





# STUDIES

## in the Spirituality of Jesuits

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**The Society True to Itself:  
A Brief History of the  
32nd General Congregation  
of the Society of Jesus**

**(December 2, 1974—March 7, 1975)**

by

**John W. Padberg, S.J.**

Published by the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality,  
especially for American Jesuits working out their *aggiornamento*  
in the spirit of Vatican Council II

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## THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

consists of a group of Jesuits from various provinces who are listed below. The members were appointed by the Fathers Provincial of the United States.

The Purpose of the Seminar is to study topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and to communicate the results to the members of the Assistancy. The hope is that this will lead to further discussion among all American Jesuits--in private, or in small groups, or in community meetings. All this is done in the spirit of Vatican Council II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original charismatic inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the changed circumstances of modern times. The members of the Seminar welcome reactions or comments in regard to the topics they publish.

To achieve these purposes, especially amid today's pluralistic cultures, the Seminar must focus its direct attention sharply, frankly, and specifically on the problems, interests, and opportunities of the Jesuits of the United States. However, many of these interests are common also to Jesuits of other regions, or to other priests, religious men or women, or lay men or women. Hence the studies of the Seminar, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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## Editor's Foreword

Father John W. Padberg has been the President of Weston School of Theology since 1975. Previously he received his Ph.D. in history from Harvard University and did postgraduate work in theology at the Institute Catholique in Paris. From 1964 onward he taught history at St. Louis University, of which he also became Academic Vice President and then Executive Vice President. He has written many articles and a book, *Colleges in Controversy: The Jesuit Schools in France from Revival to Suppression, 1815-1880* (Harvard University Press, 1968).

He was a member of this American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality from January, 1976, to January, 1979. Thus he is well known to our readers from his previous publications in this series of *Studies*: "The General Congregations of the Society of Jesus: A Brief Survey of Their History" (January and March, 1974); "Continuity and Change in General Congregation XXXII" (November, 1975); "Personal Experience and the Spiritual Exercises: The Example of St. Ignatius" (November, 1979).

Father Padberg served as an elected member of General Congregation XXXII (December 2, 1974--March 7, 1975). Shortly later he was the editor of the 608-page book, *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), which brought the official Latin texts of both these Congregations into English within one volume.

Since he had himself lived through all the labors, difficulties, and achievements of the 32nd General Congregation, he was manifestly well qualified to compose this present history, in which, writing nearly a decade later, he can now view all the incidents in a fresh perspective. But to crowd the labor of this intricate writing into his other pressing duties as a president during the closing months of an academic year was obviously difficult. Hence the members of this Seminar are especially grateful to him for accepting our invitation to undertake this work. We think that this compact account in a new perspective will be of great interest to our readers, and of special importance to the delegates to General Congregation XXXIII, now on the eve of its opening on September 2.

George E. Ganss, S.J., Chairman  
The American Assistancy Seminar



THE SOCIETY TRUE TO ITSELF  
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 32nd GENERAL CONGREGATION  
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS  
(December 2, 1974--March 7, 1975)

by

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Introduction

Any general congregation of the Society of Jesus is extraordinary. Some are more extraordinary than others. In Jesuit legislation, a congregation is regularly convoked not in the ordinary rhythm of every six or so years, as is common in most religious orders, but only after the death of a superior general, in order to elect a new general.<sup>1</sup>

In certain cases, additional general congregations are convoked, not to elect a general, but as extraordinary means of governance, to legislate on "very difficult matters pertaining to the whole body of the Society."<sup>2</sup> Such was the Thirty-second General Congregation, convoked in 1974. In the 400-year history of the Society, it was only the seventh such special congregation. It dealt with serious matters, discussion of which had occupied the whole Society in a preparatory period longer and more thorough than any previous such meeting had enjoyed. The cast of characters in attendance as delegates was larger and of greater variety than ever before. A part of the media, avid for the unusual, went searching for villains. There was mystery, too, about the source of patently exaggerated accounts during the Congregation of what it was doing and how it was reacting. In the course of its deliberations, unusual problems arose. Each of the problems was separable, but they all regularly interacted to provide surprise endings to several distinct acts. Those several acts came together at last in a resolution to the drama which engaged and still engages the minds and hearts of a multiplicity of actors. They include not only the actual participants in that past meeting, but also the members of the present Society of Jesus who attempt to live out the decisions which the Congregation made.

This brief history attempts to deal with what happened at that Thirty-second General Congregation. Even to its author some of it seemed

new when seen eight years after the event and as parts of a complete account, rather than as isolated incidents reported on week by week. To the reader, some of the story may seem even newer and previously unreported. It is however all a matter of public record, both written and oral. Only a few of the illustrative examples may be previously unrecorded.<sup>3</sup> Whatever might make this history of the 32nd General Congregation distinctive comes partly from seeing it whole and partly from seeing it against the backdrop of what has happened in the years since it concluded in March, 1975. This is not an account of the motives of the persons involved (for instance, of those who erroneously pictured some of its actions as opposition to the Holy See); nor is it a commentary on the legislation produced (for instance, on the decrees on Our Mission Today or on The Union of Minds and Hearts). Rather, it is the record of an experience participated in by the members of the supreme governing body of the Society of Jesus, men ultimately responsible before the Lord and to its members for charting its paths to the future. The Congregation gave to Jesuits an apostolic task, a source of direction, and integrative principles of community life for a future which since that time the Society has been fashioning for itself as it attempts to serve the Church of Christ and the Lord himself. This history tries to tell how the Congregation did that work for all the members of the Society who entrusted to it such a responsibility.

To begin, we shall ask: What started the whole process? What did the preparation involve? Who was there at the meeting? Then to continue, in as great a detail as can be allowed by the limits of this study and by the limits of a perspective still too close to the event, this history will treat of the issues that were to be dealt with, the actual functioning of the Congregation, the problems which arose and the solutions eventually found.

## I. THE PREPARATION

The Thirty-second General Congregation was formally announced by the General, Fr. Pedro Arrupe, on September 8, 1973, in a letter which set the opening date for December 1, 1974. But the roots of the Congregation went further back in time. In October, 1970, a "Congregation of Procurators" had met in Rome. Such a congregation, held every three years, with one elected delegate from each province, has the responsibility to decide whether a

general congregation should be called. That procurators' meeting of 1970 decided formally not to call for a general congregation. It was the common sentiment that such a meeting was desirable, but according to the law of the Society, if formally mandated now by the Congregation of Procurators, a general congregation would have had to begin in no more than eighteen months, that is by April, 1972. Everyone, however, thought this too little time for preparation. Fr. Arrupe made it plain to the procurators that he understood this viewpoint; and so a month later, in November, 1970, he announced to provincials the remote preparation throughout the Society for a general congregation to be called later.<sup>4</sup> In giving reasons for calling the congregation, the General said that the years since the 31st Congregation (1965-1966) and since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1966) had brought so many changes to the Society and to the Church and to the world, he thought it incumbent upon him to present to the highest governing body of the Society its present condition for "deep, realistic, and open consideration." Those words were to be important. The Congregation genuinely tried to live up to them. ~~did~~ not always find it easy, and, in so doing, helped to bring upon itself from outside criticisms of the very depth, realism, and openness which it was attempting to exercise. Fr. Arrupe wanted a body which represented the whole Society to look at the directions which it had taken and the choices which it had made in the near-decade just past, to consider the problems which had arisen, and to decide on how best to deal with them and with the "immense apostolic opportunities" which the future was presenting.

In April, 1971, a six-member preparatory commission was set up. Its members were Jean-Yves Calvez (Province of Atlantic France), Parmananda Divarkar (Bombay), Walter Farrell (Detroit), Johannes C. Gerhartz (Lower Germany), Luciano Mendes de Almeida (East Central Brazil), and Tomás Zamarriego (Toledo). During these preliminary steps, during the actual preparation, and during the period between convocation and commencement, the General kept Pope Paul VI informed of his intentions and of the progress of preparation.<sup>5</sup>

No previous congregation in the Society's history had such a lengthy period of preparation. No previous congregation tried to involve in that preparation as many of the members of the Society as the Thirty-second did. The results of such involvement may have pleased or displeased or dismayed or delighted participants or observers, but no one could deny that the discussions and judgments of the membership of the whole Society were reflected

in material provided for the deliberation of the delegates. What responsibilities that widespread consultation imposed upon the delegates this history will deal with later.

