the *Primaria* of the Annunciation.

All real putting on of Christ, all growth into a "genuinely Catholic adulthood" within the Sodality means to imitate *Mary's Fiat*, its design in Christ's redemption of the world. This is the *Fiat* that accepts the Cross of Christ that challenges all that is noble in the soul, that longs for a more perfect following of the suffering Christ. In this way the Sodalist must learn through the Sodality to love Mary as the exalted Queen of his *magis*. She is Our Lady of Christian Discontent. She will lead him to the Cross.

CONQUERING THE WORLD - True Zeal Born of Generosity

ALMOST automatically the third insight stems from the first and second. The soul that has denied itself even to the measure of selfless service, even to the desired identification with the Crucified, takes its place among those who are no longer deaf but "prompt" and "loving".³⁰ This is to say that always and without reservation they are at the disposal of their King and those words of the First Week are ever on their lips: "What ought I to do for Christ?"³¹ Here we find that readiness for apostolic action born of an interior life characterized by a Christ-loving self-denial, an entirely new receptiveness for world-wide co-operation in the redemptive work of Christ in the battle against the standard of Satan.

This is much more than mere ado over the Church's external activity. It does not mean apostolic activity in the frequently derogatory connotation of that term which means organization alone, nor just a narrow concentration on a particular problem within the Church. For one who has died to himself in Christ all doors are suddenly thrown open. Only he who in self-sacrifice has offered his own heart is a follower of Christ equipped and ready for every form of apostolic endeavour. In the Exercises the interior and the apostolic life are presented in their Christian perspective, which is to say, in a balanced perspective. A man

who wants only the *more* in his interior life finds everything ready for him in exterior life. There is only one limitation: the limitless and intensely arduous love of Christ and His work.

Only those souls of the *more* (who are this way in all Christian simplicity) are in a position to feel called to every kind of service for the salvation of their fellow man, the authentic apostolic work of Christ the King, who is ever present in the Church militant. This readiness to co-operate in the work of Christ is vitally necessary for every Sodality; otherwise the Sodality would remain what it already is in the eyes of many, a pious spectre, that type of organization which Pius XII, in his address of January 21, 1945, described thus: "The Sodality is no pious organization for the cultivation of serene and inactive piety, no refuge for pious souls, no quiet haven where there is no combat and no cross."³²



The Sodality should verify that fundamental law of all spiritual life within the Church: in proportion to the degree to which a man puts himself at the disposal of Christ the King with a joyful live and heartfelt intimacy does he become fit to be a witness, to give testimony for the living, the demanding, the fighting Christ. He is ready, alert enough to take his place in the line of battle wheresoever he may be needed, with the strong, sure hands which only they possess who have first sacrificed their hearts.

Again, it is our present Holy Father who proposed this ideal of apostolic readiness to the Sodality when he addressed the International Congress at Barcelona on December 7, 1947. The Pope said: "This should be the distinguishing mark of the Sodality, that each day it adapts itself anew and with agility to the many-sided problems of the Church and to the most diverse circumstances of the present day and nevertheless remains ever faithful to the essential requirements of its spirituality and its apostolate."³³ Here, in this ideal of the Sodality, we discern the true, the correct balance between piety and activity. The Sodality should cultivate, the Pope goes on to say in the same address, no mere interior and timid piety incompatible with Our Lord's words: "I have come to cast fire upon the earth!"³⁴ Again, in another passage the Holy Father applies to the Sodality's genuine enthusiasm for action the words of Scripture: "Can a man hide fire in his bosom and his garments not burn?"³⁵

Youthful Initiative

THE urge to independent action, to perfect oneself and others by one's own initiative is a fundamental trait of youthfulness. In 1610 Fr. Coster had this to say in his *Libellus Sodalitatis*: "It is really not difficult to keep young men faithful to duty while they are under the supervision of their teachers. But we must make provision, first of all, that they make piety so much their own that they will remain faithful to virtue, not because of any one form of coercion or another, nor from the mere ambition to distinguish themselves, nor for any other reason, but that they make the fear of God their own and devote themselves to study because of an ardent love of God; that they do not serve to the eye, but remain true to the faith in the secret depths of their hearts as well as in public. This was a subject on which the Fathers of the Society of Jesus reflected intensively. They asked themselves: How can we bring the young men entrusted to us to this point? They came to the conclusion that it is very important to unite

them in a Sodality governed by pious and holy laws and in which they would bind themselves interiorly to live a just and holy life.”³⁶

It is in this way, as Fr. Joseph Miller notes, that the Sodality becomes part of a genuinely educative process. The Sodality captures youth’s urge for independence. This is to adopt a cardinal principle of modern pedagogy, namely, that all efforts on behalf of youth must lead it to an independent acceptance of the world of values.

What we have said about student Sodalities also applies to every genuine Sodality. Guidance toward responsibility must be a core principle, that attentive listening for the call to collaboration in the kingdom of God, that prudent, and at the same time, courageous carrying out of convictions form a secrecy of the soul into public life, and even “...by promoting in national assemblies and as heads of states, laws that are in keeping with Gospel principles and social Justice”, as Pius XII says in his *Bis Saeculari*.³⁷ In this sense every Sodalist must be young. He is young who can always start to do something from the beginning. In the eternally new kingdom of Christ every achievement is a new beginning and every beginning is already a secret victory. Only with such persons can Christ ever begin to do anything.

Mary Present at Every Crisis

ALREADY in the very first week the exercitant stands before the Cross of his King and asks himself the question: “What ought I to do for Christ?”³⁸ But this Christ who has descended and has “come” is He who has come through Mary. Thus, as the exercitant of the second week kneels with Mary and Joseph before the new-born Babe of Bethlehem in the stable, there is enkindled in him the same noble readiness to help Christ and to do something for Him: “I will make myself a poor little unworthy slave, and as though present, look upon them, contemplate them, and serve them in their needs with all possible homage and reverence.”³⁹ That is an authentically Christian dramatization of the story of salvation which here and now he can immediately translate into action. Even to this present-day Jesus needs my help and I shall always be an ‘unprofitable servant’⁴⁰ before Jesus who is present in the Church.

In this matter Mary is my model, for I am to see her and St. Joseph “labouring

that Our Lord might be born in extreme poverty *in order that* (what a bold expression!) after many labours, after hunger, thirst, heat and cold, after insults and outrages, He might die on the Cross, and all that for me".⁴¹ This appeal grows stronger and stronger until the very climax of the Exercises when the exercitant makes his decision to choose the *better* means to help Christ. The exercitant is now ready to take his place beneath the Standard of the poor and crucified Christ. Mary once again steps to the forefront: "...to obtain for me from her Son and Lord [the grace] to be received under His Standard."⁴² She is Our Lady of the Election. Mary stands at the crossroads where the way of heroism opens before the exercitant in the contemplations which he is simultaneously making on the life of Christ, where he sees how Christ Our Lord "...left His...Mother to devote Himself exclusively to the service of His eternal Father".⁴³



The Exercises draw a distinctive portrait of Mary in which she is presented under a dual aspect. First, she is the humble woman of the Gospels. She is forever

disappearing into the background only to re- emerge suddenly at some critical stage in the moulding the exercitant. Now she becomes the noble Lady, assuming her queenly role in the life of the Christian. She collaborates as she did in the life of her Son. After her example we must fashion all our own collaboration in the kingdom of God.

