

# STUDIES

IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY  
CONSTRUCTION OF IGNATIAN  
SPIRITUALITY: A SKETCH

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY JOSÉ C. COUPEAU, SJ

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The Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality is composed of Jesuits appointed from their provinces. The seminar identifies and studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially US and Canadian Jesuits, and gathers current scholarly studies pertaining to the history and ministries of Jesuits throughout the world. It then disseminates the results through this journal.

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## *unless the LORD build it...*

Is it not an oxymoron? A *constructed* spirituality? In the following pages, Fr. John O'Malley and Fr. Timothy O'Brien offer readers a concise, coherent, and compelling vision of contemporary developments in Ignatian spirituality. The authors remind us that, as recently as one hundred years ago, the account of the life of Ignatius Loyola—today usually called his “Autobiography”—was practically unknown. They draw attention to the fact that some Ignatian terms in broad use today were coined even more recently. And what Jesuits and friends often regard as characteristic themes of Ignatian spirituality were in fact articulated only a very few years ago.

O'Malley and O'Brien organize, in terms that are easy to follow, the watershed moments and the landmarks from the last century. They introduce us to major authority figures in Jesuit studies and identify the long-term impact of certain strains of research and of the Society's internal policies. And they describe an international exchange of ideas within the Society that begin with local initiatives, according to language groups, following from new translations, taking place in particular provinces, and, at times, spurred by a few strategic publication choices.

However, all of this analysis and historical architecture contains an implicit assumption about Ignatian spirituality—or indeed, any spirituality—namely, that it can be constructed, built, or, one might say, edified. The word *construction* conveys a bringing together of building materials that by background and provenance once were separate. In this sense, Jesuits excavate a foundation by digging through archives, identifying the most reliable and substantial treasures, and extracting their relevant meaning. They create the tools that they use for the construction, including academic journals, book series, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and bibliographies. The construction also requires the challenging of earlier convictions, the demolition of disproven theories, the selection of better

materials, and the refining and rearranging of others. In a similar way, King David had buildings constructed for himself. Then, he reflected and “prepared a place for the ark of God” (1 Chr 15:1).

Any building project is ultimately incoherent without reference to the final product considered after it has been built. In other words, one must contemplate not only the conscious intentions and desires of the builders, but also the structure that in fact emerges—and these two things are rarely the same. In that sense, O’Malley and O’Brien do not simply explicate an unfamiliar history for us, they in fact *build* one. For to identify the distinctive contribution of any Jesuit writer, school of thought, assistancy, province, or language group in the Society requires one to identify and embrace retrospectively a meaning and a purpose for the project that few if any grasped initially. To build explains the vision of the whole endeavor, justifies the successive operations, and recalls the original plan and the master, for we build in vain, “unless the LORD build the house” (Ps 127:1).

The idea of edification also entails values and relationships. The word *edification* itself comes from the Latin *aedificare*, via the French *edifier*, and historically connotes the contribution of human agency. For our purposes here, *edification* suggests the training that the builders received, the transmission of skills and wisdom among themselves, and their close communication with the architect. It resonates with subtlety of teaching, excellence of instruction, and quality interactions. It stands for the corporate mission, and societal con-formation. And, finally, it points to the “soul”—call it a charism—that denotes the quietest of movements—the *unio animorum*, that the Church may be edified (1 Cor 14:5).

Essential to these pages is the historians’ construction, that such disparate elements, once gathered, may come together and make sense to us. Also essential, therefore, is the building of an implicit meaning—the idea, as it were, that the parts cohere and, in so doing, unveil a common project. Essential too, finally, is the idea of edification—the uplifting into values and heavenly realities of material things, drawn from human virtue or a mystical, inner drive spanning through the ages.

When physicians explain the hidden workings of our bodies—when the finest historians give us brilliant accounts of our past—the time has come to express gratitude and to join in a prayer of thanksgiving. A new future is here. O'Malley and O'Brien have produced a nuanced and clear synthesis that for Jesuits and non-Jesuits alike helps to make sense of what has gone before. In consequence, we spiritual persons may now apply ourselves with greater clarity to the present and future task of finding God in all things—but firstly, in that History which we share. The mere fact of being able to understand the real significance of a time period in Jesuit history, and being able to explain it clearly and effectively to others, marks the conclusion of one epoch and the beginning of the next.

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# The Twentieth-Century Construction of Ignatian Spirituality: A Sketch

John W. O'Malley, SJ, and  
Timothy W. O'Brien, SJ

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*What Jesuits and friends understand by the term Ignatian Spirituality, including such characteristic themes as discernment, men and women for others, and finding God in all things, is in fact a recent articulation of Ignatius's values and priorities. It is the fruit of a long and storied confluence of inspired research and historical contingencies that began in the late nineteenth century and continues today.*

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## I. Introduction

The term *Ignatian spirituality* springs so easily to our lips today that we can hardly imagine speaking of the Society of Jesus or its principal founder without using it. Yet, until a relatively few decades ago, the term was virtually unknown. Its appearance and widespread currency marked a significant development in the understanding and articulation of the character and ethos of the Society of Jesus among its members and among those associated with it. This issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* attempts to sketch the story of that development.

We say "sketch" because the subject is vast, complex, and spans many centuries. The original sources on which Ignatian spirituality is based have been edited and analyzed by scholars, mostly Jesuits, working in many different language-cultures and in times far removed from the sixteenth century. The process described here is, therefore, worthy of a monograph. Our goal here, then, is much more modest: to provide

a basic road map through a thick forest of scholarship and pastoral practice. As such, we cannot and do not claim to have accounted for every twist and turn in that long road.

The pages that follow address three core questions. First, how did Ignatian spirituality come into being and arrive at the prominence it now enjoys? Second, how has this affected the Society's understanding and articulation of its spiritual culture? Lastly, what does the emergence of Ignatian spirituality tell us about the relationship of the present-day Society of Jesus to its past, and especially to its documentary past?

At the outset, we must stress that we are not saying that before the twentieth century there was no spirituality proper to the Society of Jesus. Still less are we saying that the Society lacked all sense of a spirituality traceable to its founder, Ignatius Loyola. On the contrary, we assume that the realities behind the term *Ignatian spirituality* were present and operative in the Society from the beginning and that, were this not the case, the phenomenon now called *Ignatian spirituality* could have neither emerged nor been validated.

Until that happened, however, something had been absent that became present only in the twentieth century. Until that happened, Jesuits did not lack a spirituality proper to themselves, but they lacked a clear articulation of the elements that differentiated it, at least to some extent, from other spiritual traditions.

We use the word *construction* to describe what happened because that word suggests an ongoing process during which something was built or put together that, as such, did not exist earlier. The construction depended entirely on a decades-long process of research and reflection that began in the late nineteenth century and that by the latter half of the twentieth century came to inform robust pastoral initiatives.

The term *construction* also suggests that, in the resulting reality of Ignatian spirituality, the pieces fit together. That is, it suggests that Ignatian spirituality is not a jumble of unrelated elements but a structure in which the pieces convey the sense of an integrated and coherent whole.

The construction process resulted in some reclaimed features of Jesuit spiritual traditions beginning to predominate over others that

formerly had seemed more important. Those formerly important traditions receded into the background, even if they certainly did not disappear. Meanwhile, the features that came to the fore imbued the resulting structure with a distinctive character—a character that would be different had other features predominated.

We are saying, therefore, that certain elements in the Jesuit tradition have been put together and articulated in a new way. Some of those elements, though present already in the Society's self-understanding, received a new emphasis and centrality. At the same time, other elements diminished in importance. And thus we are saying that the result can justly be called *Ignatian*. In other words, what is now called *Ignatian spirituality* is fundamentally faithful to the original inspiration of the Society and, paradoxically, is at the same time new.

Lastly, we are saying that this phenomenon tells us something important about the relationship of the present-day Society to its past. The law is universal: retrieval of the past happens in the present, which means that our understanding of the past is shaped according to the culture of the present. Every "return to the sources," therefore, entails a modification of the sources that is perforce an updating.<sup>1</sup> To use terms familiar since Vatican II, each *ressourcement* is at the same time an *aggiornamento*. And as such, every *ressourcement* is creative.

The construction of Ignatian spirituality was the result of an interplay between historical sources, the sensibilities of the Jesuit scholars who edited and studied them, and those who brought their insights out of the library and lecture hall and into Jesuit schools, parishes, retreat houses, social apostolates, and other ministries. On the surface, this return to the sources might look like an antiquarian project—an attempt to turn back the clock. In fact, it was the very opposite. From the very outset, the present conditioned the retrieval process. In other words, although directed to the past, the process began and ended with concerns about the present. The result was meant to benefit the present.

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<sup>1</sup> This law has been observed by others, including in the context of *ressourcement* in the Society of Jesus. See, especially, Michel de Certeau, "Le mythe des origines," in *La faiblesse de croire* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), 53–74.

The result of the process of constructing Ignatian spirituality was therefore both continuous and discontinuous with the tradition. It was continuous with it by being solidly grounded in the sources. In addition, it was continuous by arising from within the tradition itself—the scholars asked questions that, although contemporary, arose from their lived experience of the tradition. In this sense, they were to some extent aware of what they were going to find even before they found it and so recognized themselves in what they found.

The result was, however, also discontinuous, because every retrieval process is necessarily partial and selective. It omits data that does not seem to speak to the present. It bypasses data that the present makes it difficult to see or appreciate. It highlights certain features that formerly seemed less important. It thus gives a shape to a tradition that is new. The new allows the tradition to respond to the present and thereby imbues the tradition with a new vitality.

## II. The Conditions for the Possibility of the Emergence of Ignatian Spirituality

In the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, four things happened that provided the possibility for this process to occur in the Society and to occur in the way that it did. The first and most basic was the widespread enthusiasm for the recovery of foundational religious texts that gripped the late nineteenth century. Jesuits shared this enthusiasm, and at the turn of the century a team of Spanish Jesuits inaugurated the magnificent series of critical editions of the vast corpus of Jesuit sources from the sixteenth into the early seventeenth century, the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*. The series today numbers one hundred fifty-seven volumes. There would be no Ignatian spirituality as we know it today without the *Monumenta*.

Previous generations in the Society never had at their disposal the richly varied array of documents published in those superbly edited volumes—instructions, narratives, drafts of foundational texts, correspondence from center to periphery and from periphery to center, and much more. The authors of these documents were men as thoughtful and well educated as they were devout. No other religious order, old or

new, has anything remotely comparable in quality or quantity. Ignatian spirituality is rich because its underlying sources are rich.