From 1971 to 1974 that preparation went on. According to Society rule, it was the responsibility of the General and his four general assistants, Vincent O'Keefe (New York Province), Jean-Yves Calvez (Atlantic France), Horacio de la Costa (Philippines), and Paolo Dezza (Venice-Milan). After consulting all the provincials, Fr. Arrupe named the previously mentioned preparatory commission to carry on specifically this work. Between October, 1972, and October, 1973, the General met with all the Jesuit provincials in five different language and geographical groups at Rome (twice), Nice, Mexico City, and Goa. Several hundred Jesuits around the world worked in their own local provinces and areas with the preparatory commission to set up conferences, assemblies, meetings, and forums on everything from study to prayer, from the *Constitutions of the Society* to the problems or opportunities of a particular place. All of the preceding preparation was unofficial and it resulted in enough paper work to gladden the heart of a copy-machine stockholder. But it was a real preparation which gave the Society the time and the opportunity to reflect on its life and work especially since the landmarks of Vatican II and the previous 31st General Congregation.

All of this culminated in the "official" preparation of fifteen months which began once the Congregation had been summoned in September, 1973.<sup>6</sup> The opening date of the Congregation was set for December 2, 1974. There were, as usual, three parts to that official preparation. They included the drawing up and submission by any Jesuit in the order of postulata, or formal requests for consideration, the holding of the province congregations and the election thereof of delegates to the General Congregation, as well as the choice of official province postulata.

How many individual or personal postulata were sent to province congregations is known only to the divine mind, but each of the almost 30,000 Jesuits throughout the world had the opportunity to make known his wishes on what the Congregation ought to do. The province congregations consisted, as usual, of the provincial superior, certain ex-officio members such as local rectors, and forty other Jesuits elected from among those with final vows. This was the first time in the history of the Society that members of a province congregation were elected. This was due to the decisions of the

31st General Congregation. Previously, the forty oldest professed members of a province had automatically become members of a province congregation. As a result of their deliberations on the material which they received, 934 official province postulata went to Rome from the various provinces and vice-provinces of the Society. Sent directly to Rome as joint postulata from Jesuits engaged in particular apostolic works were another eighty-six postulata. Together they made up a volume of more than five hundred pages, one of the first gifts to the men who were to go as delegates to the Congregation. More postulata came later during the Congregation from the delegates themselves to swell the total number to 1,020.

Three special preliminary committees, mandated by the previous general congregation, were appointed to finish the work of preparation.<sup>7</sup> Their members went to Rome in the summer and fall of 1974 to work on the material on poverty, on studies, and on a list of principal points (gleaned from the postulata) which the Congregation would have to deal with.

The delegates to the Congregation from each province were the provincial, ex-officio, and the two professed members elected by each province congregation. Vice-provinces sent only one delegate, and he was elected. The number elected was 148; 88 went ex-officio or by appointment, including the General and the four general assistants, all the provincials, the regional assistants, the secretary, treasurer, and procurator of the Society, and four others named by the General. The grand total then was 236.

If all the details of this preparation may have bored the present reader, so too by the end of four years the lengthy, detailed, and complicated preparation itself may have bored some of the members of the Society. But in the long run that preparation was important in itself for the effective carrying on of the Congregation and, perhaps even more important, for two other reasons. First, the details of that preparation were a touchstone against which the Congregation measured its responsibility and fidelity to its fellow members of the Society. Secondly, those details can serve historians as evidence that, far from being in any way a maverick meeting, the Congregation truly did know and did try to express the mind of the Society as it had become clear over a four-year period of consultation, discussion, reflection, prayer, and decision.

## II. THE PARTICIPANTS

Diversity was as evident as the number of delegates itself. Even a few lines of biography on each of the 236 members of the Congregation would unduly lengthen this present study, but some sense of that diversity may be given by noting a few common types of background and experience.<sup>8</sup> To start with the principal members of the Curia who took part, and in the first place with the General. Fr. Arrupe was at that time sixty-seven years old and had been general since 1965. He was a Basque of Spanish nationality, had studied medicine, had entered the Society in Spain in 1927, had done his Jesuit studies there as well as in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United States. For twenty-seven years he had been a missionary in Japan, serving there as the director of novices and, when elected general, as provincial. The four general assistants came from France, Italy, the Philippines, and the United States. Jean-Yves Calvez had a background in sociology, politics, and international affairs. Paolo Dezza was a philosopher and theologian, former rector of the Gregorian University, and former secretary of the International Federation of Catholic Universities. This was the fifth consecutive general congregation to which he was a delegate. Horacio de la Costa was a historian, former official of the Ateneo de Manila, and former provincial of the Philippines. Vincent O'Keefe was a theologian, a former professor of theology, former rector and president of Fordham University. The secretary of the Society, Louis Laurendeau, was from French Canada; the treasurer, Eugen Hillengass from Germany, had done graduate studies in economics; the procurator of the Society, Pedro Abellán, who was responsible for our official relations with the Holy See, was a moral theologian, and had been rector of the Gregorian University and an "expert" at Vatican II. He had attended the three previous general congregations. The twelve regional assistants--of Italy, Germany, France, Spain, the English Assistancy, the United States, the Slavic Assistancy, southern Latin America, northern Latin America, India, East Asia, and Africa--included men who in the Society had been, for example, sociologists, directors of the tertianship or final formation period for Jesuits, university presidents, moral theologians, experts in international law, and principals of secondary schools. Several of them had also previously been provincials.

From around the world, again to give but a few examples, among the delegates were the former editor of *Civiltà Cattolica* and now director of



Vatican Radio, a former rector of the state University of Innsbruck, Austria, the historian expert on the Lañez epoch in the Society, the General's delegate for the Byzantine rite in the Society, the novice director in East Germany, a member of the French worker priests who was a specialist in industrial electronics, an anthropologist at Louvain, a one-time missionary in Chad, a psychiatrist and professor of spirituality, a rural sociologist, and a professor of Buddhist studies. Several delegates had backgrounds of teaching and research in classical or modern languages and literature. There was a man who had been imprisoned by the Chinese Communists for several years. Two had degrees in chemistry. There were editors of the review *Mensaje*, a specialist in the fields of the philosophy and history of art, and a counselor in a center for the social rehabilitation of adults. The academic specialization which the single largest number of delegates had pursued was theology or philosophy. History seems to have been the second largest specialization. A good number had been rectors of houses of formation; and besides the then current provincials, a substantial number of those elected had at some time previously held that office.

The delegates from the United States<sup>9</sup> had backgrounds of study or experience in fields as diverse as nuclear theory and psychology, political science and biology, communications and canon law, anthropology and English literature, educational administration, spiritual direction and the history of ideas. Men with backgrounds in theology, philosophy, and history made up the three largest contingents from the United States. Here, as in the rest of the Society, many of the delegates had had previous governing experience in the Society, and six of the elected delegates were former provincials. As one then current provincial remarked, "This just proves that to be elected you have to be known in your province, and provincials can hardly be otherwise, no matter what they do."

For the whole Society the age span of the delegates was quite large. The oldest delegate at seventy-three, Paolo Dezza, was more than twice as old as the youngest, Fernando Montes of Chile. The median age, however, was forty-nine. This reflected the overwhelmingly large grouping in the range of the forties and fifties. Almost 200 of the total were in those two age groups. Of the United States delegation, the oldest member was 63 and the youngest was 38. The median American age was 51 and so was the average, some two years above that for the Society as a whole. The American

province with the youngest average age of delegates was Maryland at 44 years of age, and the oldest average was from Chicago at 54.6 years of age.