HUMBLE SERVICE IN THE VISIBLE CHURCH - *At One with the Hierarchy*

WHAT we have thus far said still requires further clarification. The Exercises conclude with the rules “to foster the true attitude of mind which we ought to have in the Church militant (= serving Church)”.⁴⁴ This is no accident. If it is to be and to remain authentic, this passion for a limitless love of Christ must be given direction, controlled, so to speak, by God’s salvific will visible in His Church.

The *more* of the willingness to serve and the readiness for greater things must be tested. Obedience to the hierarchical Church and humble, ordinary service in the visible Church constitute the infallible test. Our enthusiasm for Christ must be governed by the concrete demands of our everyday apostolic life. ‘To help souls’ – for Ignatius and his first companions that meant, precisely because of the strength of their enthusiasm, a sober service in the Church of the Pope of Rome threatened by so many storms (as it was) and burdened with so many needs. They united to form a new Order. For they realized that all apostolic enthusiasm must take definite form, if it is to endure, that the *more* of their ardent willingness needed the constitutions of a Society, if it were to remain authentic and to have within itself the power of a perpetual renewal.

In the Sodality, too, the lofty concepts of the Standard, the Legion in the service of the King can easily degenerate into mere catchwords. The readiness for all kinds of service can deteriorate into a diffuse, multi-sided activity, into that type of apostolic activity against which even the Pope has warned, calling it the *heresy of action*.⁴⁵ Nothing is more difficult, nothing more noble than to keep real enthusiasm chaste, watchful and sober.

The participation of the Sodality in Catholic Action must retain its unmistakable characteristic. This characteristic originates from the ideal of “thinking with the Church”, and in the Spiritual Exercises it has found its classic expression. To put it in a phrase of St. Ambrose, it is the ideal of *sobria ebrietas* - a sober intoxication.

It means to be always ready to do every-thing for Christ, to spend all for Him, but in quiet fidelity, in a sober labour and love of details, in co-operation without empty talk and, above all, in docile subjection to the hierarchical direction of the Church.

In some sense or other these words of Pius XII must be verified in every Sodality: "From its very beginning the Sodalities of Our Lady took to themselves as their rallying cry the Rules 'for thinking with the Church'. Moreover, Sodalities seem to have fostered that natural inclination to obey the directives of those whom the Holy Spirit has placed over the Church, i.e. the bishops. Hence Sodalities have been and shall continue to be a most powerful ally of the bishops in spreading the kingdom of Christ."⁴⁶ Moulded by this spirit of the Exercises, the Sodality becomes a true *Acies Ordinata*: An Army set in battle array.

Youth Resents Mere Theory

YOUTHFUL enthusiasm must be tempered for the requirements of daily service in the visible Church. This final aspect of the ideal proposed by the Exercises corresponds to a tendency found in youth, especially modern youth, which has seen quite enough of visionary plans and hollow slogans. The kingdom of God on earth, however, is fortunately not just an airy scheme, a theoretical program, pure and simple; it is an actuality right here and now. It is an unquestioned, an undeniable growing up into maturity, such as the mustard seed undergoes, despite all the theorizing of the spiritual botanists about the possibilities of this growth. He who still has youthful eyes sees each day new tasks in the Church, often small and modest without glamour.

The authentic Sodality trains its members to open their eyes to the Church, militant and suffering, in its earthly pilgrimage. To put this more accurately and in a more Christian way; the Sodality must become a brave friend of Our Lord Jesus Christ visible in the modern Church, Christ who here and now wants to carry on the fight with the help of His faithful friends who understand His needs and see Him in their neighbour. Because of its origins the Sodality must be an association that remains forever young in spirit, that sets itself to the task at hand and wants to produce some tangible, concrete good, that can obey and subordinate itself to something bigger than itself.

The genuine Sodality must always be suspicious of mere theorizing, just as it is suspicious of all merely theoretical criticisms of certain elements in the Church, distressing though these features may be.

Even the smallest, the most hidden acts of charity, a cheering word for those in distress, a duty of daily life better performed, are more than mere words, for it is only in this way that God's mysterious kingdom takes possession of our earth.

The Church Resembles Mary



THE fourth week of the Exercises, during which the Lord of Glory who founded the Church exercises His Office of “Consoler”⁴⁷ lays the foundation for this finishing touch of the Exercises, namely, to muster all the enthusiasm for the fight under the Standard of the Crucified and to direct it to the everyday service of the Church. Christ appears first to His Mother.⁴⁸ Against seemingly wise objections St. Ignatius insists on this. Through prayer we are to realize that Mary is also present when the glorification of the redeemed world, which is perpetuated in the Church, takes its beginning. In the embrace of the Risen Saviour and His Mother that grace begins to be operative which will effect the soul of the exercitant when our “Creator and Lord in person communicates Himself to the devout soul..., inflames it with love of Himself, and disposes it for the way in which it can *better* serve God in the future”.⁴⁹ This is a mystery, and hence, this taking up of the world into the arms of divine love remains hidden in the earthly force of the Church militant.

As it was with Mary, so it is with the Church. The mystery of her first meeting occurs in the littleness of her earthly surroundings. The Church amid the tumult of the city of this world is the humble oratory of Mary. The Church is the bride of Christ in whom swells the same spirit that is in Christ⁵⁰- our “Holy Mother, the hierarchical Church”.⁵¹ In this indissoluble combination of humility and glory the church is precisely like Mary. If a man were to grasp this truth, he would penetrate to the real mystery of the Church. For him the Church is mother and queen; mother in her earthly form of humility, queen in her secret glory. And thus, to do and to suffer everything in the Church, no matter how small, unspectacular, or menial, is really worthy of his wholehearted dedication. Every Sodalist must be such a Christian. If he is, what the Pope has said will be verified: “Sodalities can most rightly be called Catholic Action under the auspices and inspiration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”⁵²

With extraordinary dogmatic sense for what is fitting and correct, Ignatius has the Blessed Virgin appear and disappear throughout the Exercises. This should be our model in solving all questions about the place which devotion to Mary should assume in the Sodality. The centre of salvation is Christological.

Of what we must never lose sight. Because she is the handmaid of the Lord, Mary is always our Queen. So it must be in the spiritual formation of the Sodalist. Mary leads us to Jesus, yet we understand Jesus only as the Son of Mary. The

profound theology of the Exercises, which is concerned with Mary and Jesus as “mediators” in the ascent to the glory of the Father, originates in the very depths of Ignatian Mysticism. It is the best model to point out to us just how the Sodality should shape and sculpture the genuinely Catholic soul. From the place which the Mother of Jesus occupies in the history of salvation we come to realize that the dedication which the Sodalist makes of his life is in reality his reception under the Standard of Christ. Pope Pius XII in his allocution of January 21, 1945, says as much: “...a complete dedication (gift) of one self for the whole of life and for eternity; it is not a matter of pure formality nor of sentimentality; it is an effective consecration that consists in an intensely Christian, Marian life, an intensely apostolic life.”⁵³

* * *

MARY'S ROLE IN THE SODALITY

LET us say one more word about the place of devotion to Mary in the Sodality. By design we have throughout our paper put the Marian element in last place. Our reason was this. We desired to trace the inner structure of the Sodality back to its source, that is, the fundamental truths of the Spiritual Exercises. We were anxious to define first the theological and then the psychological background against which devotion to Mary assumes great importance and a new significance. Through this approach we found it more easy to avoid the pitfalls into which very recent writers on the Sodality have sometimes fallen, namely the controversy concerning what place devotion to Mary should hold, which can so readily become a pseudo-problem.