The second factor was several generations of Jesuit scholars, especially in Spain and France, professionally trained in historical criticism and interpretation. These methods sought to purify the historical narrative of apologetic and partisan concerns and to excise from it myths and legends. They also provided Jesuits with a longer and more expansive historical perspective that enabled them to form judgments about the significance of events and developments that were hidden at least in part from their sixteenth-century protagonists.

The third factor, closely related to the second, was the emergence of the academic discipline of spirituality—a development that began to take notable shape in the 1920s. The founding at that time by the French Jesuit, Joseph de Guibert (1877–1942), of the *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* was both symptom and agent of this development. The *Revue* was the first Jesuit journal dedicated to the critical study of spirituality. The inauguration in 1932 of the splendid *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, edited by Marcel Viller (1880–1952), along with de Guibert and Ferdinand Cavallera (1875–1954), signified that the discipline was already maturing. The final volume appeared more than half a century after the first, in 1995, which itself suggests the careful and thorough scholarship that lay behind the project.<sup>2</sup>

The final factor was outside forces that compelled the Jesuits to reexamine their spiritual tradition and then to rethink it. Among these forces were the criticisms of the tradition that occurred in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. The criticisms were too serious and seemingly too well founded to be ignored. In responding to them, the Jesuits were forced to go back to the sources and then forced to articulate their findings in ways that took account of the criticisms.

Another outside force was the “turn to the world” of Catholicism that began in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. The encyclical was unprecedented and heralded a new era of Catholic

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<sup>2</sup>*Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique, Doctrine et histoire*, 17 vols. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937–1995), hereafter *DSAM*.

awareness of responsibility for the betterment of conditions here and now. For the first time, the church in a formal and studied way addressed the real circumstances in which people found themselves and

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***What is now called Ignatian spirituality is fundamentally faithful to the original inspiration of the Society and, paradoxically, is at the same time new.***

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proposed programs to ameliorate them. Although the encyclical of course assumed a relationship between those programs and the transcendent destiny of humanity, it dealt directly with improving this world as such.

Forty years after *Rerum Novarum* came *Quadragesimo Anno*, followed in 1963 by Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*. And the momentum culminated in Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*, which made concern for the world and its betterment an essential element in any authentic Catholic spirituality.

These events led Jesuits to look with new eyes upon their own traditions of engagement with "works of charity." In 1938, for instance, General Congregation Twenty-Eight dedicated a long section of decree twenty-nine to "the social apostolate," but it was only later, in the wake of Vatican II, that General Congregation Thirty-One (1965–1966) issued an entire decree on the same subject. General Congregation Thirty-Two (1974–1975) went much further by describing the Society's mission today as the service of faith and the promotion of justice. This bold step heavily influenced how Jesuits now began to understand their vocation and their spirituality.

But the congregations' responses to Vatican II were multifaceted, and they affected in other ways how the Society began to deal with its spiritual traditions. In that regard, GC 31 was especially important. *Perfectae Caritatis*, the council's decree on religious life, instructed religious institutes to reform themselves by a return to their sources. This gave the Society's congregation the impetus to make operative on a corporate level the fruit of the return to the sources that had been underway for the previous six decades.

In addition, the council's documents on ecumenism and non-Christian religions had a major impact on the Society and its ministries, as did



other conciliar documents. Besides the influence of specific documents, however, there was another, more subtle, little noted, but crucially important influence that the council had on GC 31 and every congregation since then. Until GC 31, congregations had functioned as law-making bodies for the Society, just as councils until Vatican II functioned as law-making bodies for the church.<sup>3</sup> But when Vatican II largely abandoned that function, it was able for the first time in a council to let holiness surface not as an aside but as a major theme. GC 31 adopted the council's model, which allowed it to be attentive to spirituality in a way and to a degree previous congregations could not.

This was the major turning point where the scholars' labors translated into action. What GC 31 initiated and GC 32 validated and further specified was subsequently carried forward at the grass roots from that point until today.

Although the construction of Ignatian spirituality occurred on a continuum, we can distinguish phases in it. The first spanned the years from the publication of the first volumes of the *Monumenta* to about 1920. The *Monumenta* dominated this phase, even though a few Jesuits began to mine its pages for what it might reveal about the Jesuit tradition of spirituality.

The second phase stretched roughly from 1920 to about 1950. In this phase, the Jesuits took the lead in developing the academic discipline of spirituality by founding publications dedicated to it and by producing studies that became the first building blocks of Ignatian spirituality.

The third phase, which went from roughly 1950 to 1965, saw the cumulative force of all that had gone before exploding into the most intensive study of the tradition—and creative reflection upon it—in the history of the Society. This paved the way for the fourth phase, 1965 to 1975, when two general congregations validated the massive *ressourcement* of the previous decades. Finally, from 1975

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<sup>3</sup> See John W. O'Malley, *When Bishops Meet: An Essay Comparing Trent, Vatican I, and Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 13–34.

until now is occurring a fifth phase of ongoing refinement, appropriation, implementation, and popularization that already has influenced countless numbers of people well beyond both the Society of Jesus and, to some extent, the Catholic Church.

### III. The First Phase: 1894–1920

Even before the General Suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, some Jesuits advocated for the compilation and publication of documents from the founding generation. Only after the Restoration of the Society, however, would these efforts come to fruition. At that time, producing editions of the works of sixteenth-century religious figures was becoming a standard academic project. As early as 1834, the first volume was published of the *Corpus Reformatorum*, an edition by Protestant scholars of the writings of John Calvin, Philipp Melancthon, and Ulrich Zwingli that eventually reached one hundred and one volumes. Then in 1883, German Lutheran scholars undertook the famous Weimar Edition of Luther's works—a tribute to the reformer on the four hundredth anniversary of his birth.<sup>4</sup>

Although such external projects doubtless influenced the Society, the major impetus for Jesuit editions of foundational sources came from within the order. Shortly before the Suppression of the Society in Spain in 1767, Andrea Matteo Burriel (1719–1762) conceived the idea of an academy, the object of which would be to publish all the pertinent Jesuit documents from the first generation, an adumbration of the *Monumenta*.

General Congregation Twenty-One (1829), only the second after the Restoration, ordered in its twenty-first decree that documents related to the Society's history should continue to be compiled.<sup>5</sup> Still, it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that Spanish Jesuits

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<sup>4</sup> See John W. O'Malley, "Catholic Church History: One Hundred Years of the Discipline," *The Catholic Historical Review* 101, no. 2 (April 2015): 1–26, at 8.

<sup>5</sup> See John W. Padberg, et al., eds., *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations, A Brief History and a Translation of the Decrees* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 1994), 442.

under the leadership of José María Vélez (1843–1902)—who won the approval of Father General Anton Maria Anderledy and his successor, Luis Martín—began editing and publishing primary Jesuit texts in a series that they named the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*.

The first volume, published in Madrid, rolled off the press in 1894.<sup>6</sup> It was the first of six books containing the *Chronicon* by Ignatius's secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–1576). The remaining five volumes were published between 1894 and 1898. The *Chronicon* was a detailed account of the activities of members of the Society of Jesus, house by house, province by province, country by country, from 1537 until the death of Ignatius in 1556. Its pages contained sufficient data to destroy the reigning stereotype of a religious order marked by life under strict military discipline, with each member a pawn acting only under orders from his superiors. The *Chronicon* replaced this with a picture of a vast network of enterprising individuals who, while keeping in close communication with and receiving direction from those in authority, adapted to local needs and seized opportunities as they presented themselves. The pages of the *Chronicon* thereby illustrated with concrete details what constituted "our way of proceeding." With the publication of this important but forgotten document, the *Monumenta* provided the beginnings of a fresh understanding of the earliest Society.

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Also in 1894 appeared the first of five volumes of the correspondence of Saint Francis Borgia (1510–1572) and the first of seven volumes of the "quarterly letters" sent to Rome from the different provinces and houses of the Society. Then, in 1898, came the first of five volumes containing the writings of Jerome Nadal (1507–1580), which included his correspondence and drafts of exhortations he

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<sup>6</sup> See John W. O'Malley, "The Historiography of the Society of Jesus: Where Does It Stand Today?" in *Saints or Devils Incarnate? Studies in Jesuit History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 15–17.

delivered to Jesuit communities across Europe, beginning in 1553. In 1899, the first of two volumes of Saint Francis Xavier's writings appeared, and in 1903 a volume of the correspondence of four other of the so-called first companions, including Paschase Broët and Simão Rodrigues. That same year also saw the publication of the first of twelve volumes of the most important collection of correspondence in the entire *Monumenta*: the letters of Ignatius himself. That correspondence is the largest extant of any sixteenth-century figure, larger even than that of Luther and Erasmus.

The next year came the first of two volumes of sixteenth-century writings (*Scripta*) about Ignatius. The very first item in the first volume was the so-called "Autobiography." In 1567, Francis Borgia, during his term as general, withdrew the manuscript copies of the text from circulation in favor of the biography under preparation by Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611).<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the "Autobiography" had remained virtually unknown, even to Jesuits, from the sixteenth century until the appearance of this volume of the *Monumenta* in 1904. As for translations of the "Autobiography" into English, although two had appeared in 1900, they already had disappeared from circulation and been forgotten by 1956, when William J. Young (1895–1970) published the first to receive widespread attention.<sup>8</sup>

The editors of the *Monumenta*, up to that time exclusively Spanish in origin, continued to produce important volumes after they moved in 1929 from Madrid to the curia in Rome. Following this relocation, however, the editorial team gradually became more international.

Among the *Monumenta* early published in Italy, the most important for our purposes here were the three volumes on the *Constitutions*, which appeared between 1934 and 1938. In the first volume were two texts crucial for understanding the spirituality of the Soci-

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<sup>7</sup> See John McManamon, *The Texts and Contexts of Ignatius Loyola's "Autobiography"* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 5–9.

<sup>8</sup> *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius*, ed. J. F. X. O'Conor, SJ (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1900); *The Testament of Ignatius Loyola*, trans. E. M. Rix (London: Sands and Company, 1900); *St. Ignatius' Own Story: As Told to Luis González de Camara*, trans. William J. Young (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1956).

ety. The first was the Deliberation of the First Fathers, often called the *Deliberatio*: a record of the 1539 discernment by Ignatius and his companions about their future. The second text, no less important, was the surviving portion of Ignatius's Spiritual Diary, which he wrote as he prepared drafts of the *Constitutions*. Both documents were unknown up to that time.<sup>9</sup> In 1958, Young published the first English translation of the Diary; and in 1966, Dominic Maruca (MAR) performed a similar service with his translation of the *Deliberatio*.<sup>10</sup>

Although the *Monumenta* continued to turn out new volumes, most of the crucial documents were already on hand by about 1915. At that time, a breakthrough in Jesuit scholarship occurred with the books by the French Jesuit Alexandre Brou (1862–1947), a prolific scholar among the first to make serious use of the *Monumenta* as sources for the study of spirituality. Of special importance was his book *La spiritualité de saint Ignace*, first published in 1914 and followed by two further editions. Perhaps the best indication of the book's seminal importance was the publication almost forty years later, in 1952, of an English translation.<sup>11</sup>

Brou's study challenged prevailing presentations of Jesuit spirituality as overly methodical, intellectualist, and moralistic. It broke therefore with a tradition fostered even by Father General Jan Roothaan (1785–1855) in his important letter of 1834, shortly after the Restoration of the Society, by which he attempted to revive and promote the *Exercises*. Although Roothaan took a broader view, the letter can fairly be interpreted as indicating that self-abnegation leading to the planting of virtue and the uprooting of vice was the principal fruit to be expected of them.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See, however, Alfred Feder, trans., *Aus dem geistlichen Tagebuch hl. Ignatius von Loyola* (Regensburg: Kösel und Pustet, 1922).