New York was the largest province represented, with 1,097 members, and Chile the smallest with 177 members. Several of the vice-provinces in India, with only one delegate, had many more members than several of the full provinces with three delegates. In five provinces or vice-provinces, Hungary, Bohemia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Rumania, provincial congregations could not be held. The Rumanian delegate was absent; a delegate for each of the other four had been appointed and was present.

### III. ISSUES AND POSTULATA

After so extensive a preparation, probably every Jesuit had his own "little list" of what he personally considered the major issues to be treated by the Congregation. The official large list of those major issues in a sense took shape of itself out of the number of similar postulata sent in from all over the Society on several particular items. To judge from that five-hundred page compilation of postulata presented to each delegate upon his arrival, if the number of pages per subject was any indication, the Society was especially concerned about the following items: the question of the "fourth vow" took up fourteen pages; formation and studies in the Society, twenty pages; community life and obedience, twenty-eight pages; the categories of members, thirty-nine pages; the apostolates of the Society, forty-seven pages; poverty, ninety-five pages.

As it turned out, these major compilations made up a rather accurate forecast of what the Congregation's agenda was to be, especially if one notes a few subdivisions and amalgamations. For instance, the many pages on poverty were occasioned in part by the detailed formal legislation mandated by the previous congregation, in part by concerns relating to our own lifestyle both personal and communal, and in part by the increasingly common distinctions between the operations of a community and of an apostolate. The pages on the apostolates of the Society contained what was to be the extremely important material on the promotion of justice and on the service of the faith, the latter especially in the light of Pope Paul VI's request at the 31st Congregation that the Society occupy itself with the question of atheism.

The fifty-three pages on the fourth vow special to the Society and on the categories of members were eventually to be part of one common but complex consideration.

In greater detail, what kinds of issues did the postulata address in each of the areas just mentioned? What were the members asking the Congregation to consider and act on, and how? It is important to see these particular issues even before we begin to describe the actual functioning of the Congregation. The day-to-day activities of the Congregation and the specific structures through which it carried on those activities were in part determined by those detailed issues. It could not be otherwise if the Congregation was truly to be responsive to the members of the Society who in great numbers had sent in requests that such issues be dealt with.

### 1. The "Fourth Vow"

The "fourth vow," the one by which the professed members of the Society commit themselves to special obedience to the pope with regard to "missions" upon which he wishes to send them, was the subject of a great number and variety of postulata. Some stressed the fundamental character of the fourth vow for the identity of the Society and asked that it therefore be highlighted. Others, drawing on this same importance for the Society, rather regularly and with some logic asked that the vow therefore be taken by all the members of the Society, and not only by the professed. Even more fundamentally, some postulata asked that the Congregation clarify the meaning and scope of the vow. That this was needed was obvious from the differences with which various postulata saw its extension. Everyone agreed that it had reference to particular apostolic ventures or "missions" to which the pope might send Jesuits. But there were some who obviously conceived of it much more widely. For instance, some judged that in some way it conditioned or even required the doctrinal assent of Jesuits to the teaching authority (magisterium) of the Church, and especially of the pope. The question obviously needed careful historical investigation, something that a congregation itself was hardly capable of taking on. One really ought to know to what he is binding himself when he takes that vow in the Society, and that can only be determined by what it meant as it became an original element of the Society at its foundation, and as it was authoritatively understood throughout its history.<sup>10</sup>

This question of fidelity to the magisterium, especially to that of the pope, came up also in postulata not connected with the fourth vow. In some instances they dealt especially with the thorny question of the freedom necessary for serious and honest theological research, and the equally spiny question of how to deal with the public writing and speaking of Jesuits, especially in regard to the communications media.

## 2. The Fundamental Character of the Society

The fundamental character or the "essentials" of the Society was a concern for a fair number of postulata beyond those dealing with the fourth vow. But at this point, the questions of the Society's "sacerdotal" character and of its "apostolic" character met and led back to the original question. There seemed no inclination in the postulata to call into question that sacerdotal character as one of the essentials. At the same time, postulata asked: If the Society was also fundamentally apostolic, then why should not all the members share in that particularly apostolic fourth vow? Yet, according to the clear statements which were presently in the fundamental documents of the Society, only priests were capable of the "solemn profession." These interrelated questions were to puzzle the Congregation internally, and to be the occasion of simplifications and exaggerations externally.

## 3. Formation and Studies

Postulata on formation and studies in the Society exhibited concern for the decrease in vocations, but they expressed much more concern that the quality of formation not be allowed to deteriorate. For many, the study of philosophy and theology was overwhelmingly central to the academic part of that formation. For the spiritual part of that formation, there were, as there have been at every congregation including the very first one in 1558, worries expressed that the formation was not as rigorous as it had previously been. But given the extraordinary changes of the previous several years since Vatican II, there was an encouraging amount of optimism about the ways in which the Society was responding to the mandates of the 31st General Congregation in its documents on the training of scholastics and on spiritual formation. That meeting had stated directly that "the training of the scholastics should be '*apostolic*' in its orientation."<sup>11</sup> The 32nd Congregation was going to emphasize "*integration*," both personal and into the apostolic

body of the Society, as its central theme in formation.<sup>12</sup> As an integral part of that program of formation, some postulata insisted not only on apostolic experience, but on such an experience based on direct involvement with the life of the poor. This theme was, of course, connected with the related questions in postulata on an "option for the poor" in our apostolates and on the promotion of justice as a constituent part of those apostolates. To those themes and questions this study will turn later.

#### 4. Community and Personal Religious Life

As has been true for every general congregation of the Society, Jesuits through a variety of postulata gave evidence of their concern for the specifically religious and spiritual life of the Society. In the past, such postulata had dealt primarily and almost exclusively with personal Jesuit religious life; in other words, an explicit communitarian dimension had entered into consideration usually only in the treatment of the rules common to members of the Society. Those "common rules" were to regulate the daily lives of Jesuits and thus to help them in their growth in the religious spirit and holiness proper to the Society. What was somewhat new for the 31st Congregation and for the 32nd also was the direct and specific emphasis on the importance of the character and quality of a Jesuit community itself in the life of a Jesuit who was a member of that community, and on the character and quality of his participation in that community life.

First among the specifically religious concerns was the prayer life of Jesuits. Some postulata saw a falling-off in it and wanted definite remedies, perhaps a return to the former rule of a fixed hour of prayer for everyone. Others, while aware of the difficulties of prayer in current circumstances, urged the further encouragement of what they saw as a basically healthy growth in the spiritual life of Jesuits, supported and sustained by community structures. Frequently the postulata commended the decisions of the 31st Congregation on the spiritual life and recommended that the Society carry them out better. This included such items as regular, ongoing personal spiritual direction, the account of conscience, a further deepening of knowledge and use of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and community support for one's prayer life, including more emphasis on prayer in common than had been traditional in the Society.

There were some frank postulata, too, about the practical failings in

the community life of individual Jesuits and in the very structures of the communities themselves. Some asked for a description of what went into the making of a successful community, in the way of a shared life of faith, human communication, physical and psychological structures, lifestyle and apostolic witness. The apostolic nature of Jesuit communities was regularly affirmed, and this fundamentally apostolic character of a community, of course, related to the postulata on apostolates.

Some persons outside the Society may have seen, in the changes introduced by the 31st Congregation, and continued by the 32nd, only a damaging loss of the rules which had helped to structure religious life.

Most Jesuits, however, if one can judge from the postulata, saw the changes as healthy and conducive to personal responsibility internal to the Society. Those changes had brought about the disappearance of an anachronistic regimen of sets of rules common to all, and of overly detailed particular rules for everyone from the rector to the keeper of the clothes room. No one wanted to go back to the minutiae of such rules of yesteryear, but some asked for at least a minimum of clear and simple responsibilities incumbent on all Jesuits.

## 5. Obedience

Because it is important in the spiritual life of any Jesuit and because it is regarded as a distinctive mark of the Society, there were postulata also on obedience. As in the past, they were often placed in the context either of internal religious life or of the apostolic work of the Society. In the present, two new elements were introduced. The first was the heightened sensitivity to the rights and demands of conscience; the second was the increased emphasis on a spiritual discernment which was both personal and communal. The postulata on obedience were, in general, well aware of the nuances thus introduced into the theory and practice of obedience. There had been more than enough "hard cases" in recent years to make that evident. At the same time, the postulata usually asked for an affirmation of the mutual and interlocking responsibilities of superiors and members and communities in arriving at the point when a superior could and had to make decisions, and for a clear statement of the importance and value for a Jesuit of recognizing that he was being "sent" by the Society, officially and with its support, to a particular task.