This is particularly true if we begin to reflect only on whether devotion to Mary is a means or an end and whether there is a difference between veneration and consecration or patronage, whether Mary is to be considered more from a subjective point of view rather than from her place in the economy of salvation. All these questions can be discussed with profit, but only after more weighty matters have been clarified.

Our starting-point is the formula of *Bis Saeculari*, the apostolic constitution, which is obligatory for all Sodalities.

“These sodalities are to be called Sodalities of Our Lady not only because they

take their name from the Blessed Virgin Mary, but especially because each Sodalist makes a profession of special devotion to the Mother of God and dedicates himself to her by a total consecration, under-taking, though not under the pain of sin, to strive by every means and under the standards of the Blessed Virgin for his own perfection and eternal salvation, as well as for that of his neighbours.”⁵⁴

From these words it would be an obvious misinterpretation to conclude that the Sodality is primarily an organization to honour Our Lady.

Article XI states to the contrary: “Among the *primary* ends of Sodalities is to be reckoned every kind of apostolate, especially the social apostolate for the propagation of the kingdom of Christ and the defence of ecclesiastical rights.”

And Article X: “It is the duty of Sodalities of Our Lady to train their members...so that they can be proposed as models to their companions of Christian life and of apostolic endeavour.”⁵⁵

These are not two contradictory propositions. According to an express declaration of Very Reverend Wlodimir Ledochowski, Father General of the Society of Jesus until his death in 1941, veneration of Mary in the Sodality has exactly the same place that it occupies in Catholic thought, prayer and piety. This is not a quasi-dynamic principle capable of change in our veneration of Mary. We are all aware and bear happy witness to the fact that Mariology and devotion to Mary are at the present time moving into the forefront in the whole Church.

In the unfolding plan of salvation and in the progress which apostolic revelation is constantly making toward greater explicitness, this development must be integrated ascetically. Mariology is more and more emerging into our conscious understanding of the faith, or, to put it more accurately, it is moving in the direction of its Christological centre. In so doing it is disclosing with ever greater clarity its relationship to the Church, so the Sodality will also give to Mariology that position of importance which has constantly become clearer in the mind of the modern Church.

CONCLUSION



IN this sketchy outline, wherein we have attempted to derive from the Spiritual Exercises the spiritual significance of the Sodality we might further show, and with profit, how a reconsideration of the Sodality's origins can provide a constantly new revitalization of any Sodality. Wherever a Sodality has returned to its first beginnings (its first spirit), an amazing new life appears. Just as the Exercises moulded men in the Society of Jesus who have experienced through the discernment of spirits a titanic battle between Christ and Satan; men who have understood through their identification with the crucified Christ that victory in this battle belongs only to those who follow Jesus in a spirit of prayer and total self-denial; men who come from their retreat fired for every type of service on

behalf of their King, who want to conquer the whole world; men who know how to concretise their enthusiasm through a brave and a humble surrender to the Church; - so the authentic Sodality must mould Christians who, filled with a holy discontent, are ardent followers of the Cross and valiant servants of the Church. Their ideal is Our Lady who has crushed the serpent's head, who stood beneath the Cross and who epitomises the Church.



ARTICLE 5

Sacred Story Community IS DEVOTED TO THE HEART OF CHRIST

Servant of God, Pedro Arrupe delivered the following homily, in Rome, in 1979.⁵⁶ The remarks foreshadow much of what Pope John Paul II articulated the following year in his encyclical “Dives in Misericordia,” which examined God’s mercy and man’s need for mercy. For Arrupe, the heart “is the abode of the Trinity,” and the Sacred Heart of Jesus serves as the supreme revelation of the mystery of God and of man. It is in proximity and communication with the Sacred Heart that man can “understand the greatness and holiness of God, our own dignity of being children of God in the deepest meaning of the human person.”

1. *Meaning of the word “Heart”*

In human language there are words considered to be fundamental, original, “source words,” in contrast to other words known as “technical” or “useful.” The former contain an enormous evocative power. They are like sea shells that collect in their innermost coils all the distant murmurs of the oceans. The other type of words are coined by man for practical and utilitarian purposes. The source words come down the ages loaded with a weight of deep persuasive connotation, evoke deep and varied ideas and sentiments, and in many cases have different meanings depending on the personal experiences of the speaker or the listener. The “technical” words are plain, concrete, applied to ideas or objects of our daily life and do not transcend tangible realities.

The word “heart” is one of those source words, fundamental, original, that go to the root of things.

“Heart” is one of these complex concepts, whether studied in biblical theology,

in the popular language, or in daily life. It may be said that it expresses man in his totality and is logically anterior to the philosophical distinction between the biological body and the incorporeal spirit. "Heart" is a real symbol used to express the most original center of the psychological unity of the person, the innermost core of every human being, in which the openness to God and to other men is essentially realized.

The heart is, we might say, the consciousness of the birth of all human decisions. It is the "I" of man, his inner self, his hidden personality, in contrast to the external appearance of man. The heart is God's point of insertion into man; here is where the natural law is imprinted and the Holy Spirit infused; this is the abode of the Trinity. This is the intimate point of contact "*toto ictu cordis*" of the actus of St. Augustine and his mother St. Monica at Ostia. For a Christian the heart represents the fountain of all his personal life, where thought, love and sentiments converge into one: *Cor meum*, says St. Augustine, *ubi sum, quicumque sum*: "My heart, where I am, whatever I am."

2. *Meaning of the word "Heart"* The Heart of Christ reveals the Mystery of God. The Heart of Christ has for us a still deeper meaning. The faith experience makes it for us the infinite love of the Redeemer for the Father and for us men.

Thus the "Heart of Christ" is the indicator, so to say, pointing to us where we shall find the most profound depths of our faith. It is like a large door that opens wide to admit us to a better understanding of the depths of the one and triune God and his activity "*ad extra*" in the gift of himself. As we draw near to this divine love, symbolized by the Heart of Jesus, we shall find the most efficacious inspiration: for our life of children of God and the deepest insight into so many fundamental human aspirations.

The Heart of Jesus is an open door to the secret recesses of God. Having the only-begotten Son of God as a guide we can approach, with the profoundest awe, the "Holy, Almighty, Immortal God," who has deigned "to reveal to us his mystery, which was kept secret from long ages but is now disclosed."