<sup>10</sup> William J. Young, "Spiritual Journal of Ignatius Loyola," *Woodstock Letters* 87 (1958): 195–267; Dominic Maruca, "The Deliberation of the First Fathers," *Woodstock Letters* 95 (1966): 325–33.

<sup>11</sup> Alexandre Brou, *La spiritualité de saint Ignace* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1814); *The Ignatian Way to God*, trans. William J. Young (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1952).

<sup>12</sup> The letter can be found in *Epistolae Praepositorum Generalium*, 4 vols., 2nd ed. (Rollardii: De Meester, 1908–1909), 2:365–384. At the same time, Roothaan in some

Brou took a different approach, as the concluding paragraph of his chapter on the *Exercices* indicates:

And we can say that St. Ignatius leads the soul from love to love by way of love, from the active life of praise and obedience to the love of tenderness and ecstasy that seeks and finds the Beloved everywhere, all by way of the love of which Jesus, who sacrificed himself on the cross, has given us an example here on earth.<sup>13</sup>

The book took a major step in reshaping the image of Ignatius and his spirituality. More broadly, it also numbers among the first to use the term *spirituality* in the sense in which we commonly use it today. Neither in French nor in English did it have that meaning until in France it began to gain currency from this point forward.<sup>14</sup> And as spirituality gained currency, asceticism began to lose it.

For the first edition, Brou wrote an appendix in which he defended Ignatius and the *Exercices* against the criticism by the Belgian Benedictine Dom Maurice Festugière, who had argued that the “Ignatian method” was rigid and incompatible with a genuine appreciation of the liturgy of the church.<sup>15</sup> Brou was far from being the only Jesuit to rush to the defense—an indication of how seriously they took the criticism.<sup>16</sup>

However, critical assessments such as those levied by Festugière—and even more so the later criticism by Henri Bremond—did more for

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ways anticipates the later *ressourcement* of the Society. He was keenly interested in establishing the so-called autograph version, rather than the subsequent official Latin versions, as the standard text of the *Exercices*. In 1835, he issued a Latin translation of the Castilian original as well as a commentary on it.

<sup>13</sup> Brou, *Ignatian Way*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> See the *DSAM* entry for *spiritualité* and the Oxford English Dictionary entry for spirituality.

<sup>15</sup> Maurice Festugière, *La liturgie catholique: essai de synthèse, suivi de quelques développements* (s.l.: Abbaye de Maredsous, 1913).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Paul Aucler, “La spiritualité de saint Ignace: A propos d’un livre récent,” *Études* 144 (1915): 82–95, in which the author mentions other defenses. The issue continued to concern the Jesuits for decades. See, for example, John N. Schumacher, “Ignatian Spirituality and the Liturgy,” *Woodstock Letters* 87 (1958): 14–35.

the emergence of Ignatian spirituality than merely increase Jesuits' recourse to the sources. To wit, they inadvertently helped members of the Society to move out of an uncritical assumption that Catholic spirituality was an undifferentiated and harmonious unity in which real discrepancies among traditions were barely acknowledged. An early indication of the erosion of that assumption was an article replying to Festugière published in 1914—the same year in which Brou's book appeared. In this article, the term *Ignatian spirituality* appears seemingly for the first time in print.<sup>17</sup> Although the term took a while to catch on, its appearance indicated that a sharper sense of distinctiveness was in the making.

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*Brou's study challenged prevailing presentations of Jesuit spirituality as overly methodical, intellectualist, and moralistic.*

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In that regard, a later book by Brou, *Saint Ignace: maître d'oraison (Saint Ignatius: Teacher of Prayer)*, is important because in it there is a chapter entitled "Seeking God in All Things" and another called "Discernment of Spirits," two subjects constitutive of Ignatian spirituality as understood today. Prior to that point, these topics had received no special attention. Some thirty years later, the book was translated into German, English, and Italian.<sup>18</sup>

Brou was important, but he did not stand alone. He was indicative, rather, of a new focus among Jesuit scholars on spirituality in general and on the spiritual tradition of Ignatius and the Society in particular. By about 1920, the movement was under way and began to take important institutional forms. In that very year, for instance, the French Jesuits inaugurated the *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*, under de Guibert's leadership.

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<sup>17</sup> Louis Peeters, *Spiritualité 'ignatienne' et 'piété liturgique'* (Tournai: Casterman, 1914).

<sup>18</sup> Alexandre Brou, *Saint Ignace: maître d'oraison* (Paris: Spes, 1925); see also *Ignatian Methods of Prayer*, trans. William J. Young (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1949); *Gebetsschule des heiligen Ignatius*, trans. Otto Pres (Kevelaer: Buzon & Becker, 1953); and *Sant' Ignazio, maestro d'orazione*, trans. Alessandro Broli (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1954).

## IV. The Second Phase: 1920–1950

In 1918, at the Gregorian University in Rome, the Jesuits inaugurated a new chair in “ascetical and mystical theology,” which was an unmistakable indication that a new field of study was taking shape. The next year, the French Dominicans founded *La Vie Spirituelle Ascétique et Mystique*, the first periodical devoted to an academic study of spirituality. The following year, de Guibert founded the *Revue*, the Jesuit equivalent. Although the articles in the *Revue* ranged over the whole course of the Christian tradition, many of them dealt with subjects related to the Society.

Six years later, in 1926, the German Jesuits founded their own version of the *Revue* entitled *Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik*, today called *Geist und Leben*. As with the *Revue*, the German journal covered the whole tradition but showed a bias toward articles related to the Society.

In these years following World War I, scholars such as de Guibert, the Dominican Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, and the Sulpician Adolphe Tanquerey worked to develop *une théologie ascétique et mystique*—an ascetical and mystical theology. Tanquerey’s book on the subject, which appeared in 1923/1924 and went through multiple editions and translations, won him an international reputation and became the standard text in this new field that was gaining ever more interest.<sup>19</sup>

Although these theologians were all Neo-Thomists, they of course differed from one another, notably in the relative weight they gave to asceticism—the active, self-disciplining dimension in the spiritual life—and the mystical graces associated more with passivity and affectivity. They agreed, however, that spiritual perfection, exemplified by the saints, was its goal. And although they were concerned to include the laity in this goal, they made clear that pursuit of perfection was characteristic of vowed members of religious orders.<sup>20</sup> The classic proof-text

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<sup>19</sup> See Adolphe Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life: A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, trans. Herman Branderis (Tournai: Desclée, 1930). For the French original, see *Précis de théologie ascétique et mystique* (Paris: Desclée, 1928).

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Timothy W. O'Brien, “‘If You Wish to be Perfect’: Change and Continuity in Vatican II’s Call to Holiness,” *The Heythrop Journal* 55, no. 2 (2014): 286–96.



for this concern appears in Christ's injunction in Matthew: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me (19:21)."

In contrast, the Spanish Jesuits seem, at least on the surface, to have taken an approach different from that of their confreres in France and Germany. As the title of their new journal, *Manresa*, founded in 1925, suggests, the focus was not only exclusively Jesuit but specifically the central document of Ignatian spirituality, the *Exercises*. As this publication's earliest masthead said, it was a journal "*de Ejercicios*."

Next, in 1932, the editors of the *Monumenta* launched their own review, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*. Although not focused directly on spirituality as such, the *Archivum* carried articles sometimes related to it. For instance, the lead article in the very first issue was by the Italian Pietro Tacchi Venturi (1861–1956) on novitiate programs according to the *Constitutions*.

As we have already suggested, the importance of the appearance in 1938 of the first volume of the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* is almost beyond exaggeration. It signified that spirituality as an academic discipline had come of age, and revealed a stunningly high level of thorough and dispassionate scholarship, thereby challenging others implicitly to go and do likewise.

Thus, by 1938, the Jesuits had in place at least five major publications poised to act as engines for the development of Ignatian spirituality. But while that process was underway, they had to deal with a criticism of the tradition, and a criticism more serious than Festugière's, precisely because it came from a person much better known and with seemingly impeccable credentials.

Henri Bremond (1865–1933) had himself been a Jesuit for twenty-two years until he left the Society in 1904. He went on to a brilliant career as a historian-essayist on religious subjects.<sup>21</sup> The number and range of his publications is extraordinarily broad and includes books

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<sup>21</sup> On Bremond, see the long entry about him, authored by Joseph de Guibert, in the *DSAM*.

on Blaise Pascal, Thomas More, John Henry Newman, and subjects like prayer and poetry. Nonetheless, the work for which he is best remembered is his monumental, eleven-volume *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France*, translated in part into English as *A Literary History of Religious Thought*. Given the range and impact of his publications, it is no surprise that in 1923 he was elected to the *Académie française*.<sup>22</sup>

Bremond was, therefore, no ordinary critic. The many exchanges between him and the Jesuits, especially Ferdinand Cavallera (1875–1954), took place with special intensity between 1927 and 1930.<sup>23</sup> The arguments were complex and subtle, but essentially Bremond maintained that the Society promoted a corporate spirituality dominated by a concern with the development of moral virtues—a spirituality of ascetical practices and self-improvement rather than of surrender to God, which he took to be the essential mode of true spirituality. Bremond dubbed the Jesuits' concern *l'ascétisme*, a neologism with no direct equivalent in English, and his *Histoire* sketched critical moments for its emergence in Jesuit life and spiritual teaching.

He put his thesis most boldly when he wrote that it was a mistake to call Ignatius a teacher of prayer—"un maître d'oraison"—when he was, rather, a teacher of asceticism—"un maître d'ascèse."<sup>24</sup> This sounded like a direct challenge to Alexandre Brou, one of whose books was entitled, as noted above, *Saint Ignace, maître d'oraison*. Brou had, apparently, not gone far enough in rescuing Ignatius from *l'ascétisme*.