## 6. "Grades" or Categories of Membership

The unity of the Society and the common goals to which its members had given themselves, was an important consideration all through the Congregation. It loomed large in the postulata and in the concern for "grades" in the Society. Many postulata clearly exhibited the desire for an internal equality of membership in the Society, not only de facto but also de jure. Hence the kinds of questions raised. For example: Should the Society, after the completion of formation, have the separate grades of professed members and spiritual and temporal coadjutors or helpers? Why? How deal structurally with the equally apostolic character of the vocation of every Jesuit? In part, of course, these postulata, as was true of so many others, were an ongoing response to actions of the 31st Congregation. It had quite clearly stated that it had wanted a thorough renovation and adaptation in the Society.<sup>13</sup> The previous congregation had reminded itself and the Society that it was within the competence and power of a current general congregation (and not only of past ones whose decisions had, up to this time, been regarded almost as set in sacrosanct concrete), to declare which matters were substantial in the Institute, that previous congregations had done so, and that it also had the power to declare the meaning of the Formula itself of the Institute.<sup>14</sup> Since that was the case, the Congregation had asked the then newly elected Fr. Arrupe to set up a commission to investigate thoroughly the whole question of grades for the next (32nd) congregation. In the meantime, social distinctions formerly existent in the Society between priests and brothers were to cease, and coadjutors, both spiritual and temporal, were to have voice in the provincial congregations.<sup>15</sup>

Partly as a result of those actions of the 31st Congregation, postulata now for the 32nd Congregation ranged from finally admitting everyone to profession to not accepting at all into the Society any more religious who were not by present law capable of profession. All of this material touched on the fundamental characteristics of the Society and on documents not of the Society's but of the Holy See's competence. So it was clear that the thicket of considerations would be thorny, and that if the Congregation took up the matter in response to these many and strongly urged postulata, it would have to have recourse to the Holy See at some point.

## 7. Apostolates

Since the Society existed not for itself but for the service of the Lord and the Church, the apostolates of the Society were a very large item among the postulata. There were, of course, requests for the reaffirmation of the Society's commitment to various specific apostolates. More unusual, perhaps, was the repeated stress on certain characteristics or criteria which ought to mark present apostolates or ought to govern the choice of future ones.

Some of those characteristics, as the postulata expressed them, were the following: the explicitly spiritual dimension of the works undertaken by the Society, and especially the imprint on all those works of the heritage of the *Spiritual Exercises*; an effective response to Pope Paul VI's request that the Society work with the problem of nonbelief and atheism (the "promotion of faith" was to express this in another positive way); the ecumenical dimension which ought to be present, where possible, in every one of the Society's apostolates; the internationalization or broadening of the Church and its gospel message from Western European culture to the cultures of other lands ("indigenization" might be the best word to express the thrust of the postulata; "inculturation" was the term which was to come as a result of the Congregation's work on this question); the importance of engagement, by qualified Jesuits, in secular occupations or professions, especially in yet developing lands where there were no others to take up those responsibilities; the need for a commitment to the poor in Jesuit apostolates and especially to those poor who were oppressed by social injustice. This last characteristic which postulata requested led inevitably into a commitment to apostolates which could impinge upon social structures themselves. Many postulata recognized fully the danger of misinterpretation of a Jesuit's religious or social activities as direct political engagement. Because the Society has been so much engaged in the educational apostolates, postulata on that subject were numerous. But often enough they, too, looked to concerns that were ecumenical or social or faith-involved or international. An example of this international dimension was the concern that the international educational institutions in Rome in the care of the Society respond to the needs of a worldwide Church.

## 8. Poverty

Basically four areas of poverty were the subjects of postulata. The



first was juridical or legal, the second institutional, the third communitarian, and the fourth personal. They were interrelated, of course, and that interrelationship showed up in the texts of the later legislation by the Congregation. The juridical material was in great part occasioned by the commission on poverty set up by the 31st Congregation. At its mandate, *definitores* named by the Congregation had worked to "prepare in stages a schema of adaptation and renewal, and revision of our entire law concerning poverty."<sup>16</sup> The revision had become interim law until the next, that is, the 32nd, general congregation could review and finally approve it.

The postulata on the institutional aspects of poverty were related to those juridical aspects. In general, they dealt with the distinctions between the Jesuit religious community and the institutional works or apostolates served by that community, and with clear accountability and appropriate control of the separate finances of the two. For instance, a Jesuit community might serve a parish or a high school or a national publication or a university. Postulata asked that it be made clear in each instance how financial responsibility was to be apportioned, structured, and controlled, and what steps were to be taken to continue to keep the Society as such from profiting in any way from its apostolic works. For the communities, the postulata asked for clear regulations to prevent the building up of long-range community surpluses, for modest lifestyles both communal and personal, and for approved budgets to maintain such simplicity.

For both communities and institutions there was also the question of sources of revenue. Briefly put, from its beginning the Society had made it a rule to ask or accept for its services no payment due in any way in justice or law. It was to commit itself to gratuity of ministries and to live on alms. Once "colleges" started, they could have endowments so that students need not pay for the cost of instruction. After the suppression of the Jesuits, and the French Revolution and the restoration of the Society, Jesuit institutions endowed by towns or kings or bishops or wealthy laymen were a thing of the past. Without tuition there could have been no Jesuit schools. In the early 1830's the Society received from the Holy See a "temporary" dispensation from this rule of gratuity of ministries.<sup>17</sup> The dispensation lasted until the 1960's when the 31st Congregation made a distinction between community and apostolate, changed the age-old rule, and allowed for stable sources of revenue for apostolic works. Some postulata

at the present congregation wanted to deal again with gratuity and, if not to return to it, at least to try to move closer toward it, although the postulata were not at all clear on how to do so.

On the level of the personal practice of poverty by Jesuits, postulata showed some worry about its vigor and effectiveness in daily life. They also saw the practice of religious poverty as part of a witness of the solidarity of Jesuits with the poor.

## 9. Governance

On two levels postulata dealt with questions of Society governance. The first was on the level of the whole Society, the second on the more provincial or local level. For the whole Society, several questions arose. The first dealt with the advisability of periodic general congregations. There was also the frequently expressed request that participation in province congregations not be limited, as was currently the case, only to those with final vows. This last provision was itself an expanded participation made possible by the 31st Congregation. Before then, participants included, besides the ex-officio members, only the forty oldest professed members of a province. A "gerontocracy" is what some had rather wryly dubbed it. The 31st General Congregation had introduced for province congregations the election of and by members with final vows. This present congregation was asked to broaden participation to include in some way Jesuits who did not yet have final vows.

There were postulata asking for a review of the structure and effectiveness of the central government of the Society. Such a review of the structures newly put in place by the 31st Congregation had been foreseen as desirable when the next congregation would convene. For the whole Society, too, several postulata again brought up the question of a limited term of office for a general. Whether these latter postulata in any way would have gained support in the Congregation really cannot be known because, by the time the misunderstandings with the Holy See had come upon the Congregation, there was every desire among the delegates to sustain the General, Fr. Arrupe, and any question of a limited term might at that time have looked like a reflection upon him.

#### IV. THE CONGREGATION IN SESSION

##### 1. Beginnings

On the morning of December 2, 1974, the 32nd General Congregation began. Fr. Arrupe opened it with an address in which he quite directly said that the calling of the Congregation was the greatest decision of his generalate. His talk attempted to describe the overall attitudes with which the delegates had to approach their work. There was a common responsibility to the Society to take practical decisions on structures, spirituality, formation, and apostolates in the light of the needs of the world, the expectations of the Church, and the resources of the Society. There were expectations from the Jesuit brethren who had chosen the delegates. And in the midst of all the work to be done, said Fr. General, there was a single unwavering basis for confidence and serenity, and that was the Lord.