Though St. John of the Cross rightly says that "the closer the soul approaches God, the blacker is the obscurity she feels through its weakness, yet in this very obscurity a light emerges that allows us in a wonderful manner, to penetrate into

its depth. This is a “light-giving obscurity” that teaches us “with a knowledge, without knowing, transcending all knowledge.” This mystery of love is the mystery of the life of the Blessed Trinity which is a life of communion and communication. As St. Ignatius tells us, love consists in sharing what one possesses and is (Sp Ex 231).



This exchange is something essential in the Trinity. The Father begets the Son communicating with him from all eternity the plenitude of his divine being; and the Son responds, also from all eternity, giving himself totally to the Father in an impulse of love. The mystery of divine love is precisely in this, that the three persons, being infinitely perfect in themselves, communicate themselves fully giving their own being. This communication of love between the Father and the Son is so rich, so close and profound, and of such high quality (divine quality!) that it is also a person, the Holy Spirit. Each one of the three persons does not exist in itself and does not belong to itself, except in so far as it is referred and gives itself fully to the other two at the same time. The whole of their being is a pure and complete going out of themselves (“ecstasy”), a total tendency of

each toward the others, in the expression of the Greek Fathers.

3. *Meaning of the word "Heart"* *The Heart of Christ reveals the Mystery of Man*
In the light of the mystery of God we can more easily see in what man's perfection consists. Modern psychology has "rediscovered," in terms more comprehensible to modern man, what scholastic theology taught long ago. This teaching is that our human body (with its organs and senses) cannot grow and develop, or mature and reach its fullness except through a gradual process of acquisition. We consume food, assimilate concrete data, and acquire particular skills; but our person, our most recondite being, can only attain its plenitude and fulfilment by the opposite process. We develop ourselves, our persons, when we come out of our own selves as soon as we relate to others, and as far as we serve them. Jesus himself said, though this saying was not recorded in any of the Gospels: "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." "God loves a cheerful giver."

The Heart of Christ is an open door that reveals to us, not only the interior life of the Trinity, but also God's exterior activity in the world. If love is always communicative of itself, the infinite love, which is God, wishes to communicate himself with all that is outside himself. Through creation he pours out his perfection to all created beings in the universe, making them all reflections of his infinite perfection.

In particular he has made man "to his image and likeness," capable of being, of communicating, of giving himself to others. In this sharing with others God has placed man's highest fulfilment of all his powers and his greatest happiness.

Further God desires to make man a sharer in the communion of love and life which the essence of his trinitarian being. This is precisely why the Son of God was sent to this world. Jesus Christ accomplishes this redeeming mission by his total self-giving, even to death on the cross. This was his voluntary offering of love and obedience to the Father and the surrender of his life for us, his brothers, thereby communicating to us his divine life, in the measure of which we are capable. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

If we wish to go deeper into this knowledge of the love with which Jesus loves us, let us hear his words: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." What

can this mean? "As the Father has loved me." Jesus himself in the discourse of the last supper says: "That the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them (my disciples) and I in them." It might look incredible that Jesus loved us with the same love with which he is loved by the Father. Yet, how could it be otherwise, once we share in the divine nature, as St. John tells us: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."

Following the same line of thought Jesus says: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." Christian love, therefore, is to love with the only love that proceeds from the Father to the Son and "which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." Here is a perfect remedy for our egoism: we shall love with the same love which Christ communicates to us and which is a participation of that unique love of the Father to the Son.

4. *Meaning of the word "Heart" History of Love and Mercy*

His Holiness Pope John Paul II defines this revelation of love as mercy and says that "in man's history this revelation of love and mercy has taken a form and a name: that of Jesus Christ."

Hence derives the compassion towards all men, chiefly toward suffering humanity; hence the understanding of the position of others, with the desire of "being more ready to put a good interpretation on another's statement than to condemn it as false," as St. Ignatius would tell us (*Sp Ex 22*).

With this loving mercy "God our Savior desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." In other words, God wishes that all men become children of the Father. This imparts a profound meaning and an unshakable foundation to the apostolic zeal that labors in order that the word of God be accepted by all men; here lies the true motive of all evangelization.

The Pope himself has declared this in his encyclical letter: "Man cannot live without love. He would remain a being incomprehensible in himself; his life makes no sense, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it. This is why Christ the Redeemer fully reveals man to himself."

It is clear from this that in order to understand man in his innermost being, that is to say, in order to penetrate into man's heart, that profound and original center of which we have spoken earlier, we must enter through the Heart of that Man-God, the God who made himself man in order that man be truly man and a child of God.

Only by entering through this door, which is the Heart of Christ, shall we be able to understand the greatness and holiness of God, our own dignity of being children of God in the deepest meaning of the human person, the foundation of the equality of all men before God, "in whom there is no partiality," and who died for all, men and women, without distinction.

We shall thus understand also the eternal value and transcendence of our dedication to others in brotherly love, in which the perfection of the human person consists, and which impels us to collaborate in the Lord's plan of universal salvation "as fellow workers with God."

Thus, we shall feel that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of man, while showing us his wounded Heart, tells us: "I am the door; If any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

SERVANT OF GOD FATHER ARRUPÉ'S SPIRITUAL TESTAMENT⁵⁷

Conclusion of his address and letter

"Rooted and Grounded in Love"

Each year since 1978 the Ignatian Centre of Spirituality, located in the Roman Curia of the Society of Jesus at Borgo S. Spirito, 5, Rome. From 1978 to 1981, Father Arrupe gave the concluding lecture of the series. His four addresses have won widespread appreciation for their inspirational spirituality. The last of these addresses was delivered on February 6, 1981, in the Hall of the General Congregations. Entitled with the Pauline expression "Rooted and Grounded in Love", it gives us the core of the speaker's Ignatian experience. He called it his own swan song, thinking probably of the resignation he intended to offer soon to a General Congregation.

The concluding section of it, brief and also the most intimate and personal, was

pronounced with a special sincerity and emphasis which caused his hearers to listen in silence with attentive awe. This section turned out to be not only a resume of his discourses but also his spiritual testament.

For later that year he suffered a stroke which left him largely incapacitated. He later sent the discourse in the form of a letter to the whole Society.

Let me end now greeting you all, as well as every Jesuit who will read these pages, with that wonderful Pauline formula: *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying.* (Eph 6: 23-24).

The Centre of the Ignatian Charism



Having reached this point, when we see that love is the very core of Christian-and therefore Ignatian-spirituality, I feel somewhat obliged to add a final consideration. What I have said so far may be synthesized as follows:

1. Love (service) for our brothers, for Christ, for the Father, is the single and indivisible object of our charity.

2. Love resolves the dichotomies and tensions that can arise in an imperfectly understood Ignatian spirituality. For instance:

-*The tension between faith and justice* is resolved in charity. Faith has to be to be informed by charity, '*fides informata caritate*', and so too must justice, which thus becomes a higher form of justice: it is charity that calls for justice.

-*The tension between one's own and one's neighbour's perfection.* Both should be the perfection of one and the same charity which tends to keep growing, as well intensively in itself, as extensively in the spread to and perfection of our fellow men.