Bremond's criticisms had important consequences for how influential Jesuit scholars framed their exploration of Ignatian sources for the next few decades. Perhaps it was only a coincidence that in 1937 Karl Rahner published an article signaling the mystical element in Ignatius's

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<sup>22</sup> Henri Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des guerres de religion*, 11 vols. (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1916–1933).

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Henri Bremond, "Ascèse ou prière: Notes sur la crise des 'Exercices' de saint Ignace," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, 7 (1927): 226–61, 402–28, 579–99, and the response by Ferdinand Cavallera, "Ascétisme et prière: A propos d'une prétendue crise," *Revue d'Ascétique et Mystique*, 20 (1928): 54–90. See also Aloys Pottier, *Pour saint Ignace et les Exercices contre l'offensive de M. Bremond* (Paris: Téqui, 1930).

<sup>24</sup> Bremond, "Ascèse ou prière," 410.

vision, "The Ignatian Mysticism of Worldliness."<sup>25</sup> It was certainly not a coincidence, however, that Joseph de Guibert published his first study on Ignatius's mysticism in the *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* the following year.<sup>26</sup> De Guibert's article was especially important because, more than any scholar before him, he had clear mastery of long-forgotten Ignatian sources, especially the "Autobiography" and the *Spiritual Diary*.

By the 1930s, the growing corpus of sources available about Ignatius and the earliest Society also began to yield more comprehensive biographical studies of the founder. Key among these was Paul Dudon's *Saint Ignace de Loyola* (1934). Dudon was a respected and well-trained historian, and his biography broke new ground by basing itself solidly on the new critical editions, published in the *Monumenta*, of Ignatius's writings. He was thus able to dispel hagiographical myths that had long enveloped the Society's founder. His biography was also among the first texts from this European renaissance in Ignatian studies to be translated into English by William J. Young.

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*The renaissance, even if principally focused on Ignatius, increasingly began to shed light on the role of other influential first Jesuits.*

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The renaissance, even if principally focused on Ignatius, increasingly began to shed light on the role of other influential first Jesuits. Notable among such works was the English-Province Jesuit James Brodrick's biography of Peter Canisius, first published in 1935 and still considered the standard life of the saint. Brodrick (1891–1973) based his book on the eight-volume edition of Canisius's correspondence by the German Jesuit Otto Braunsberger (1850–1926). Brodrick's other works, especially his biography of Saint Robert Bellarmine, were also important.

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<sup>25</sup> Karl Rahner, "Die ignatianische Mystik der Weltfreudigkeit," *Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik* 12 (1937): 177–90.

<sup>26</sup> See Joseph de Guibert, "Mystique Ignatienne: A propos du 'Journal spirituel' de S. Ignace de Loyola," *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* 19 (1938): 3–22, 113–40.

Of outstanding importance, however, was the Spanish Jesuit Miguel Nicolau's study in 1949 of Jerome Nadal's teaching on prayer.<sup>27</sup> Nicolau was preeminently qualified to address the topic because he was the editor of the final volume of Nadal's writings for the *Monumenta*, which consisted principally in his exhortations given to Jesuit communities across Western Europe. In these talks, Nadal was the first to articulate a coherent vision of the Society's spirituality, especially as related to the broader issue of its "way of proceeding." Nadal's conferences and his conversations with individual Jesuits were crucially important for explaining the identity of the Society to its own members at a time when the order's growth seemed unbounded—and when many seemed to have only a vague understanding of the nature of the institution they had joined.

Nicolau (1905–1986) also made extensive use of Nadal's illustrated book of meditations on the gospels of the Sunday liturgical cycle. This called attention to the importance of visual culture in the earliest years of the Society. Because Nadal's book was inspired by the church's liturgy, Nicolau at least indirectly responded to Festugière's criticism. With this detailed research, therefore, Nicolau presented Nadal as, next to Ignatius, the best window into the Society's spirituality during its most formative years. This first book-length study of Nadal was another important breakthrough in the great *ressourcement* charted here.

Moreover, deliberately or not, Nicolau's book served as a lengthy response to Bremond by taking special pains to show the affective and even mystical elements in the Jesuit tradition. In so doing, he mentioned Nadal's soundbite about Ignatius as a "contemplative in action," which later would become such a prominent feature of Ignatian spirituality. He does so in a long section on "finding God in all things"—another expression today taken to be characteristically Ignatian. However, Nicolau was not the first to use the expression "contemplation in action." That honor belongs to Karl and Hugo Rahner, who as early as 1937 used the expression in an article in-

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<sup>27</sup> Miguel Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal, S. I. (1507–1580): Sus obras y doctrinas espirituales* (Madrid: Manuel Pasó, 1949), especially 254–64.

tended to introduce Nadal to German Jesuit readership.<sup>28</sup> In any case, only in the 1950s did the expression, which occurs only once in all of Nadal's writings, catch on broadly in Jesuit circles. In 1957, for instance, the American Jesuit Joseph Conwell published his dissertation entitled *Contemplation in Action: A Study in Ignatian Prayer*.<sup>29</sup>

## V. The Third Phase: 1950–1965

By the middle of the twentieth century the pace of publication, diversity, and quality of books and articles about the spirituality of the Society had reached a crescendo that became particularly intense between 1950 and 1965. This outpouring of material directly paved the way for official validation of it in the general congregations of the Society. It was during this phase that among Jesuits at large a newly clear awareness of themselves as beneficiaries of a distinctive spiritual heritage began to take hold.<sup>30</sup>

In 1953, the French Jesuits published posthumously de Guibert's voluminous and wide-ranging monograph, *La Spiritualité de la Compagnie de Jésus*. The book opens with a long study of Ignatius himself but continues to review the teaching and practice of Jesuits down to 1940, two years before de Guibert's own death.<sup>31</sup> A *tour de force* of erudition, it runs almost seven hundred pages in the English translation.

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<sup>28</sup> Karl and Hugo Rahner, "Über die Gnade des Gebetes in der Gesellschaft Jesu," *Mitteilungen aus der deutschen Provinzen SJ*, 13 (1935), 399–411. On this, see the incisive chapter "The Rahner Brothers and the Discovery of Jerónimo Nadal," in Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 68–98.

<sup>29</sup> Nicolau, Nadal, 465. Joseph Cromwell, *Contemplation in Action: A Study in Ignatian Prayer* (Spokane: Gonzaga University, 1957). See also, for example, Maurice Giuliani, "Trouver Dieu en toutes les choses," *Christus* 6 (1955): 172–94.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Jean-François Gilmont, *Les écrits spirituels des premiers jésuites: Inventaire commenté* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu [IHSI], 1961), and Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Répertoire de spiritualité Ignatienne: De la mort de saint Ignace à celle du P. Aquaviva (1556–1615)*, (Rome: IHSI, 1961).

<sup>31</sup> See Joseph de Guibert, *La spiritualité de la Compagnie de Jésus: Esquisse historique* (Rome: IHSI, 1953); see also *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, trans. William J. Young (St. Louis: IJS, 1964).

The book's most lasting achievements were twofold: first, the convincing arguments that Ignatius was a true mystic, an elaboration of de Guibert's article in 1938 on the subject; and, second, the specification that Ignatius's mysticism—or spirituality—was a “mysticism of service” that expressed itself in zeal for the good of others and thus led to engagement with the world in all its concrete details. As such, it was not a mysticism that depended on a tightly enclosed cloister; and neither was it a mysticism that made use of the nuptial imagery characteristic of so much of the earlier and later Christian mystical tradition. This was, wittingly or unwittingly, a correction of Brou, who in the passage quoted above hinted, in passing, at such imagery.

While de Guibert clearly established Ignatius as the recipient of mystical favors, he did so by situating him within the prevailing Neo-Scholastic categories concerning grace and nature as they related to mystical experience. But with this book, Ignatius appeared, at long last, as a human being—no stranger to confusion and anguish, but equally familiar with divine graces and consolations that frequently reduced him to tears. And in addition to developing his case for Ignatius's mysticism, de Guibert's monograph also sought, not always successfully, to spare the wider spiritual tradition of the Society from Bremond's attacks concerning “*l'acéticisme*.”<sup>32</sup>

That same year of 1953, another French Jesuit, Maurice Giuliani, published an article on what he called “certain traits” of the Society's spirituality that reflected the direction in which the current interpretations were heading.<sup>33</sup> Giuliani's accomplishment was to synthesize much of the work that had been done up to that point, resulting in a coherent portrait of the Society's apostolic spirituality. Indeed, the article was an early attempt to identify the key elements in what we now mean by the term *Ignatian spirituality*.

For his part, Giuliani showed how the gift of Ignatius to the church was more than a school of prayer. It was, rather, an apostolic

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<sup>32</sup> See John W. O'Malley, “De Guibert and Jesuit Authenticity,” *Woodstock Letters* 95 (1966): 103–10.

<sup>33</sup> Maurice Giuliani, “Quelque traits de la spiritualité de la Compagnie de Jésus,” *Cahiers carmélitains* 2 (1953): 6–20.

“way of proceeding” in which service and “the help of souls” was central. In that regard, he maintained that, for Ignatius, the key scriptural text was John 5:17: “My Father is at work still, and I am at work.” As such, God manifests himself in an ongoing creative presence in which human beings are called to participate in service to others.

While the article summarized the progress up to that point, it also anticipated developments still to come. Among them was what seems to be one of the first identifications of “indifference” with freedom—a legitimate interpretation of the idea, but also an interpretation attractive to contemporary men and women. For Giuliani, indifference in its positive aspect is a liberation from oneself that blossoms into an exclusive passion for God and for God’s work to be accomplished in the world. The article also looks back to Bremond when it indicates that the spirituality of the Society consists in both an active asceticism and a passive submission to the inspiration of the Spirit.

The next year, 1954, the French Jesuits launched *Christus*, their new and highly-regarded journal of spirituality. The articles, based on solid scholarship, were short and meant for a non-professional readership. They were intended, as the *Liminaire* introducing the series stated, to help people in their prayer and daily life—“*prière et action*.” Although the masthead described *Christus* simply as a journal of spirituality (*Cahiers spirituels*), the editors made clear in the *Liminaire* that it was intended as a *revue ignatienne*.