Two innovations of the previous 31st Congregation became a regular part of this present gathering. Simultaneous translation, introduced hesitantly, partially, and experimentally in the second session of the 31st Congregation, became a regular and fixed part in the 32nd. Some twenty priests and scholastics from around the world translated from six languages (English, German, Spanish, French, Italian, and Latin) into three (English, French, and Spanish). An Office of Information prepared and published regular bulletins in the five vernaculars mentioned above. It also had its work to do in answering questions from journalists worldwide, sometimes in response to rumors and misinformation.

The recourse to the Lord of which the General had spoken was symbolized and expressed in a deeply moving celebration of the Eucharist that same night of December 2. All the delegates, plus more than five hundred Jesuits resident in Rome from all over the world, gathered at the Gesù for the liturgy. That principal church of the Society, its interior splendidly illuminated, had never better embodied the baroque desire to celebrate the glory of God in the beauty of human artistry. In a multiplicity of languages, the Liturgy of the Word and of the Eucharist praised God. The congregation ranged from the oldest members of the Roman houses to Jesuit students of every continent and tongue to Italian novices, whose blue jeans were a counterpoint to the lapis lazuli on the great memorial altar to Ignatius. As the General expressed it in his homily, they were all celebrating on the eve of the feast of St. Francis Xavier the worldwide work of Jesuits, the traditions of the

Society, and the vision that had impelled those first Jesuits, Ignatius and Xavier.

On the next day, December 3, Pope Paul VI received all the delegates in the rather overwhelming magnificence of the Consistorial Hall at the Vatican. At many previous congregations, the oldest delegates from each assistancy customarily made up a group which went to the pope to tell him formally that the congregation had begun and to assure him of the Society's readiness to respond to his wishes. In more recent decades, the pope had received all the delegates themselves at the beginning of a congregation. At the 30th Congregation in 1957, five years before Vatican II, Pope Pius XII had delivered an address which, to a great degree, closed off any discussion of possible changes that the delegates might have wished to consider.<sup>18</sup> Pope Paul VI's talk was not in like manner peremptory but it was serious. He asked three questions: Where do you come from? Who are you? Where are you going? As a response to the first question, he recalled the origins of the Society, Ignatius, Manresa, the *Spiritual Exercises*, Rome, and Pope Paul III. To the second he replied that Jesuits were essentially religious, apostles, priests, united to the pope by a special vow. For the third he hoped, in the name of the Church, for a balanced adaptation which would meet current needs and be faithful to the essential characteristics of the Society, in accord with the charism of its founder, based on faith in a living Lord, at the service of the Church. The address concluded with the words: "Let us walk together, free, obedient, united to each other in love of Christ for the greater glory of God."<sup>20</sup> The tensions of the juxtapositions of "apostle" and "priest" and of "free" and "obedient" were to surface all too quickly in the next weeks and months.

Day-to-day business began on December 4. The Congregation elected its permanent secretary (Johannes Gerhartz from Germany), two assistant secretaries (Luciano Mendes de Almeida from Brazil and Simon Decloux from Belgium), and the membership of the two first and very important committees. One member from each assistancy was chosen for the Committee to Report on the State of the Society, and one from each assistancy for the Committee for Screening Postulata. The first of these groups was to gather information from individual delegates and from regional groups of delegates on the present strong and weak points of the Society, and to draw up a report thereon as a

help to the Congregation in its work. In times past, the committee had been charged simply with looking to impediments to the healthy functioning of the Society. The 31st Congregation had broadened its scope to a positive assessment too. The second committee was to plunge into the ocean of postulata which the Congregation had received. It was to channel them to specific committees which, in the light of their particular postulata and in the light of the report on the state of the Society, would draw up and discuss and propose legislation on those subjects most important for the Society's future.

All was not work. Little was play. Much was prayer. At the end of each of three days (December 4, 5, and 6), the General gave a talk to all the delegates for their personal reflection. The successive themes were: the challenge of the world and the mission of the Society, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and God alone as our hope.

Inside the congregation the work went on. The Commission on the State of the Society elected as chairman Vincent O'Keefe of the New York Province. He was one of the general assistants and had been several times, in the absence of Fr. Arrupe, temporary vicar-general. The commission on postulata elected as chairman Carlo Martini, rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute.<sup>21</sup>

A new body, established by the previous congregation, functioned at this meeting too. By previous law the general had presided at its meetings. But the 31st Congregation had set up a "council of the presidency" to help the General in preparing the meetings and to relieve him, through several of its members, of the burden of presiding day by day at those plenary sessions. The council comprised the general secretary (Johannes Gerhartz), a member from each of the two committees mentioned above (Jean-Yves Calvez and Cecil McGarry, Provincial of Ireland), two members chosen by the General (Robert Mitchell from New York, President of the Jesuit Conference of the provincials of the United States, and Roberto Tucci from Naples, former editor of *Civiltà Cattolica* and currently director of the Vatican Radio).

Discussions on the state of the Society began, especially in small groups of members set up along language lines. People could in that way be at ease in expressing themselves, and delegates could get to know Jesuits from other regions and other cultures. Out of such groups began also to emerge some feeling for the priorities which the Congregation ought to address. Provisional additions (later definitively approved) to the

procedural formula had mandated an early decision by the Congregation on a list of priority topics to be treated in such manner that no other topics would be brought up for formal consideration by the Congregation as a whole without a new and explicit decision to do so.

Outside the Congregation, the press began its search for the unusual. The Pope's address to the delegates got headlines. Too often they were more attention-attracting than accurate; for example, in two German papers, "Pope Warns Jesuits"; in the London *Times*, "Pope Warns Questioning Jesuits"; in the *Guardian*, "Pope's Harsh Words for Jesuits"; and in the Italian *Messaggero*, "The Pope to the Jesuits: Why Do You Doubt?" Most of this genuinely puzzled or dismayed the delegates. More of such simplistic views were to come later on during the Congregation. In fairness to the newspapers, it must be said that the articles themselves were usually more nuanced than the headlines.<sup>22</sup>

## 2. Priorities

The linguistic groups mentioned earlier had been discussing not only the state of the Society but also priorities among the hundreds of postulata. Fortunately they had not had to start from scratch with those postulata. The preparatory committee, authorized by the 31st Congregation, had been at work two weeks before the present Congregation even began. Made up of five already elected delegates (from India, the United States, Italy, Ireland, and Chile), it had put together a list of forty-eight headings as a summary of the topics treated in the postulata. With this list at hand, the Commission on Postulata saved some time. The same list was also useful to the seventeen or so language groups as they prepared reports on what they considered the principal items which the Congregation had to treat. The Commission on Postulata, toward the end of its major work, presented to the whole Congregation a list of eight principal topics that had emerged from the language-group discussions. And finally, after several plenary sessions on the matter, the whole Congregation, in the relatively short time of ten days after the meeting had begun, on December 12 approved by vote a list of six subjects to which it wanted to give priority. This was a very important step, for it helped to define from now on, in a variety of configurations, most of the major concerns of the Congregation. The topics, each of which received more than an absolute majority of the votes of the Congregation, were: (1) criteria for Jesuit apostolates; (2) "mission" and obedience; (3) poverty in its institutional

and juridical aspects; (4) the promotion of justice; (5) the fourth vow; (6) formed members, grades, and the question of types of membership in the Society.

Somewhat earlier, the Congregation had given the General and the Commission on Postulata the authority to decide what specific working committees were needed to handle the topics that were to be dealt with. So on the same afternoon of the vote on the six priorities mentioned above, the General could announce the setting up of ten such working committees. Six of the committees were to deal with those priorities; four others were to deal with subjects mandated by the previous congregation or clearly also of substantial concern to a good number of present delegates. The four additional committees were: (7) on formation of Jesuits; (8) on spiritual and community life and union in the Society; (9) on governance and congregations; and (10) on last vows or final incorporation into the Society. All of the assistancies were asked to suggest membership for the working committees. Lastly, two somewhat technical committees were set up. The first was on juridical matters and was composed largely of canon-lawyer members of the Congregation; the other was to deal with procedural matters in the conduct of the meetings day by day.