-*The tension between prayer and active apostolic work* is resolved in the 'contemplative in action', in seeking God in all things (the Contemplation for Attaining Love).

-*The tension among the three religious vows* disappears when their motivation and observance are inspired and impelled by charity (the same can be said of the fourth vow).

- *The tension between discernment and obedience.* Charity should be present both at the origin and in the final goal of discernment: till presence of this 'agape' enables us to discern God's will (Rom 12:2), it is an institution of charity (Eph 3: 18-19; Col 2:2). Obedience similarly is an expression of that same divine will. Both superior and subject ought to be animated by charity, with the intuitiveness that is proper to love.

3. Love is the solution to the apostolic problems created by the wickedness (*anomia*) of today's world.

4. Love is the very depth of the personality and work of Jesus Christ, that which gives unity to it all.

5. Love is also the deepest element of our life and activity, since with Jesus Christ we share one common Spirit (the Person, who is love), who makes us cry out like Christ: Abba Father! Love, then, understood in all its depth and breadth (both charity and mercy), is the synthesis of the whole life of Jesus Christ, and should be that of the Jesuit's whole life too. Now, the natural symbol of love is the heart. The heart of Christ, therefore, is the natural symbol for representing and inspiring our personal and institutional spirituality, leading us to the very

source and abyss of the human-divine love of Jesus Christ.

A Contradiction: Love and Silence?

And so, at the close of this address, I would like to tell the Society something that I believe I should not pass over in silence.

From my noviceship on, I have always been convinced that in the so-called "Devotion to the Sacred Heart" there is summed up a symbolic expression of the very core of the Ignatian spirit and an extraordinary power -'*ultra quam speraverint*'- both for personal perfection and for apostolic fruitfulness. This conviction is still mine today. It may have surprised some that during my generalate I have said relatively little on this topic. There was a reason for it, which we might call pastoral. In recent decades the very phrase 'the Sacred Heart' has not failed to provoke emotional and allergic reactions in some, partly perhaps as a reaction to forms of presentation and terminology linked with tastes of a bygone age. So I thought it advisable to let some time go by, in the certainty that that attitude, more emotional than rational, would gradually change.

I cherished, and still do cherish, the conviction that the immense value of so deep a spirituality-which the Popes have termed excellent,⁵⁸ which employs so universal and so human a biblical symbol, and a word, "heart", that is a genuine source-word (*Urwort*) -would before long come back in to usage.

For this reason, much to my regret, I have spoken and written relatively little on this subject, although I have often mentioned it in private conversation with individuals and find in this devotion one of the most profound affective sources of my interior life.

As I bring to an end this series of conferences on the Ignatian charism I could not but give the Society an explanation for this silence of mine, which I trust will be understood. And at the same time, I did not wish to draw the pall of silence over my deep conviction that all of us, as the Society of Jesus, should reflect and discern before Christ crucified what this devotion has meant for the Society, and what it should mean today. In today's circumstances, the world offers us

challenges and opportunities that can be fully met only with the power of this love of the Heart of Christ.

A last message to the Society

This is the message that I wanted to communicate to you. There is no question of seeking to force or impose anything in an area where love precisely is involved. But I do wish to say · Give thought to this message, and *ponder on what presents itself to your mind. (Ex Sp 53)*. It would be sad if, having so great a treasure in our spirituality, even our institutional spirituality, we were to leave it aside for largely specious reasons.

If you want my advice, I would say to you, after 54 years of living in the Society and almost 16 of being its General, that there is a tremendous power latent in this devotion to the Heart of Christ. Each of us should discover it for himself- if he has not already done so-and then, entering deeply into it, apply it to his personal life in whatever way the Lord may suggest and grant. There is here an extraordinary grace that God offers us.

The Society needs the "*dynamis*" contained in this symbol and in the reality that it proclaims: the love of the Heart Christ. Perhaps what we need is an act of ecclesial humility to accept what the Supreme Pontiffs, the General Congregations and the Generals of the Society have incessantly repeated. And yet, I am convinced that there could be few proofs of the spiritual renewal of the Society so clear as a widespread and vigorous devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Our apostolate would receive new strength and we would see its effects very soon, both in our personal lives and in our apostolic activities.

Let us not fall into the presumptuous temptation of considering ourselves superior to a devotion that is expressed in a symbol or in a graphic representation of it. Let us not join *the wise and prudent of this world* from whom the Father keeps hidden his truths and mysteries, while he reveals them to those who are or make themselves *little ones*. (Lk 11: 21; Mt 11:25). Let us have that simplicity of heart which is the first condition for a profound conversion: *Unless you change and make yourselves like little children. (Mt 18:3)*.

Those are Christ's words, and we might translate them in this way: "If you want,

as individuals and as a Society, to enter into the treasures of the Kingdom and to help build it up with an extraordinary effectiveness, make yourselves like the poor whom you wish to serve. You keep on saying so often that the poor have taught you more than many books; learn from them, then, this very simple lesson: acknowledge my love in my Heart."

Former Jesuit General, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J. wrote a series of seminal articles on the theology of the devotion to the Heart of Christ that have been collected in a small book entitled, *A Most Pleasant Mission*.⁵⁹ Sacred Story Community, along with devotion and consecration to the Blessed Mother, also promotes devotion to and consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To understand the richness and power of this ancient devotion, we offer this beautiful homily of Fr. Kolvenbach that he delivered at Paray-le-Monial in 1988; the location of the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to Sr. Margaret Mary Alacoque that began in 1673. The visions were authenticated by her Jesuit Spiritual Director, Fr. Claude de La Colombiere, S.J. Both Margaret Mary and Fr. Claude are now saints of the Catholic Church.

HOMILY OF FR. PETER HANS KOLVENBACH, S.J. A MOST PLEASANT MISSION

Since it was the Preparation Day the Jews did not want to have the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, for that sabbath was a solemn feast day. They asked Pilate that the legs be broken and the bodies be taken away. Accordingly, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the men crucified with Jesus, first of the one, then of the other. When they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers thrust a lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. This testimony has been given by an eyewitness, and his testimony is true. He tells what he knows is true, so that you may believe. These events took place for the fulfillment of Scripture: 'Break none of his bones.' There is still another Scripture passage which says: 'They shall look on him whom they have pierced.'

John 19: 31-37 Mass for the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, Year B

Just three centuries ago in this same Paray-le-Monial, it pleased the Lord to confer on the Visitation Sisters and the Jesuits the very pleasant mission of bringing to the attention of all mankind the wounded love of his heart.

The memory of this event invites us to give thanks to the Lord and to go deeper still into its sense of mystery. In order to bring new energy to this mission, guided by St. Margaret Mary and Blessed Claude we shall meditate on the episode which the gospel for this eucharistic celebration proposes.

The event which John proclaims as the solemn end of the whole Passion of the Lord, from whatever perspective it is considered, is profoundly marked by the feast of the Passover.

For the superficial viewer, the main concern is the observance of the law which does not permit the bodies to remain on the crosses over the great Sabbath. The Roman soldiers are responsible for this formality: When one of them pierces the Lord's heart to verify that he is truly dead, he is simply performing the ordinary action by which the fact of death is established. Doesn't this image sum up the whole process against Jesus?