They therefore made a deliberate effort to bring the riches published in the *Monumenta* out of the closed world of academia and into everyday life. Almost every issue included a French translation of short, important, but forgotten texts from the earliest Society—texts by Ignatius, Nadal, Faber, and others. Moreover, it dedicated the entire fourth issue of its very first year to “spiritual discernment,” a sign of the growing realization of that subject’s central role in Ignatian spirituality. Then, just two years later, a crucially important, book-length, multi-authored entry on discernment of spirits appeared in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*; an English translation of that article appeared in 1970. These two publications on the subject broke new ground: in the half-century between 1900 and the *Christus* issue and *Dictionnaire* entry, we have located only one article on the subject of

discernment in spirits in any language. From this point forward, the pace of publication on the topic gradually accelerated until it gained an extraordinary momentum in the early 1970s.<sup>34</sup>

More broadly, *Christus* played a major role in accomplishing within the Society of Jesus a fresh understanding and articulation of

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*The specification that Ignatius's mysticism—or spirituality—was a “mysticism of service” that expressed itself in zeal for the good of others and thus led to engagement with the world in all its concrete details.*

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the Society's spiritual traditions. This accomplishment made clear that the investment of men and other resources that the Society had made in scholarship, especially

in Spain and France since the beginning of the twentieth century, had been an investment well made.

The year after the founding of *Christus*, 1955, Ignacio Iparraguirre published the second of his three-volume history on the use and diffusion outside Rome of the *Exercises* from the time of Ignatius into the seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> Iparraguirre was a prolific writer on the *Exercises*, even beyond these volumes, but they were the basis on which many of his publications rested. Not surprisingly, he was the editor of the second volume of the *Monumenta* explicitly dedicated to the *Exercises*, which documented the process leading up to the publication of the official *Directory* in 1599.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> See Lászlo Polgár, *Bibliographie sur l'histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus. 1901–1980*, 5 vols. (Rome: IHSI, 1981–1990), 1:167–168. In 1970, an English translation of the entire entry in the *Dictionnaire* was translated into English. For the reference, see Jacques Guillier, et al., *Discernment of Spirits*, trans. Sister Innocentia Richards (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1970).

<sup>35</sup> Each of Iparraguirre's three volumes has a slightly different title: *Práctica de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio en vida de su autor (1522–1556)* (Rome: IHSI, 1946); *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio (1556–1599)* (Rome: IHSI, 1955); and *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio: Evolución en Europa durante el siglo XVII* (Rome: IHSI, 1973).

<sup>36</sup> Even before the death of Ignatius in 1556, he and other Jesuits expressed the desire for a “Directory,” beyond what was already recorded in the retreat manual itself, to offer guidance for those giving (i.e., directing) the Spiritual Exercises. After numerous drafts from diverse Jesuit authors, the official directory was published in 1599, during



The three volumes of Iparraguirre's history remain to this day the most comprehensive treatment of the early use and practice of the *Exercises*. They tell the story of how the *Exercises* arrived in different parts of Europe and the Americas, analyze the different categories of persons who made them, examine variations in their practice, and, finally, include some methodological reflections. Although they are highly informative, they rarely rise above the level of a massive chronicle.

However, the second volume contains an extremely important section on "the director" in which it becomes clear that, under ideal circumstances, the *Exercises* implied a one-on-one relationship between the director and persons making the retreat. The same idea appeared later in Iparraguirre's small pastoral work entitled in English, *How to Give a Retreat*.<sup>37</sup>

But at the time these books were published, this one-on-one relationship was far from being general practice. Even in the Society's houses, the Exercises were "preached" —that is, a Jesuit several times a day presented topics for meditation to an assembled group of his confreres, who were then left on their own for the rest of the time. Even though Iparraguirre never quite described the directed retreat as we know it today, his comments about the role of the director opened the way for it and were a major factor in its early development at precisely this time.<sup>38</sup> For Ignatian spirituality, this was a *ressourcement* of tremendous importance.

The four-hundredth anniversary of Ignatius's death in 1956, the year after Iparraguirre's second volume appeared, occasioned a further outpouring of studies and conferences concerning Ignatius's person, his spirituality, and his legacy as the order's principal founder. Certainly, among the most important articles to appear in

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the lengthy generalate (1581–1615) of Claudio Acquaviva. See Martin E. Palmer, ed. and trans., *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599* (St. Louis: IJS, 1996).

<sup>37</sup> Ignacio Iparraguirre, *How to Give a Retreat: Practical Notes* (Bombay: St. Xavier's High School, 1959).

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Charles Jacquet, "Le rôle de l'instructeur de la retraite," *Christus* 10 (1956): 208–24.

the jubilee year was Karl Rahner's essay on obedience.<sup>39</sup> Rahner was a philosophical theologian, not a historian, and so, while he did not cite a single historical source—not even Ignatius's famous "Letter on Obedience"—he did provide a helpful lens through which to view such documents. For example, when he described obedience as commitment of oneself to an abiding way of life in imitation of Christ, he effectively countered the prevailing idea that obedience consisted largely in "keeping the rule," understood as an unremittingly faithful and exact execution of even the minutest regulations.

The article, swiftly translated into several languages, had a considerable and almost immediate effect on the understanding of obedience in the Society and therefore on its role in Ignatian spirituality. It was, however, far from being the only contribution that Rahner and his brother, Hugo, made to the evolving discussion about the Jesuits' spiritual traditions.<sup>40</sup>

During and after the jubilee year, interest in things Jesuit continued to expand beyond Ignatius. We have already mentioned, for instance, Brodrick on Canisius and especially Nicolau on Nadal. Then, in 1960, Michel de Certeau (1925–1986) published his French edition of Peter Faber's *Memoriale*, the Savoyard's spiritual journal.<sup>41</sup> Important as the translation from the Latin was, even more important was de Certeau's long and incisive introduction. It reshaped earlier generalizations about the "companions of Paris," and placed them in their cultural context with a precision never achieved before. The introduction and the excellent footnotes represented a new level of critical interpretation for Jesuit studies. This was de Certeau's first book but far from his last. This brilliant scholar, almost impossible to classify, went on to achieve international acclaim for his writings on religion and culture.

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<sup>39</sup> Karl Rahner, "A Basic Ignatian Concept: Some Reflections on Obedience," *Woodstock Letters* 86 (1957): 291–310.

<sup>40</sup> See, generally, Edean, *Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*.

<sup>41</sup> Pierre Favre, *Mémorial*, ed. Michel de Certeau (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1960).

## VI. The Fourth Phase: 1965–1975

On October 5, 1964, Father General Jean-Baptiste Janssens died, and the following spring General Congregation Thirty-One met in Rome to elect his successor. The congregation would be one of the most important in the entire history of the Society. In principle, its main task was to elect a successor for Janssens, and the congregation fulfilled that task with the usual dispatch on May 22, 1965, with the election of Pedro Arrupe. The election took place, however, in the context of the Second Vatican Council, which concluded in the fall of that year. The congregation had to deal, therefore, with the many and profound ramifications for the Society that the decisions of the council entailed. This required that the congregation meet for an unprecedented second session in the fall of the next year.

Among the many decrees of Vatican II, *Perfectae Caritatis*, on religious life, most directly affected the development of Ignatian spirituality. As we mentioned earlier, it mandated, first, “a return to . . . the primitive inspiration of the institute”; and, second, “adaptation to the changed conditions of our time” (n. 2). These two steps were simply specifications for religious life of the council’s principles for dealing with all aspects of the Christian tradition—*ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. And as we have pointed out, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* are not as distinct from one another as they at first might seem.

As we also noted earlier, the *ressourcement* had been underway in the Society during the six decades preceding the council, ever since the first volume of the *Monumenta* appeared. Now came the moment for the *aggiornamento*—the moment to make the results of the Society’s massive *ressourcement* operative and to do so on a corporate level, especially regarding the Society’s understanding of its spirituality.

Only a particularly keen eye can catch any direct impact of the spiritual *ressourcement*, even in the congregation’s decree eight, “The Spiritual Formation of Jesuits.” Nonetheless, the *ressourcement* in the form of a new corporate awareness of something called Ignatian spirituality pervaded the congregation. The best indication of that fact came in 1970, a few years after the congregation closed, when Arrupe established in the Jesuit curia the Center for Ignatian Spirituality.

tuality (*Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis* or CIS). With that, Ignatian spirituality attained at least quasi-official status.

A decade later, delegates gathered for General Congregation Thirty-Two to examine and assess the direction that the previous congregation had given to the Society and to evaluate how Arrupe had carried out the congregation's mandates. The congregation resoundingly affirmed both the direction and Arrupe's leadership. Moreover, by mandating in decree four that all the Society's ministries be oriented to "the service of faith and the promotion of justice," it provided a new specification for the Society's perennial dedication to "the help of souls." It thus provided a newly specific orientation for the pastoral center of Ignatian spirituality.

General Congregation Thirty-Two ended in March 1975. It was a milestone in establishing the promotion of justice and a more general this-worldly concern as constitutive features of Jesuit spirituality. With that, all the elements were basically in place for the configuration that we recognize today as Ignatian spirituality.

## VII. And Then?

Up to this point, Jesuits of the English-speaking world had for the most part played the passive role of listener and learner. Beginning in the late 1940s, William J. Young became an active contributor by bringing the fruits of this *ressourcement* to American shores and to Anglophone readers more broadly. Young had spent several years during his course of formation in Spain and France, and during that time he had become aware of the ferment in those countries around the Society's spiritual heritage. Since this scholarship was essentially unknown in the Anglophone Society of Jesus, he set to work to remedy the situation.

Within three years, between 1949 and 1952, Young translated and published Dudon's life of Ignatius and two of Brou's books on spirituality, and in 1956, he published, as mentioned, *St. Ignatius' Own Story*, the first English-language translation of the "Autobiography" to gain wide circulation. Then, two years later, he published

the first English translation of Ignatius's *Spiritual Journal* and also a volume containing translations of articles from the early issues of *Christus*. And year after that, 1959, he came out with a collection of two hundred twenty-eight of Ignatius's letters, the first such collection of any size to appear in English. Of course, he selected the letters from the *Monumenta*. Finally, his translation of de Guibert's massive study of the history of Jesuit spirituality appeared in 1964.

In this same spirit, Paul Kennedy (1903–1988) of the British province became tertian instructor in Saint Beuno's in Wales in 1958, where for the next sixteen years he introduced the directed retreat principally, but certainly not exclusively, to English-language Jesuits from around the world. His impact on Jesuits from Canada and the United States was particularly important.<sup>42</sup> Mean-

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*The three volumes of Iparraguirre's history remain to this day the most comprehensive treatment of the early use and practice of the Exercises.*

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while, in 1961, the British Jesuits began publishing *The Way*, which they described simply as a "Quarterly Review of Christian Spirituality," but it of course favored articles on the Jesuit tradition.

Following Young's important initiatives, the North American Society of Jesus bit by bit began to play an active role in promoting the theory and practice of Ignatian spirituality. In 1969, for instance, the American Jesuit provincials entrusted to George E. Ganss (1905–2000) of the Missouri Province the supervising of a new series entitled *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*. Ganss had meanwhile become director of the Institute of Jesuit Sources, whose remit was the publication of monographs dealing with the Jesuit tradition.