Now the Congregation could get down to work--almost. One last step intervened. Some delegates wanted to establish a "priority of priorities." This led to some confusion, procedural, linguistic, substantive, and a mix of all three. Was it enough simply to have a list of items that the Congregation thought good to deal with from the start? Was a vote on the set of topics meant to be an order-of-rank listing? Would it not be good to have some time for a general discussion toward choosing a topic which would provide a "horizon" for all of the subsequent work of the Congregation, and a priority for all of its discussion and debate and decree-drafting and legislating?

The discussion both at this point and later made the matter yet more complicated. Some could hardly fail to note that "horizon" and "priority" were surely not the same thing, as one American later remarked perceptively. He said that if they were to be taken synonymously, then a "priority of priorities" would become a "horizon of all horizons," an absolute totality, and the Congregation would end up dealing with everything, temporal and eternal, material and spiritual. In any case, the delegates voted to spend several days in group discussions on what emerged as a joint theme from this

preliminary proposal for a priority of priorities. The two subjects of discussion were to be the criteria for the apostolates of the Society today and the promotion of justice in the world.

These group discussions were meant to have a twofold result: They were to deepen the understanding of these topics in their specific commissions, and they were to lead to a growth in the knowledge of one another on the part of the members of the Congregation. After all, the members had come to Rome mostly as strangers to each other. From all of this discussion would come, ideally and consequently, a growing awareness of the "style" which the Congregation might wish to adopt. These were all worthy objectives, but the conjunction of all of them did not help toward clarity in understanding them. The introduction of the promotion of justice as seemingly a criterion of equal or greater importance than any other ones, still unspecified, was disquieting to some participants. But the Congregation nonetheless settled down to this work seriously and with basic internal serenity, and over the weekend of December 14-15 the assignment of members to all the commissions took place.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Uncertainties

On Monday, December 16, the serenity was broken. That morning Fr. Arrupe informed the plenary session of a letter, dated December 3, the same day as the papal address to the delegates, which he had received on behalf of the Holy See from Cardinal Villot, the papal Secretary of State.<sup>24</sup> The letter dealt with the "fourth vow" taken by professed members of the Society. To understand its context one has to review briefly some earlier relations of the Pope and the Society leading up to the Congregation. As mentioned previously, in 1972 Fr. Arrupe had told Pope Paul VI of the preparations for a congregation as soon as they had begun. On November 21, 1974, about ten days before the Congregation started, he had visited the Pope and had given him a copy of the volume containing all the postulata. He also noted in a memorandum the topics with which he thought the Congregation would in all likelihood deal, given the postulata and the tenor of the preparatory period for the Congregation. Among those topics, the General had noted for the Pope the possibility that the Congregation might want to request a change in the "Institute" of the Society so that nonpriests could also take the fourth vow.



In the address which the Pope delivered to the delegates on December 3, he urged the desirability of renewal in the Society and the changes necessary to bring this about, and talked about the "double charism of the apostle . . . *fidelity*--not sterile and static, but living and fruitful . . . and *service* to all men, our brethren traveling with us towards the future."<sup>25</sup> This might well have encouraged in the delegates an optimistic spirit toward adaptation, especially when coupled with the concluding words of that address, previously quoted here: "Let us walk together, free, obedient, united to each other in the love of Christ. . . ."<sup>26</sup> At the same time, however, the Pope had also said something in that same address which was borne out later in the Congregation:

We are certainly aware that if obedience demands much from those who obey, it demands even more of those who exercise authority. The latter are required to listen without partiality to the voices of all their sons, to surround themselves with prudent counsellors in order to evaluate situations sincerely, to choose before God what best corresponds to his will and to intervene with firmness whenever there is departure from that will.<sup>27</sup>

Undoubtedly the Pope had such a right and responsibility, and he had no obligation whatsoever to disclose who it was from whom he took advice. But as the Congregation progressed it was never clear to its members which "sons" of the Society, other than the ones chosen by their own brethren for the Congregation, he was listening to in his evaluation of the actions of the Congregation, nor which "counsellors" outside--or inside--the Society he was relying on for prudent advice. This situation was to help create a growing sense of uncertainty about how well the intentions and actions of the Congregation were interpreted and understood.

To turn from the context to the letter itself, the Secretary of State noted that the Pope had "indicated his lively concern . . . that the Society itself, in its praiseworthy and responsible attempt at '*aggiornamento*' in accord with the needs of the times, would remain faithful in its essential characteristics set down in the fundamental rule of the Order, that is, in the Formula of the Institute."<sup>28</sup> He then said that the Pope had not failed to consider the possibility which might be proposed to extend to all the members of the Society the fourth vow of special obedience to the Supreme Pontiff "with regard to missions." The next phrases of the letter were the crucial ones, in themselves and in further discussions in the Congregation. "The Supreme Pontiff . . . desires to let you know that such a change in the

light of more careful examination seems to present grave difficulties which would impede the approval necessary on the part of the Holy See."<sup>29</sup> The Cardinal concluded by saying that he was sending the letter so that the General might have it before him "as the work of the General Congregation develops."

The first development, then, was for the Congregation to ascertain what this meant for its work. On the one hand, the Congregation had a mandate at hand from the Society itself, which it could hardly ignore. There were sixty-five official postulata from province congregations around the world, asking that the question of grades be considered; forty-one of those postulata called for the abolition of the distinction in grades. On the other hand, there was the present letter saying that extension of the fourth vow seemed to present grave difficulties which would impede the necessary approval on the part of the Holy See. It was clear that these several matters, namely, consideration of grades, abolition of the distinction in grades, and extension of the fourth vow, were not exactly the same things. It was also clear that they were intimately linked. It was not at all clear of which of these matters the letter forbade any further treatment, or whether it forbade any treatment at all of the whole question. In discussion, some of the Congregation members said that the letter was an absolute prohibition against any further treatment at all. In part they relied on their understanding of Vatican language and style of expression. Others said that it was surely a caution, but that the letter itself used conditional or tentative terms such as "seems" or "would impede."<sup>30</sup> For this second group of delegates, there were clear and obvious terms to use if the Holy See had wished to forbid any further treatment, and the Holy See deliberately had not used them. In the long run, the first opinion was to prove correct; for the Congregation learned later that prohibition of any further action was what the letter had intended. From the letter itself, it always remained ambiguous whether the Holy See intended to preclude dealing with all three of the parts noted above, namely, consideration of grades, abolition of the distinction in grades, and extension of the fourth vow, or only one or some combination of the three parts. For the moment, however, the Congregation, faced with a green light from the Society and what it saw as an amber light from the Holy See, proceeded with caution. Later it learned that the Vatican light had been red.

Other matters went forward. The most immediate one was the "priority of priorities." Seventeen linguistic groups and the twelve assistancy groups had had a go at the topic, and had forwarded more than fifty pages of material from those discussions to two of the working commissions, those on Apostolates (I) and on Justice (IV). The two commissions now presented a general combined report to the entire Congregation, after which plenary discussion took place. Two preoccupations were noted in the report and underlay that discussion, as they had also conditioned the smaller group deliberations. They were not necessarily antitheses but rather emphases. The one preoccupation was that the Congregation take seriously and highlight the connection between the message of the gospel and concern for the oppressed; the other was that the Congregation take seriously and highlight the specifically spiritual character of the work of the Society. The large number of postulata on justice as a primary concern of the Society's apostolates was appealed to as a reason for forward movement. Ambiguity about the meaning of justice and implied pretensions that the Society was taking on rather the role of the Church itself were urged as reasons for going slow.

Some thirty-five delegates spoke during several days of discussion. Gradually it became clear that a central point around which differences revolved was how to put together at the same time a priority commitment to the promotion of justice with commitments to several other central tasks, such as the commission given by Pope Paul VI to deal with atheism, the concern for evangelization, and the responsibility for preserving the fundamental character of the Society. Some who wanted "justice" as a "horizon" or priority commitment noted that the Society quite naturally assumed that "learning" was already such a priority in all of its work, and asked why justice could not equally be so. With a somewhat rhetorical flourish one of the delegates asked which was closer to the gospel, a commitment to learning or a commitment to justice.