If for the Lord it is the authentic expression of God's boundless love for humanity, for men it is nothing more than a law to be observed with routine indifference. "We have a law, and according to this law he should die." Authority, represented by the Roman Governor, washes its hands to indicate it is in no way responsible for all this innocent blood. Precisely at the moment human beings give proof of their hardness of heart God breaks into human history to reveal the heart of his son whose love gives to the Passion its real meaning.

"One of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance, and immediately blood and water flowed out." For the soldier it's no more than an incident, surprising and perhaps unpleasant, revealing nothing to him but an open chest, leaving him thoroughly unmoved and indifferent. So be it. But this thrust with the lance sets in motion the fulfilment of the promises of the ancient alliance. The bones which have been left unbroken proclaim the Crucified to be the authentic Paschal Lamb. The wound in the side opens the invisible wound of the love of God. The blood and water are the rivers of living water foretold in Scripture and spring from the desert rock which is Christ.

The spectators have seen nothing--no more than we when we hesitate to "look on him whom they pierced," preferring to this contemplation the multiple duties which surround our preparations for a paschal feast according to our own taste, little lived according to the Heart of God.

It is this rejection and indifference which moves God to intervene on many occasions and in different forms to attract our gaze back to the Crucified One with his pierced side so that we may discover the wounded heart of his beloved son against whom man with his heart of stone directs his hatred to the limit of his

capability, and in whom the love of God has "loved us to the end," to the limit of his.

So God irrupts on the lives of Saint Margaret Mary and Blessed Claude, the first of the multitude of those who up to the present have assumed the most pleasant task of announcing the riches revealed by the open side of the Crucified -- all the breadth and depth and height of God who is Love, all the mystery of the Heart of Jesus. Words that attempt to express it will change, theological perspectives which attempt to explain it will be replaced, and images never quite able to capture artistically its mystery will constantly be recreated. But the "One whom they pierced" will always be among us, there to gaze upon if we wish; so, too, the most pleasant task of witnessing to him, as did the disciple whom Jesus loved.

John sees what the soldiers don't, and gives witness to it -- authentic witness, "that you also may believe." Contemplating what is taking place on Calvary before his very eyes at the same time the celebration of the Great Passover is being prepared, John is moved to the depths of his being. Watching his Lord die, he seems to lose the hope of ever seeing Life vanquish death.

On the first Passover, "with firm hand and vigorous arm" the Lord fought to free his chosen people from slavery. Through his faith in Jesus, the Lamb of God, John would be able to celebrate the Great Passover that destroys forever the power of the prince of this world. As the blood and water flowed from the heart of the Lord struck by the lance, John saw and believed: Passover means, then, that the Lord of Life has conquered death by dying. In the death on the Cross the glory of God is resplendent.

Indeed, from that moment this Jesus whom we contemplate is one who has been crucified, whose body bears wounds but whose bones, thanks to the paschal ritual, have not been broken. It is not a hideous corpse with broken bones the Father offers to our gaze, but a victim whose pierced side, contemplated in the first rays of Easter, reveals the glory of love which is the Heart of God.

The love of his divine heart doesn't allow "the one who loves him see corruption" but rather has Life flow out, the Spirit of love, to be poured out immediately on all who wish to contemplate "him whom they have pierced". Baptized in water and blood, in death and resurrection, they form this new people, the Church, born directly from the pierced side of the Lord.

John, seeing what the lance of the soldier has done, is filled with faith and sings the prophecy of Zacharias according to which the contemplation of the One

Pierced announces, as a manifestation of the love of the Heart of God, joy and sadness, forgiveness in blame, and in the refusal to love, reparation. Yes, reparation! For he who contemplates the One whom they have pierced from the vantage point of faith cannot limit himself to being simply an adorer of the mystery of love. This contemplation brings him to live the paschal mystery with the spirit of reparation, to allow his heart of stone to be transformed into a heart of flesh and actively love, by means of this water and this shed of blood, the Father and all mankind.

Understood in this manner, the comforting duty of making known the Heart of Jesus is not a quest for suffering cultivated for its own sake. Rather, as the much-loved Apostle understood, and as Margaret Mary and Claude La Colombiere would later understand, one who believes cannot celebrate the living water of Pentecost without participating also in the spilled blood of Calvary.

So, this most pleasing task radiates out through men and women whose hearts are marked by the Heart of Christ, our Passover. His love transforms the paralyzing anguish of death into Paschal confidence in life, the hatred of war into the peace from which springs the civilization of love, and the injustice of men into the justice expected by the commandment of love. True reparation is an active participation in the work of redemption, in the living water and blood which flow continually from the pierced Heart of Jesus.

Celebrating this Eucharist, we give thanks to the Heart of Jesus for all the good that has been done during these three centuries by the men and women who have assumed whole-heartedly the task confided to them. Through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, may the Society of Jesus faithfully discharge the mission which Pope John Paul II recalled in this same Paray-le-Monial, to proclaim to the people of our time the love of the Sacred Heart whose fidelity accompanies us from generation to generation.

July 2, 1988 - Paray-le-Monial



Article 6

Sacred Story Community Daily Disciplines Have a Venerable Jesuit History

Apart from the global phenomenon of the Sodality movement, the use of the core Ignatian tools of the Examination of Conscience and frequent Confession were also incorporated in to a “rule of life” by other saints in the history of the Society. St. Peter Faber or Pierre Favre, as he is commonly known, also started a congregation or confraternity for laity called the Congregation of the Name of Jesus. For the sake of understanding better the structure of these groups, it is worth printing the advice and rules that St. Favre left his community. St. Favre was the very first companion of St. Ignatius and so very close to the true spirit of the Society of Jesus. These rules are also known as the Rules for the Sodality of Parma.

RULES FOR THE SODALITY OF PARMA SEPTEMBER 7, 1540

Favre understood the importance of consolidating and spreading the results of his apostolic labors. In Parma he formed a confraternity of laypersons for this purpose, and composed for them the following rule of life.

Order and Help for Persevering in the True Christian and Spiritual Life

Dearest sons and brothers:

Since I must depart from Parma for Spain, I wanted to satisfy the excellent desire expressed by you and many other persons like you, who would not remain content with me unless I left them a remembrance, not of my person, but of the procedure they ought to follow in the way of God when they have no other instructor.

First, I would not have you mistakenly think that for your perseverance I would give you a different food from what I have given you hitherto. The philosopher would tell you the same: speaking of bodily food, he says that the same things which nourish a person also enable him to grow. Hence, you must stoutly believe that the spiritual exercises in which you have found nourishment for your spirit up to the present will still be necessary for you in the future, your essential food having been above all the heavenly bread on which the angels and all the saints always have been and always will be fed. This bread is far more important for your spiritual life than material bread is for your temporal life. Similarly, for the other spiritual exercises: self-examination, confession, meditation, prayer, and the works of mercy.

You must be convinced that if by means of these exercises you have obtained some knowledge of yourself and abnegation, some love of God and neighbor, it will be necessary in the future as well to continue steadily in these excellent practices with greater fervor of spirit. Your method and order for doing this daily should be as follows.