Then, in 1970, Ganss published his translation, with introduction and copious notes, of the Jesuit *Constitutions*, the first English-language edition of that document in the history of the Society. The Ganss

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<sup>42</sup> In highlighting the importance of Kennedy's efforts in reintroducing the individually-directed retreat, we do not mean to suggest that he was the only Jesuit who did so. See, for example, Tom Shufflebotham, "Ignatian Directed Retreats: The Dark Ages?" in *The Way* 49, no. 3 (July 2010): 109–20.

translation joined a wider revitalization of interest in the *Constitutions* and also contributed to a reevaluation of that text as containing spiritual wisdom rather than simply juridical prescriptions. As such, the *Constitutions* took its proper place alongside the *Spiritual Exercises* as a source par excellence of Ignatian spirituality.<sup>43</sup>

From this point forward, a number of important publications began regularly appearing in English, including the Canadian John J. English's book on the experience of freedom resulting from the Exercises and the American Jules J. Toner's volume on discernment.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, important initiatives directly related to pastoral practice got underway. For example, a number of provinces established centers for the training of directors of the Exercises. In 1971, a group of Jesuits from the New England province led by William J. Connolly (1925–2013) and William A. Barry (UNE) founded the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was the first such institution to offer a professionalized program for the training of spiritual directors.

Provinces and individuals undertook other initiatives. By the last quarter of the twentieth century, Ignatian spirituality had become an unquestioned reality, part of a larger transformation of awareness about the ethos of the Society of Jesus.

Especially distinctive in what has happened is the shift in agency regarding Jesuit scholarship and practice. Until then, Jesuits were responsible for almost all scholarship on the Society. Today, the situation has reversed: almost all scholarship is done by laypersons, many of whom are not Catholics. A somewhat similar and more obvious shift has taken place regarding practice. While before 1975 it was almost inconceivable that a non-Jesuit guide others through the Exercises, today it is common. On a broader level, today lay ministers, administrators,

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<sup>43</sup> See Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. George E. Ganss (St. Louis, MO: IJS, 1970). Prior to this, a French translation of the *Constitutions* and a commentary on the text had been published. See François Roustang, *Saint Ignace: Constitutions de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 2 vols. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1967).

<sup>44</sup> John J. English, *Spiritual Freedom: From an Experience of the Ignatian Exercises to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Guelph, Ont.: Loyola House, 1973); Jules J. Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits: A Guide to the Principles and Practice* (St. Louis, MO: IJS, 1982).

teachers, and others In Jesuit institutions have committed themselves with savvy and enthusiasm to the promotion of “Jesuit values,” at the core of which is Ignatian spirituality.

But no matter how gratifying to contemporary Jesuits this broad-based support may be, the danger that accompanies it is the promotion of a superficial and catchphrase grasp of the Jesuit tradition. The problem is that, when present-day discussion of Jesuit values and ideals is severed from knowledge of the original sources, distortions are almost inevitable and correction by the sources impossible. This danger is real, especially in popular presentations of Ignatian spirituality. It is, however, a danger that accompanies a success story.

Regardless, the foregoing discussion reveals that the movement that began with the publication of the *Monumenta* developed in ways that its initiators could not possibly have imagined. It has had an impact beyond their wildest dreams. That is the way the historical process sometimes works.

## VIII. The Elements of a Spiritual Culture

**A**lthough the term *Ignatian spirituality* is now solidly established in Jesuit circles, it remains undefined except in the most generic sense. But within the larger Catholic tradition, it has a distinctiveness deriving from Ignatius and from the larger reality of the early Society as found in the writings of Nadal, Polanco, Faber and others. Moreover, it is inseparable from the Society’s ministries, especially the ministry of formal education. It is even inseparable from the decrees of recent general congregations, which have provided contemporary specifications of the charism we attribute to Saint Ignatius and to the other early Jesuits.

Although all these aspects of the Jesuit tradition have an impact on Ignatian spirituality as applicable beyond the Society of Jesus, some apply most directly, sometimes exclusively, to members of the Society. Whether we use the term *Jesuit spirituality* or some other to take that reality into account, we must somehow do so. In short, real boundaries exist between Ignatian spirituality and the life of the vows, as well as

between Ignatian spirituality and the pastoral/spiritual traditions that animate the Society of Jesus. They are also to some degree permeable.

On the other hand, we use the term *culture* to designate the cumulative result of this confluence of elements. As such, *culture* here means simply a configuration of assumptions, forms, symbols, and behavioral patterns that result in a reality that is distinctive and identifiable, but not necessarily easily definable. Taken together, the elements in the configuration express a set of mutually dependent values. Even so, some elements dominate over others and thus provide the mix with shape, coherence, and character.

If it is difficult to define Ignatian spirituality, then it is perhaps even more difficult to describe the spiritual culture that it replaced. That culture, which has almost disappeared from our corporate memory, deserves a full-scale study. Until then, we must remain satisfied with impressions and generalities. Here and there, however, we sometimes catch a glimpse of it, as in a few pages in a recent issue of *Studies*.<sup>45</sup> By spending even a brief time with certain documents, however, a reader will quickly perceive its difference from today. Włodimir Ledochowski was general of the Society from 1915 until 1942. The nine hundred pages of his *Selected Writings* quickly reveal a spiritual world unlike that of today's Society. For instance, he emphasized "our rules" as "an efficacious means to holiness." In that regard, he in 1921 wrote a long letter on "keeping the rules of modesty," which he described as the "finishing touch" of Ignatius's legacy to the Society.<sup>46</sup>

There is, of course, much more in this long book, some of which still rings true today. As the point we have selected indicates, however, much seems strange. Perhaps most important in Ledochowski's writings is what is *not* there. The same is true of the letters of other generals up to Arrupe, of general congregations up to GC 31, and of the responses to queries in the *Acta Romana*. For us to try to say more about that earlier set of emphases than we have already said or implied

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<sup>45</sup> See John W. O'Malley, "How We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate, 1946–1948," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2019), especially 30–37.

<sup>46</sup> See *Selected Writings of Father Ledochowski* (s.l., The American Assistency, 1945), especially 27–29, 306–17.



would take us far beyond the modest limits we have set ourselves in this essay. In any case, the most palpable sign of the shift in spiritual culture is the change in vocabulary now common in Jesuit circles. The new vocabulary indicates a shift in awareness, a shift in consciousness, and to some extent a shift in self-definition.

Most of the words or expressions in currency today are not new. They would be familiar to Jesuits of earlier generations, but they now have a new prominence and, in some cases, a new definition. Even though a few words or expressions are new, they point to realities that are not; and, for this reason, earlier generations would have known what they express. Meanwhile, as we said earlier, even if some words or expressions that formerly were prominent have diminished in currency, they and the realities that they indicate have certainly not vanished from the life of the Society or from wider Jesuit circles.

If we want to get a handle on what we want to convey when we speak of Ignatian spirituality, a helpful way to do so, therefore, is simply to list some of the words and expressions that today are standard. In first place, of course, is the term *Ignatian spirituality* itself. A neologism, it fills a long-standing gap in Jesuit vocabulary. It opens our eyes to realities that earlier escaped us or were peripheral to our awareness. It enables us to see connections that we did not see before or that we did not see so clearly. In addition, its rise to currency helped diminish the currency of terms such as *asceticism*, *mortification*, *abnegation*, and, to some extent, even *mysticism*.

In Jesuit parlance, for example, the term *Ignatian spirituality* has mostly replaced the expression *the Institute*, which until mid-century was the common way of expressing Jesuit identity and distinctiveness. Early on in the Society's history, *the Institute* came to stand for a collection of official documents designated by general congregations. The last such collection, published in the mid-nineteenth century, consisted in three folio-sized volumes of some six hundred pages each. Those pages included the *Constitutions*, the *Exercises*, the official *Directory* to the *Exercises*, the *Ratio Studiorum*, all the rules of the Society, the decrees of all the general congregations up to that time, letters to the Society from the fathers general beginning with Claudio Acquaviva, official documents

from the Holy See directed to the Society, and other documents.<sup>47</sup> To understand the Society was, then, according to our congregations, to understand this collection. On that note, “studying the Institute” was a primary task of tertianship, and general congregations sometimes referred to the collection as “our laws.” In fact, the Institute contained a number of purely juridical documents.

Except for the *Exercises* and *Constitutions*, the corpus of documents in the Institute is altogether different from the corpus we usually associate with Ignatian spirituality. Except for the “Letter on Obedience,” for instance, the Institute contains no other letter of Ignatius, nor does it contain anything from Faber, Nadal, or Polanco. Like the letters of Ledochowski and similar documents, the Institute reveals a culture and mindset different from today’s. Nonetheless, the *Exercises* and the *Constitutions* provide a crucial link and a strong bond of continuity between the Institute understood in this way and Ignatian spirituality.

Even so, in the past fifty years, both the practice and the interpretation of the Exercises have undergone significant developments. Most notable in their practice is the new prominence of the directed retreat and the diminution in frequency of the so-called preached retreat. This development has in turn led to a new prominence of the ministry of spiritual direction, such that “having a spiritual director” has for devout persons largely replaced the practice of “having a confessor” common in earlier days.

In tandem with this new prominence, the art of spiritual direction has undergone a major reexamination, which has led to a better understanding of its practice. From the new perspective, the director is neither an oracle nor a problem-solver but a gentle

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<sup>47</sup> *Institutum Societatis Iesu*, editio novissima, 3 vols. (Rome: Civiltà Cattolica, 1869, 1870; Florence: A SS. Conceptione, 1886–1891). On congregations and “the Institute,” see Padberg, *Matters of Moment*, 363–64 (GC 14, d. 8); 430, 432–33 (GC 20, d. 9, 15); 476 (GC 23, d. 43); 481 (GC 24, d. 7); and 507–08 (GC 26, d. 11).

guide and experienced partner in the spiritual quest. The director also often functions as a teacher of prayer according to the different forms found in the *Exercises*. Among these, for instance, is the so-called Ignatian contemplation, whereby one imagines oneself as present in scenes from the Gospels.

One of the most popular and fruitful forms of giving the Exercises has been the retrieval from oblivion of the nineteenth annotation retreat—usually, a one-on-one form that requires a trained director. As that form has risen to prominence, weekend retreats have in some places, but by no means all, diminished in frequency, even though there is no obvious causal relationship between these two phenomena. The recent prominence of the individually directed retreat is, nonetheless, significant. It implies a more focused concern with spiritual growth—with “the interior journey”—than with a set of resolutions to do better in the future. On that note, the word *perfection* now appears much less often in expressing the goal of the spiritual life for either vowed religious or the lay faithful.