After all others had spoken, Fr. General expressed his own reflections on an option for justice. He spoke briefly but eloquently. He thought that such a work was inescapable, that it came from the gospel itself, that it flowed from the priestly character of the Society, that Ignatius was several centuries ahead of his time in understanding what priestly ministry was, that justice, as the gospel envisaged it, had to be preached through the cross, and that if the Society took on this work, the cross would quickly be present. With a foresight which has been confirmed in the years since the Congregation,

he said that "despite our prudence and fidelity to our priesthood and religious charism," we would find that those who do injustice and who might often be among the benefactors or friends or relatives of Jesuits would "accuse us of Marxism or subversion, and will withdraw their friendship from us and, consequently, their previous trust and economic support." He asked whether the Congregation was ready "to enter on the sterner way of the cross, that which will bring us misunderstanding from civil and ecclesiastical authorities and our best friends?"<sup>31</sup> At the end of all the discussion, the chairmen of the working committees assured the delegates that they would review their original report and all the comments from the floor as they worked on a draft proposal for enactment by the Congregation.

Several weeks of the Congregation had now elapsed. Much of the humdrum work of getting down to the details of all the subjects to be considered was well under way. In reality, most of the time had been occupied with such work. But the attention-getter had been the discussion on the promotion of justice. That discussion became part, too, of the background against which the Pope was assessing the Congregation. For whatever reasons and with whatever advice, both as yet unknown, this question of justice was for him linked with the question of grades. The way the Congregation was dealing with both subjects could be seen by the Pope as likely to lead to the diminution of the primarily sacerdotal nature of the Society, the weakening of priestly ministry, and an undue political and social emphasis in Jesuit ministries. As a matter of fact, there was no such inclination at all among the delegates to be other than a priestly order. But what happened later in the Congregation on the question of grades (and later to be recounted here) served only to reinforce in him that original impression.

#### 4. Day by Day--and Its Implications

The big news and the sense of important activity came from the plenary sessions of the Congregation. The utterly necessary work went on in the context of a daily schedule at the level of the working commissions and their subcommittees and their yet further subdivisions. That day-to-day schedule went somewhat as follows. Mornings from nine to noon were very often occupied, after the first two weeks or so, with commission sessions, or language-group meetings, or subcommittee meetings. Only when draft documents had gone through all previous steps was there a plenary session to deal with them. This was

true until, in the last month of the Congregation, decisions were to be made on final legislative proposals. Then plenary sessions became more frequent. When there were no plenary or particular meetings, most of the delegates were busy reading the new material which on a daily basis filled their mail boxes, or they were busy contributing to that flood through the reports, drafts, and revisions which they themselves were commissioned to write.<sup>32</sup>

Meetings, plenary or otherwise, ended at noon and began again at four in the afternoon. In the intervening hours, the celebration of the Eucharist came first, sometimes by language groups, sometimes in the several houses where the delegates lived. There were earlier Masses too, and regular prayer sessions, even before the meetings began in the morning. On special occasions all the delegates would gather for Mass in the chapel of the Curia. The main meal of the day, dinner, was usually taken about one o'clock, followed by common recreation. The early afternoon left time to rest, to catch up with reading (which was a never ending task), and to get what exercise one could by a walk. (Joggers were not known to be common among the delegates.) From four to seven the round of meetings went on again. Supper was available after that. Then the delegates went back to their lodgings there to reflect on, or wonder about, or record, or be weary of, or be happy about the events of the day, and to work on the material for the morrow.

The Curia had limited space which could lodge only some of the delegates. Most of them had to live in religious houses which were run especially during summer months as pilgrim hostels or *pensionati*. Some delegates were assigned to a rather nondescript hotel a block from the Curia. Each lodging had its advantages, each its temptations to laughter or fury. At the religious *pensionati*, the nuns were very solicitous to provide for the delegates but, understandably, on their own terms.<sup>33</sup> At the Curia, the accommodations were convenient, and the community was very welcoming, but one never got away from the atmosphere of the Congregation. At the hotel, one got away from the Congregation but had little incentive to stay in dimly lit, cold, dull blue-gray rooms which became even colder after the boiler blew up in early January.

Saturday afternoons and all day Sundays were free. The only other times off were Christmas Day and New Year's Day and one half day on each of their eves, and one day in January, about halfway through the three months of the Congregation.

Rome itself in all its beauty, diversity, and grandeur was for some a

matchless attraction. How it was enjoyed varied with the delegates. As pilgrim or tourist or historian or lover of art and architecture, one could visit churches (more of them than one could ever get to) or tramp through museums (something was always closed "for restoration"). Sunday mornings brought a watchful wait at St. Peter's Square for the great papal blessing at noon (and improbably but regularly one would meet in the assembled throng of thousands a person he knew). There were opportunities to sip coffee at the sidewalk of a *trattoria* while watching the crowds at the holiday booths on the Piazza Navona, to walk in the Pincio gardens and see the sun turn to gold the baroque domes of papal Rome, to inspect the flea market on a Sunday morning and perhaps make a small purchase where the bargains were interesting but the people more so. Most evocative of the complexities of Rome were visits, guidebook in hand, to the republican, imperial, papal, and modern monuments, squares, palaces, temples, and streets of a city in which each spoke of a grandeur or a crime, a folly or a virtue which helped some of the delegates to put the Congregation in perspective.

As the days became the weeks which became the months, the members of the Congregation needed that perspective, for several reasons. The work was demanding and important and always there. The uncertainty and misunderstandings in the relationship with the Pope were psychologically and spiritually trying. Perhaps most importantly, and perhaps true of the history of any general congregation, the delegates were involved in an enterprise for which, for the most part, they were unprepared by temperament, background, or experience. Members of the Society of Jesus have usually gone from very active apostolic work to being delegates to the congregation, where they had to spend their time over documents and discussions. They have individually had little taste for politics; in fact, at times they have refused to recognize their obvious existence. But inevitably there have been for the internal and external life of the Church political implications to any action of a general congregation. Lastly, because the Society of Jesus, for its own good reasons, does not have a capitular form of government for its ordinary, ongoing law-making, many of its members have had almost no experience of legislative processes or of parliamentary practice; hence in any congregation such delegates become acquainted with all of this in a very short time.

The average period of time between general congregations has been eleven years. Very many, if not the majority, of the members have been elected for

the first time as delegates. Therefore, there has been no ongoing, uninterrupted tradition of a lawmaking body which through experienced members smoothly inducts new hands into that tradition. The Society of Jesus has opted not to have continuing or regularly scheduled legislative meetings. The delegates to any general congregation then necessarily have had to bear the consequences outlined above. If such a congregation has been brief, those consequences have not been so apparent. If a congregation has been of long duration, faced with complications in the matters with which it has had to deal, and large in number of delegates, some of whom have little experience and less interest in procedure, those consequences have become quite evident. If, as in the 32nd and some previous congregations, there has been the added complication of misunderstanding or disagreement with some offices of the Holy See, then those consequences have become aggravatedly painful.

#### 5. Step by Step

The day-by-day life of the Congregation was yet further divided by the step-by-step procedures through which material moved from being an idea in the mind of the Jesuit writer of a postulatum in the most remote province of the Society to a finished document adopted by the Congregation as part of the Society's official legislation. Everything started with such a postulatum or proposal or request for action by the Congregation. This present study has earlier described the subject matters of those postulata. Here it will describe the process by which this gathering of delegates turned them into the sixteen decrees of the 32nd General Congregation.