First, every evening, before going to sleep, kneel down and recall to your minds the four last things: death, judgment, hell, and paradise. Dwell on these for the space of three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys. Immediately thereafter, make an examination of your conscience, thinking first of the benefits received from the Lord God, and thanking him; and recognizing, on the other side, the sins you have committed that day, with sorrow and a firm resolution to confess them to your confessor at the regular time. This is called spiritual confession, when the person, acknowledging his sins in detail, accuses himself in the sight of God with contrition and the resolve to confess his sins orally at the proper time—a time which I want you to have in your thoughts and desires. This done, pray the Lord to give a good night to you and to all the other living, and some assuagement to the dead, saying for this three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys.

In the morning, before anything else, you will likewise say three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys so that he may protect you and all the other living from sinning throughout the day, and may give assuagement to the dead.

If you still have time, before the crucifix or at Mass listen to some word or think of

some action of Christ in which to mirror yourselves and arouse yourselves to live well, not only that day but always and forever, grieving always for your sins and longing to live a better life. At the consecration or elevation of the sacred Host, you can begin to pray for remedies against your evils and for the graces that you stand in need of, such as courage, knowledge, peace, and so forth-and finally, as supreme grace, a hunger and thirst for justice. You may pray the true and very body of Christ to deign to come spiritually to your soul.

Communicating spiritually in this way, stir up your desire for sacramental Communion, recalling the times when you communicated last and will do so next. This spiritual Communion each day will be a powerful preparation for sacramental Communion, just as daily spiritual confession is a powerful preparation for making a good confession at the time agreed upon with your confessor.

This is why I wish every Christian would inwardly adopt the practice, for every occasion when he will go to confession or Communion, so that he can better carry out this resolution, of saying each morning, "I will be going to confession and Communion on "such-and-such a day"-even if it is still two months off. And so, spend half the time each morning dwelling upon your last Communion and the other half on the coming one. In this way you will show that you have reverence for Communion; otherwise, you risk never properly digesting and never having a perfect appetite for this food.

Never fail to go to confession and Communion at least once a week. Your other spiritual practices-prayer and meditation-which you perform daily, you should order to one or all of the following three effects: the honor of the Lord God and of his saints, your own salvation, and the salvation of your neighbors both living and dead. In this way, you will be growing daily through these devotions in some virtue that is needed for the better performance of your actions: humility, patience, prudence, and the like; you will grow in the knowledge and love of, God; you will grow in love for your neighbor. Thus you will be able to stride forward on the way of salvation, ordering your spiritual life step by step.

As regards your bodily and temporal life, order your intentions and affections in such a way that your first aim in every corporal activity is the praise of God and the salvation of your own souls and of the souls in the bodies of those for whom

you labor. See that it is God first of all who moves you to this labor—or to rest as well. In second place should be your own soul. After your own soul, you should labor for nothing more strenuously than for your neighbor's soul, either in your household or outside. In last place should come property and other things needed for your bodies.

So take good care that there is no disorder in this matter. There will be none if you do not seek property beyond what is needed for your bodies, and if you desire for your bodies that condition which is best for your souls, and finally if you desire your souls to be conformed to God's will.

It is from the last that you must begin; that is, you must first properly order your soul, and then seek the other things mentioned according as they help the soul more or less—not acting like those persons who first want to take care of their property and their bodies, thinking that they will then take proper care of their souls. Similarly as regards the neighbor, you should take care that, wherever possible, his soul is provided for before your own body; so that if there were one thing you could do either to defend yourself from bodily death or your neighbor from spiritual death, you should be readier to act against your neighbor's spiritual ill than your own bodily ill. If you preserve this order in your spiritual and temporal affairs, this would be the true remembrance that I would like to leave you now, asking you to pray as much as you can to the Lord God for me and for all my brothers in Christ.⁶⁰

Given at Parma, September 7, 1540

Your brother and spiritual father in Christ Jesus, Don PIETRO FABRO



Article 7

Rules for SSC Meetings

Robert's Rules' basic agenda

Robert gives us an order of business but doesn't mandate any particular agenda. However, he does give us an agenda protocol that has been so widely used that it's almost universally accepted as a fundamental meeting plan. Not everything in the agenda shown here is necessary in every situation, and your agenda may even need to be more extensive and detailed. But in its own right, this basic agenda is a great arrangement of events, consistent with the standard order of business discussed throughout this chapter; you can find it at the heart of just about every good business meeting you ever attend.

Call to order

When the time comes, start the meeting on time. A single rap of the gavel at the appointed hour and the declaration, "The meeting will come to order" is sufficient. You can't finish on time if you don't start on time, and everybody knows when the meeting starts. A good chairman is known for starting meetings on time and will always be respected for doing so.

Opening ceremonies

Your group may customarily open meetings with an invocation and a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Maybe you sing a hymn or the national anthem. The protocol is "God before country" (meaning you invoke the deity before you salute the flag), so plan to make your invocation before you say the Pledge. This part of the agenda is also the place to include any special opening fraternal rituals, a greeting given by one of your officers, or anything else that might reasonably fall under the category of ceremony. You don't have to use it, of course, and in many types of meetings, you'll skip this item.

Roll call

If your group is a public body, or if you have a rule that certain officers must be in attendance before the meeting can proceed, this is the time to call the roll. But if you don't have a rule requiring it, you shouldn't waste your time on this item.

Consent calendar

This item isn't used often, except in specialized organizations such as public legislative bodies or a large professional society's house of delegates. A consent calendar quickly processes a lot of noncontroversial items that can be disposed of quickly by placing them on a list (the consent calendar) of items to be adopted all at once. The list can also contain special preference items to be considered in order at the appropriate time. This consent calendar is usually placed in an order of business by a special rule of order, and its placement is generally of relatively high rank.

Standard order of business

Everything on the agenda outside of the standard order of business is really just ancillary to the meeting. All the business really begins with the approval of the minutes, and ends when you're finished with any new business.

Good of the order

This is a time set aside for members to offer comments or observations (without formal motions) about the society and its work. The good of the order is also the time to offer a resolution to bring a disciplinary charge against a member for offenses committed outside of a meeting.

Announcements

This portion of the basic agenda sets aside time for officers (and members, when appropriate) to make announcements. However, the fact that this is an agenda item does not prevent the chair from making an emergency announcement at any time.

Program

If you're offering some other general presentation of interest to your members, whether it's a film, a guest speaker, a lecturer, or any other program, it should be presented before the meeting is adjourned. If you would rather conduct the program at some other place in the agenda, it may be scheduled to take place before the minutes are read or, by suspending the rules, inserted within the standard order of business.

Guest speakers are often on tight schedules, so it's quite proper for the chair to ask for unanimous consent to place the program at any convenient place on the agenda, even if the only convenient place is within the order of business.

Adjourn

This part of the agenda marks the end of the meeting — time to go home. But don't leave until the chair declares the meeting adjourned, or you may just miss something important.