This leads directly into interpretations of the *Exercises*. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, commentaries on Ignatius’s text commonly indicated that, although a deeper love of the Lord was the fruit of a retreat, that love found expression in resolutions to do better in the future. As Roothaan’s letter of 1834 indicated, the uprooting of vices and the planting of virtues was the major goal of a retreat. While that, goal has not disappeared, and commentators still tend to see an experience of God’s love as a fruit of the retreat, today they understand a new interior freedom as enhancing that love. The term *interior freedom*, which is new in the context of the *Exercises*, has given a significantly new cast to the meaning of *indifference*, which in the process has lost some of its former luster.

In the achievement of spiritual freedom—and, indeed, in every aspect of the retreat—the notion of *discernment* has gained an unprecedented currency in the interpretation of the *Exercises* and has come to be a defining characteristic of Ignatian spirituality. Although through the centuries unfailingly recognized as an integral part of the experience of the Exercises, it rarely received extended examination. That has changed radically. The examination has focused new attention on the

movements of consolation and desolation that play such a central role in discernment as Ignatius describes it. Indeed, consolation has sometimes seemed to be an identifying mark of Ignatian spirituality, which is not necessarily a healthy development. Even as Ignatius understands it in the *Exercises*, consolation requires careful analysis.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, discernment now forms an integral part not only of the spiritual journey that is the retreat, but also of the spiritual journey that continues after it. In this sense, it has come to be an abiding feature of the spiritual life as such. Again, one certainly can argue that discernment always has characterized of a truly devout life; but what is new is the clear articulation of it and the emphasis that it now receives in the Society. And since the 1970s, the Examen has become the exercise that makes discernment a daily reality and thus has afforded this practice a central place in Ignatian spirituality.

Note, however, that discernment is no longer presented exclusively or even primarily as an examination of conscience—that is, as a scrutiny of one's failings and a resolution to do better in view of receiving the sacrament of penance and reconciliation—but as an exercise in awareness of God's presence in one's life. Although the Examen takes its form from the five points of the traditional examination of conscience as found in the *Exercises* (n. 42), it thus uses them for another, though related, purpose. On this point, a 1972 article by the American Jesuit, George A. Aschenbrenner (MAR), led the way in promoting this radical transformation of a long-standing religious form.<sup>49</sup> Of course, because there is no evidence that Saint Ignatius understood the Examen as we now understand it, to describe these initiatives as the recovery of an "Ignatian Examen" is to describe a non-recovery. Still, when placed in the larger context of Ignatius's

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<sup>48</sup> See Brian O. McDermott, "Spiritual Consolation and Its Role in the Second Time of Election," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 50, no. 4 (Winter 2018).

<sup>49</sup> See George A. Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," *Review for Religious* 31 (January 1972): 14–21. See also Timothy M. Gallagher, *The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom for Our Lives Today* (New York: Crossroad, 2006); Jim Manney, *The Prayer that Changes Everything: Discovering the Power of St. Ignatius Loyola's Examen* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2011); and Mark Thibodeaux, *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen: Fresh Ways to Pray from Your Day* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2014).

spiritual heritage, today's Examen has no problem vindicating its legitimacy, given that our current understanding of it has resulted from a new grasp of that larger context.

Returning to the topic of discernment, whereas *discernment* is a traditional term, *communal discernment* is an altogether new one, unknown in Jesuit circles until the last thirty years of the twentieth century. For example, while General Congregation Thirty-One (1965–1966) made many references to discernment of spirits but none to communal discernment, just a decade later, *communal discernment* appeared at General Congregation Thirty-Two (1974–1975) with some prominence and became a mode prescribed for reflection and decision making in Jesuit communities. Since GC 32, every congregation has made mention of it, and decree one of GC 36 (2016) specified Jesuit communities as “privileged places of apostolic discernment.”<sup>50</sup> On this subject, it was Arrupe’s letter, dated December 25, 1971, that turned the tide by giving the practice official status and promoting its use in communities around the world.<sup>51</sup> It is thus not surprising that, between 1970 and 1974, *Studies* published four issues on it.<sup>52</sup>

This sudden and strong acceptance of such a new notion is unprecedented in the Society. Some authors have tended to explain its easy acceptance by noting the context of the attempt of Vatican II to moderate a strictly top-down governance of the church with more participatory forms. However true that may be, as communal discernment has become accepted, the “Letter on Obedience” has slipped to a distant second place behind it. Based on discernment as described by Ignatius in the *Exercises*, communal discernment takes as its paradigm the deliberations of Ignatius and his companions in Rome in 1539 as they tried to decide their future. As such, communal discernment has become a constitutive element of the Jesuit *way of proceeding*—this latter expression having a pedigree of unquestionable authenticity but, until recently, very limited currency in the Society.

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<sup>50</sup> GC 36, d. 1, no. 8, and nos. 7–16 generally.

<sup>51</sup> See *Acta Romana Societatis Jesu*, 15 (1967–72): 767–73.

<sup>52</sup> See also Michael Sheeran, “Discernment as a Political Problem,” *Woodstock Letters* 98 (1959): 446–64.

Related to discernment is the notion of *finding God in all things*. The expression, a direct translation from paragraph 288 of the *Constitutions*, constituted, verbatim, rule seventeen of the Rules of the Summary, by means of which, until very recently, most Jesuits learned the key points of the *Constitutions*. The standard English translation of rule seventeen, which was read from the pulpit every month in every Jesuit house, rendered the Latin of the passage more literally as “seeking [*quaerant*] God in all things.” The distinction is subtle and ignored by most authors, even in languages other than English. The general notion was, in any case, familiar to members of the Society, even though only in the 1950s did it become a mantra. Indicative of its new importance in the English-speaking world was Young’s choice of it in 1958 for the title of his translation of articles from the early issues of *Christus*, mentioned earlier. Unlike finding God in all things, the related idea, *contemplative in action*, had no previous currency in the Society until recovered from Nadal in the last century.

The ideal that these two expressions propose, *finding God in all things* and *contemplative in action*, relates closely to discernment in that they indicate a frame of mind and heart sensitive in an ongoing way to the presence of the Spirit. They are also closely related to the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God of the *Exercises* (nos. 230–37), which is clear from the passage in the *Constitutions* where *finding God in all things* is found. The passage indicates the process as “loving [the Creator] in all creatures and all of them in him.” Moreover, the ideal has a certain affinity with the expression *the world is our house*, also lifted from the exhortations Nadal gave to Jesuit communities as he traveled through Europe explaining the *Constitutions*.<sup>53</sup> He coined it as a way of dramatizing for Jesuits that the Society’s distinctive Fourth Vow committed Jesuits to be missionaries and to be so without geographical or cultural limits. From this idea derives the presumption that God is to be sought and found in all peoples, countries, and cultures.

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<sup>53</sup> See Jerome Nadal, *Comentarii de Instituto Societatis Jesu*, ed. Michael Nicolau (Rome, 1962), 54, 364–65, 469–70, 773–74; *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* 90. See also John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 64–68.

To some extent, *the world is our house* was also a positive expression of Nadal's insistence to the members of Jesuit communities that *we are not monks*. But again, like *contemplative in action*, these latter two expressions did not begin to enter Jesuit vocabulary until the latter half of the twentieth century. Of course, Jesuits were perfectly aware they were not monks; but at the time, many features of their life suggested that they were. In any case, Nadal used both expressions to emphasize that ministry was what the Society was all about. This meant that the order's spirituality could not be one of retreat from the world, lived in isolation from problems of contemporary life. To Jesuits of the early twentieth century, this was hardly news, but the retrieval of Nadal's emphatic expression of it focused attention of it in a sharply new way.

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*As communal discernment has become accepted, the "Letter on Obedience" has slipped to a distant second place behind it.*

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A less dramatic but more straightforward expression of the Society's reason for existence is *the help of souls*, first called to our attention several decades ago as a leitmotif in Ignatius's correspondence. As expressions like these have increased in currency, the expression *the greater glory of God* has lost some of the unquestioned prominence it had for centuries. Moreover, *the world is our house* has come to suggest Jesuit engagement with "the world"—that is, engagement with all aspects of the cultures in which Jesuits might find themselves. Its meaning can thus be stretched to indicate perhaps the most distinctive feature of "our way of proceeding" as it began to develop in Ignatius's lifetime: the systemic engagement of Jesuits with "worldly" subjects—that is, subjects other than the standard clerical disciplines of philosophy and theology.

On that note, although not foreseen in 1539, Jesuits became skilled in astronomy, cartography, literature, political theory, and a host of other subjects. And Jesuits cultivate such skills in the Society precisely because doing so came to constitute a distinctive way in which the order serves the church. Special about this central dimension of our way of proceeding is that it is not spelled out in normative documents. Rather, it gets its validity and authenticity from the lived history of the Society and, as such, serves as a stunning example of the limits of normative documents in defining charism.

Note too that *accommodation* has emerged as an especially Jesuit mode of engagement with the world. The idea is central, or course, to the practice of the Exercises, which Ignatius insists be accommodated to the age, background, and spiritual potential of the person making them (no. 18). On which note, accommodation to circumstances forms another leitmotif both in Ignatius's correspondence and in the *Constitutions* concerning how Jesuits were to conduct themselves in their ministries. As the history of the Society shows, that is indeed how the Jesuits routinely but in unexceptional ways conducted themselves. However, when in the twentieth century the Holy See began to take an appreciative approach to the more radical accommodations undertaken by the Jesuits in China and India before the rites controversies, Jesuits began to speak explicitly of accommodation as a characteristic mode of their pastoral strategy.

And so, in that regard, *inter-religious dialogue* also now features in talk about Ignatian spirituality. Here, the Society made its own *Nostra Aetate*, Vatican II's "Declaration on Non-Christian Religions," and took up reconciliation among religious traditions as a dimension of its pastoral engagement. Although strikingly new in the mainline traditions of the Society, this work looks to the Chinese and Malabar rites experiments as precedent, thus providing another example of social history's impact in determining a tradition.

But by far the most important development in Jesuit pastoral strategy in recent years has been the defining centrality of *faith doing justice*. This entirely new expression, first appearing in the landmark decree four of GC 32, took time to rise to the prominence it enjoys today. Jesuits at first were not sure precisely what it meant and how it coordinated with our traditional ministries, especially with formal schooling. In time, however, reflection on the social character implicit in and inherent to most of those ministries led to widespread appropriation of *faith doing justice* as a characteristic of our way of proceeding.

In this same vein, when Arrupe first articulated the related expression *men for others*, more recently expanded to *men and women for others*, he certainly did not anticipate how widely it would be appropriated. Here, while the basic notion that the Society's *raison d'être* was to be of service to one's neighbors was always clear and taken as fundamental,



the expression *men and women for others* has become a popular and succinct way of expressing it. As this expression has come to be commonly understood, however, it has moved in tandem with *faith doing justice* and thus has come to indicate being for others in trying to improve the concrete conditions of the world here and now.

## IX. Conclusion: The Society Today in Relation to Its Past

In addition to serving as handy slogans, the expressions discussed in the preceding section delineate features of a distinctive spiritual profile by conveying a message about one's relationship to God, to oneself, and to the world. And although this profile offers a genuinely Christian outlook, it suggests a more positive interpretation of the Christian vision than some other views. It is a vision open to other faiths and in which the world is our house.

Even more to the point, the twentieth-century construction of Ignatian spirituality has offered an authentic interpretation of the legacy of Saint Ignatius and of the original charism that bound the first Jesuits as companions in mission and as "friends in the Lord." Nevertheless, it is an interpretation—that is, a combination of *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*—that draws faithfully upon the sources while creating something new.

In this essay, we have tried to sketch the historical development of that "something new." However, the process we sketched is more than just an interesting episode in the Society's recent history. It is a lesson in how contemporary Jesuits have come to understand themselves. It is a lesson in how to think about the relationship of the present Society to its past and to the documentary sources that testify to that past.

Now, the very process of the development of Ignatian spirituality counsels against viewing that spirituality as a pure, static essence that moves unchanging through the ages.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, it also counsels

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<sup>54</sup> In an earlier issue of *Studies*, Philip Endean referred to this as a "classicist" view of the Society's charism. This he contrasts with an "interactive" understanding,

that the contemporary Society will respond best and most authentically to today's challenges and opportunities by remaining deeply connected to its historical sources. Among those sources, while the *Exercises* certainly hold an altogether special space, they cannot function, as sometimes people seem to think, as if they were the only source.

In addition to acknowledging the wider corpus of the Society's documentary sources, we also wish to emphasize a less obvious point: that the social history of the Society too is a legacy of Ignatius to the Society. This is because only in that history do we see, as mentioned, the impact of the schools in creating a body of clerics systemically learned in ways that other clerics were not. Note too that this is no minor aspect of the Jesuit charism and way of proceeding, and it is no minor aspect of the gift that the Society offers to the church and to the wider world. On the contrary, it is crucially relevant for Jesuits in their understanding of Ignatian spirituality in its full breadth as it touches the Society most directly.

We have argued that the twentieth century *ressourcement* that outlined here made the riches of the Society's past, especially of its earliest years, widely available for the first time. And we have shown how decades of research and reflection on that past have allowed a profile of "Ignatian spirituality" to emerge. This profile must continue to develop, in conversation with the same sources of that past and with the contemporary needs of the church and the world. Nevertheless, for the first time in history, we have a term that enables us to articulate to ourselves and to others in a clear and handy way what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ in the tradition of Ignatius of Loyola.

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which "places religious charism in the context of ongoing relationship between God and a specific group of unique individuals." Endean's article sheds light on the relationship between God and members of the Society as the source, at once longstanding and continually being renewed, of the Jesuit charism. See Philip Endean, "Who Do You Say Ignatius Is? Jesuit Fundamentalism and Beyond," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 19, no. 5 (1987): 44.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

The most recent issue of *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* (Summer 2020) gives the date of *Iniunctum Nobis* as March 14, 1544 (p. 14). However, the closing at the end of the document reads, "Given in Rome at St. Peter's in the year 1543, on the fourteenth of March" (p. 18). How do you explain the discrepancy in year?

Joseph J. Fice (*uwe*)  
Sacred Heart Jesuit Center  
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Fr. Fice:

You have a good eye. It was not a typo. When St. Ignatius was alive, the Julian calendar served as the civil or "vulgar" calendar—it was replaced by the Gregorian calendar in 1582—while the Catholic Church had her own ecclesiastical calendar. And so, according to the church's reckoning, Pope Paul III issued *Iniunctum Nobis* in 1543, while, according to the Julian and Gregorian reckoning, he released it in 1544.

Barton T. Geger (*ucs*)  
General Editor

Editor:

In his essay, "Jerome Nadal's Apology for the Spiritual Exercises" (*STUDIES* 52, no. 1), the author, Aaron D. Pidel (*ucs*), remarks about his own spiritual direction training: "I learned above all to avoid giving instruction, to 'stay with the person's experience'" (p. 22). He later cites Barry and Connolly as likewise warning against the spiritual director teaching and preaching rather than helping the directee to experience and to respond to God (p. 26). In our view, the words *instruction*, *teaching*, and *preaching* need explanation in order to avoid confusion in the context of spiritual companionship.

First, we agree that, during the long retreat and in ongoing spiritual direction, a certain kind of instruction or teaching can help. For example, the one giving the Exercises may have to clarify what a specific contemplation involves, or what Saint Ignatius means by *repetition*. Likewise, a spiritual director may need to describe, in light of a directee's present struggles and growth, the difference between *spiritual desolation* and *spiritual consolation*. We understand these moments as "instruction"

or even as “teaching” in a broad sense, and we would discern in the moment any decision to engage in such.

However, this kind of instruction differs fundamentally from the teaching and preaching that Barry and Connolly warn against. Their concern, which we share, is with the sort of instruction that attempts either to fix someone or something or to force insight. Such instruction often ignores the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits and betrays a hidden agenda in the one giving the Exercises or in the spiritual director.

Indeed, the fact that one feels a need to teach or to preach in this way is a matter for supervision, as Barry and Connolly rightly suggest. Ideally, the one giving the Exercises or the spiritual director would bring these issues to prayer and then to supervision.

Through this process, she or he may discover that differences in culture, theology, and spirituality, interfacing with the spiritual director’s hidden areas of unfreedom, vulnerability, and brokenness, operate in the way in which the director is accompanying others. All of this may in turn manifest itself in such thoughts as, “I need to help or instruct this retreatant,” or “I need to correct this exercitant

right now.” In our view, without the light of supervision, these influences can hold sway over the giver of the Exercises or spiritual director and undermine the use of the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits.

Furthermore, in our experience, this kind of spiritual accompaniment—that is, teaching and preaching to fix or to correct—often signals that the one giving the Exercises or offering spiritual direction is not inhabiting a contemplative attitude—which is to say, is not attending to how the Spirit is actually moving in the experience of the exercitant or directee.

Without a contemplative attitude, the giver of the Exercises likely will struggle to focus on God’s pace and patience in the life of the exercitant or directee and will be less than open to the actual graces that God is giving. However, through the contemplative attitude and in supervisory conversation, the one giving the Exercises may come to realize the true source of the impulse to teach, preach, or give insight, understood in this sense.

Moreover, Fr. Pidel observes that Nadal would feel no need to wait for this kind of process to unfold, but would intervene and offer instruction of precisely the

kind that Barry and Connolly advise against. But this judgment does not hold up under scrutiny.

First, Nadal did not have access to the experience of contemporary supervision that can reveal how some interventions in the spiritual direction encounter can undercut the use of the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. Also, Nadal did not have access either to the body of contemporary clinical literature or to the experience of Twelve Step programs, both of which demonstrate the fruitlessness of attempting to force insight rather than empower its unfolding in another person.

We close by thanking Father Pidel for his thoughtful and thought-provoking work.

*William E. Creed (UMI)*

*David G. De Marco (UMI)*

*Loyola University Chicago*

Editor:

I thank Frs. De Marco and Creed for reading and engaging my article. In fact, I expected to receive many more comments about the fruitlessness of "forcing insight," and I find myself both agreeing and disagreeing with their concerns.

First, I can readily agree that shifting to moral or doctrinal instruction may reveal the director's unfreedom and may prove less profitable for the directee. It thus seems prudent to use, when possible, a supervisor to test one's motivations and the likely effect on the directee of such a persuasive intervention. As my article argued, Nadal himself considered "Plan A" to allow God to deal directly with the soul. I am very grateful to Barry and Connolly's book for having sensitized me to this priority and for having provided a salutary corrective to my natural tendency prematurely to "fix" and "teach."

Such hard-won judgments, however, easily harden into their own inflexible dogmatism, and it seems to me inflexibly dogmatic to insist that a director should not "give insight" in the form of advice.

For example, to a directee seriously considering whether an act of adultery might be God's will for her. When Barry and Connolly treat this *casus*, I might add, they do not counsel simply that the director reflect deeply and consult a supervisor before attempting to persuade the directee not to engage in the act. In fact, they insist that such

moral exhortation lies categorically beyond the competence and responsibility of the spiritual director. Ignatius and Nadal, I argued, would have disagreed.

Frs. Creed and De Marco further suggest that such interventions risk blinding the director to the Spirit's work and thus undermining the discernment of spirits. However, according to Ignatius and Nadal, neither the Holy Spirit nor the good spirit prompts persons to disobey the Ten Commandments, since these are interpreted by "the hierarchical Church" (*SpEx* 365; ed. Ganss, 135). And saying as much to a directee might very well "empower the unfolding of insight" in her.

In fact, the thirteenth of Ignatius's Rules for the First Week suggests that we can put the evil spirit to flight by opening our hearts to someone who "understands the enemy's deceits and malice" (*SpEx* 326; ed. Ganss, 125). Does this not suggest that an expert diagnosis might sometimes break the evil spirit's spell and in this sense "empower the unfolding of insight in another"? On an autobiographical note, I myself found clarity in my decision to enter the Society of Jesus only after a Jesuit offered me, in a moment of my confusion, such a frank assessment.

Also, Frs. Creed and De Marco imply that Nadal would not have been so interventionist had he availed himself of the findings of contemporary clinical literature. Of course, it is hard to know this for certain. The ever-shifting consensus in the field of psychology over the last century suggests that progress in care of souls is hardly linear and straightforward. Even today the field of counseling psychology hardly speaks with one voice.

For example, while some approaches, such as client-centered therapy, avoid instructive intervention, other approaches, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, prove less averse. The professional counselors I have consulted on the subject tell me that they learn how to "shift gears" between exploratory and didactic postures, sometimes within the same session. But this is exactly the prudential, flexible approach that Nadal recommends.

Then too, one might also ask what evidence exists to support the claim that an unswerving observance of what Frs. Creed and De Marco call the "contemplative attitude" produces deeper conversion and more effective service of the Church than does the more variable, occasionally instructive

posture that Ignatius and Nadal recommend. Certainly, the “contemplative attitude” has characterized Jesuit spiritual direction since the 1960s. However, recent documents of the Society, which my article cites, reveal growing misgivings about the efficacy of the Exercises among Ours, suggesting that we supplement the contemplative approach to spiritual direction.

Finally, although it seems we still disagree on several points, I would like thank Frs. Creed and De Marco again for engaging my argument so charitably and for giving me this opportunity to clarify my position.

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