ENDNOTES

¹ George Aschenbrenner, S.J. is one of the most seminal commentators on the Ignatian Examen. Javier Meloni, S.J. is a world renowned Ignatian scholar and David Keith Townsend is one of England's foremost writers on Ignatian methodology.

William Watson's Sacred Story is a huge undertaking. It is a new, enlarged and redeveloped book of Ignatius' Examen. Sacred Story probes profoundly into the dynamics of Ignatius's personal journey—into his sacred story—and the discernment of spirits that embellish and enlighten it. William Watson's treatment of the Discernment Rules, so essential to the practice of Examen, is very well done. Watson finds the integral development of Ignatius's own life as essential elements for the Examen.

Watson uncovers a paradigm of the Examen in the Autobiography with the two conversions of Ignatius, which is very insightful. Despite my familiarity with the Autobiography, I had never thought of this before. Also, I can see now after reading Sacred Story that the key insight of Ignatius' surrendering his scruples over confessing past sins was the most important decision of his life—a tipping point for him personally and a defining element of Ignatian Spirituality.

George Aschenbrenner, S.J.

Author, *Stretched for Greater Glory & Quickening the Fire in Our Midst*

William Watson's Sacred Story is an exceptional work. It masters the difficult task of integrating spirituality and psychology and creates an original, rigorous, brilliant and scholarly book. It is an excellent contribution to Ignatian Spirituality and spirituality in general. The author has the ability to take the classic Ignatian Examination of Conscience and recreate it with great originality and scholarship. It illuminates with brilliant insights and accuracy the fields of both psychology and spirituality. Books like this rarely come along once a decade.

Javier Melloni, S.J., Th.D.

Author, *The Spiritual Exercises in the Western Tradition*

Professor, Faculty of Theology of Catalonia

William Watson's Sacred Story is a seminal, brilliant tour de force—erudite, well researched and deeply pondered. It is a passionate book, full of the urgency of one who is speaking of what he knows and of what he lives. It is a book born not merely from well-grounded scholarship but from deeply personal experience and struggle. Read it and be amazed, as I was.

Watson does for the Examen what Jerome Nadal did for the Jesuit Constitutions. Nadal explained the Constitutions to the Jesuit communities he visited in the very early days of the Society of Jesus. Watson links any proper and full appropriation of the Examen to the experiences of St. Ignatius' life, particularly to his conversion, and to the programme of the Spiritual Exercises. This is a novel approach, and one, in my opinion, which is holistic, rich, fertile and fruitful.

David Keith Townsend, S.J.

Director, *The Seven Fountains Spirituality Centre, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

² Jesuit Constitutions 410 §1, & §2.

³ Our conclusions from the research I have done on gender-segregated small groups are as follows:

- 1.) Ministry leaders perceive gender segregation as helpful, especially in young adults.
- 2.) It provides opportunity for the cultivation of identity in terms of gender.
- 3.) It provides opportunity for role models and understanding mentors.
- 4.) Gender segregation is helpful in situations where participants are asked to be vulnerable.
- 5.) Removes the distraction of attraction.
- 6.) Boosts overall participation.

⁴ We adapt this article by Fr. Hugo Rahner, substituting the Sacred Story Community name in place of the Sodality.

⁵ TRUE SOURCE OF THE SODALITY SPIRIT Rev. Fr. Hugo Rahner, S.J. Published by Saint Joseph's Workshop Under the Auspices of the Sodality of Our Lady 2007.

⁶ Phil. 3, 12.

⁷ *Enarr. In Psalmos* 62, 16.

⁸ Josef Miller, S.J., "Die Marianischen Kongregationen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert", *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 58 (1934), p. 85.

⁹ *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu, Monumenta Ignatiana*; series IV, tome I, pp. 41-42.

¹⁰ C.f. Apoc. 20, 3.

¹¹ C.f. Mark, 13, 35; 1 Cor., 16, 13; Apoc., 16, 15.

¹² 1 Peter, 5, 8.

¹³ *Mon. Hist., S.J., Mon. Ignat.*: series IV, t. I, p. 42.

¹⁴ Gen., 3, 15

¹⁵ *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, Newman Press, 1951, No. 63. References are to the marginal numbers as given there and in other more recent editions.

¹⁶ C.f. *ibid.*, No. 71.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 95.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 97.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 23.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 167.

²¹ *Ibid.*, No. 189.

²² *Ibid.*, No. 97.

²³ Miller, S.J., *op. cit.*, p. 106.

²⁴ *Bis Saeculari Acies Ordinata* of The Queen's Work edition, p. 2; Bombay edition, p.4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3

²⁶ C.f. Spir. Ex., No. 95.

²⁷ *Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII*, vol. VI, Milan, 1946, p.285

²⁸ Spir. Ex., No. 189

²⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 109.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 91.

³¹ *Ibid.*, No. 53.

³² *Discorsi*, vol. VI, p. 282.

³³ *Ibid.*, vol. IX, Rome, 1949, p. 375.

³⁴ Luke 12, 49

³⁵ Prov., 6,27.

³⁶ Miller, S.J., *op. cit.*, p. 84.

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- ³⁷ *Bis Saeculari*, p.4; Bombay edition, p.6.
- ³⁸ *Spir. Ex.*, No. 53.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 114.
- ⁴⁰ Luke 17, 10
- ⁴¹ *Spir. Ex.*, No. 116.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, No 147.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 135 and 273
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 352.
- ⁴⁵ AAS XXXVI, 1944, p 239. Also *Discorsi*, XI, p.376
- ⁴⁶ *Bis Saeculari*, pp. 6-7; Bombay edition, pp. 7-8.
- ⁴⁷ *Spir. Ex.*, No. 224.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Nos. 219 and 299.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 15.
- ⁵⁰ C.f. *Ibid.*, No. 365.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, No. 353.
- ⁵² *Bis Saeculari*, p. 7; Bombay edition, p. 8.
- ⁵³ *Discorse*, Vol. VI, p. 281.
- ⁵⁴ *Bis Saeculari*, Art. VIII, P. 11; Bombay edition, pp. 11-12
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Art. X, p.12; Bombay edition, p.12.
- ⁵⁶ Arrupe, Pedro. *In Him Alone Is Our Hope: Texts on the Heart of Christ (1965–1983): Selected Letters and Addresses—IV*, ed. Jerome Aixala. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984, “Mystery of the Merciful Love,” pg. 141–146.
- ⁵⁷ Arrupe, Pedro. *In Him Alone Is Our Hope: Texts on the Heart of Christ (1965–1983): Selected Letters and Addresses—IV*, ed. Jerome Aixala. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984, “Rooted and Grounded in Love,” pg. 147–151.
- ⁵⁸ Cf. Leo XIII, *Annum Sacrum*, 1899; Pius XI, *Miserentissimus Redemptor* 1928; Pius XII, *Haurietis Aquas*, 1956; Paul VI, *Investigabiles Divitas*, 1965.
- ⁵⁹ Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.; *A Most Pleasant Mission: General Office of the Apostleship of Prayer*, Rome. 1988. P 5-10.
- ⁶⁰ Pierre Favre, S.J., *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Favre: The Memoriale and selected Letters and Instructions*, trans. Martin E Palmer, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996. 321-323.