When the working commissions met immediately after they had been set up, the first task of their members was to get to know each other. The members had come from all over the world. Who was who? What background did he bring to the work of the commission? What were his main areas of interest in that commission? What languages could he handle? To take but one example, which we shall continue to use as an example for the purposes of this section of the study, the commission on governance had 22 members from 22 different provinces. Of course, very soon the members of the commission had to choose a chairman. The next two steps were to read and analyze all the postulata on the subject at hand, in this case governance, and to decide how best the commission could begin to deal with them. Almost always the postulata could

best be handled by the appointment of subcommissions to consider particular parts of the overall topic. Thus, for example, the commission on governance recognized quickly that the two main divisions for the numerous postulata were the ordinary governance of the Society, which goes on regularly through the general and provincial offices, and the extraordinary governance of the several congregations or special meetings, namely, the congregation of the province, of provincials, and of procurators, and the general congregation. A subcommission took shape for each of those two main divisions, with members appointed from the whole group according to interests, backgrounds, and expertise.

As in the lives of a cell, a subcommission often further subdivided in order to deal with particular topics. The group which was to deal with congregations became two further groups: one for general congregations, the other for all of the other such extraordinary means of governance. The same thing happened in the other working commissions according to the subjects to be treated, because a committee of the whole would have been too large and too unwieldy to tackle every detail. The Congregation, lengthy as it turned out to be, would have gone on into old age. The members of each specific small working group then reviewed the postulata particular to its concerns, talked informally among themselves about their reactions to the proposals, and tested with each other their personal, tentative responses to the questions raised and their possible solutions to the problems posed. When some first clarity and agreement appeared concerning a proposal for a particular point, one of the subcommittee members was deputed to write a draft of it. Meanwhile, of course, the same process was going on in all ten commissions and their smaller subcommissions and yet smaller working groups.

The tables in the special reference library which had been set up for the Congregation were often crowded. The sibilant rustle of pages of documents from the past legislation and life of the Society was evident. Conversation over coffee might deal in succession with ten different topics. Brows furrowed at the difficulty of getting down in writing what seemed so easy to explain in speaking. The copying machines, no matter how simple to operate, regularly developed the glitches that Jesuits are geniuses at inducing in any machinery.

When a small working group had reviewed and accepted a proposal, it



went to a meeting of the subcommission. For example, the group dealing with general congregations considered several versions of a proposal on the size, composition, and duration of a general congregation. The members of the subcommission on congregations individually reviewed it, met together to discuss and debate it, and made evident to the working group what it could and could not accept. The group prepared a new version on the basis of those reactions, and brought it back to the subcommission. After further debate and amendment, that body approved the proposal for discussion and debate in the whole commission. The same process took place there, with the added benefits and, to be sure, **obstacles**, of considering how this particular proposal fitted as a part into the whole decree which was being fashioned out of many such parts.

The example cited here was for the present uncontroversial and relatively uncomplicated. For the commissions which dealt with controversial and complicated topics, the process was the same, but to carry it out was far more fraught with difficulties, with the need for clarity, patience, honesty, openness, conviction, and the willingness recommended by St. Ignatius, to "suppose that every good Christian is more ready to put a good interpretation on another's statement than to condemn it as false."<sup>34</sup>

The usefulness of straw votes was obvious in such circumstances. Without at all committing the congregation to a particular position, such votes helped the commissions to use their time and talents and energies to the best effect. They kept the several groups which were at work on projects from charging up blind alleys or wandering afar off onto paths which the Congregation had little or no inclination to follow. Such straw votes indicated the general lines of solutions to problems and answers to questions and responses to opportunities which might be most likely to gain the assent of the Congregation when in full assembly it formally voted on a proposal.

Such a definitive vote, of course, was the goal to which all of this detailed work was aiming. After a commission had approved a first draft or preliminary proposal, the Secretary of the Congregation arranged for its distribution to all the members of the Congregation. They were invited to make written comments for the benefit of the commission. Depending on those comments, the commission might even at this stage meet again and amend the preliminary draft. In any case, those comments helped the "relator," or in current legislative terms the "floor manager of a bill," to prepare his remarks

as he introduced a second draft of the proposal in the assembly hall to the whole membership of the Congregation. After he had done that, the small language groups met to discuss the proposal, usually for a half or full day.

#### 6. . . . That the Truth Might Appear

Then the debate began in plenary session. It might have been as brief as half a day; it might have continued on for several days. Each member had the right to speak on every proposal. Some exercised the right to a great extent. Fortunately, others were more restrained. If a delegate had made a written request to speak, seven minutes were allotted to him; if, during the debate itself, he signaled his wish to speak, five minutes were his apportioned time. Neither period seemed long in itself. But when the electronic indicator board sparkled as green as a summer field, the delegates had only to multiply requests by minutes to know when to settle in for a long session. Or when, as one delegate remarked, "Seven minutes is not even the beginning of the commencement of the start to an introduction to a speech," the others knew that neither buzzer nor bell from the presiding officer, but only a personal sense of restraint, would dam the flow of oratory.

Almost always the discussion was serious and intelligent and relevant to the topic. Happily, the speakers were also intelligent enough to leaven the seriousness at times with humor. A regular difficulty was the lack of an easy familiarity with procedures by which to propose and deal with amendments or points of order. In such a case, the presiding officer sometimes had a threefold task, attempting to untangle a briar patch of material while explaining what he was doing and while trying to be very careful not to be or to appear arbitrary in the rulings which he had to make.

When a topic of great importance or delicacy was the subject for plenary discussion, the air of seriousness in the aula was palpable. Almost always the discussion was both frank and respectful, but tensions could and did arise and were to be expected, especially as the Congregation ground on and as the uncertainties of the relations with the Holy See weighed down upon the members.

When discussion of a text had been completed, it went back to its commission for whatever revisions were required by formal amendments or had been suggested by the general tenor of the debate. Once in a while, earlier or at this point, a special drafting committee would be set up and charged

with taking a difficult text and putting it into the final shape which the debates had indicated as the mind of the Congregation. This was not a task to be envied; it often involved long meetings, late nights, close deadlines, great energy, frayed nerves, and organizational and writing skills of a high order. Then, some time later, after a week or ten days or more, back again to the full assembly came the definitive draft. Debate again might well ensue. An interval of at least one day followed after close of debate. Then, at last, a final vote took place. After everyone had spoken his last words, sometimes outside the hall and informally over coffee or during a walk or at dinner, or formally in the setting of the hall, the delegates cast their ballots. On persons, votes were private. On documents, votes were public. Section by section, sometimes paragraph by paragraph, the delegates voted on the proposal at hand. Tedious though this might have been, it left no doubt in the minds of the delegates what precisely it was that they were accepting or rejecting. Each delegate contributed to the Christmas-tree effect of the indicator board high up behind the General's presiding table, as the red (for "non placet") and the green (for "placet") lights snapped on. Yet farther up above them the electronic totalizer blinked rapidly through its numerals, gradually slowing down its activity as the last of the delegates turned on the switches at their desks. At the end of such detailed voting, a final ballot was taken on the proposal as a whole. When the subject in question had been complicated, ardently debated, and of great importance, the sense of accomplishment was audible. When it was extraordinarily that kind of subject, and when in addition it was overwhelmingly accepted after great initial problems, such as was the case with the document on faith and justice, the audible was not just a sigh of relief but a burst of applause.

And then, waiting in the wings, often after having gone through all the procedures here detailed at too great a length, was the next document to come to the floor.

## 7. The State of the Society

At the very beginning of the Congregation in early December, the special commission on the state of the Society, elected at every general congregation, had started its work. Its membership included the previously mentioned twelve delegates, one from each assistancy, Father General, the four General Assistants, and as a nonvoting member the Secretary of the Congregation. At

the end of December it submitted its report to all the delegates. While its members were simultaneously serving on other working commissions, they had also taken on the complications of preparing this report. Individual delegates and seventeen small language groups and the twelve assistancy groups had submitted their own observations on the state of the Society. At the decision of the General, the assistancy meetings early in the Congregation on the state of the Society had even had the opportunity to hear in some detail and with complete candor complaints about the Society and its members which various people had sent to the Holy See and with which the Vatican had taxed the General. The commission itself had received from the General specific documents on that subject. The members of the Congregation were not surprised at the existence of both abuses and plain simple foolishness on the part of specific Jesuits. They were not happy about them, of course, but given original sin, such failings were a regrettable expectation. Many delegates were distressed, however, at the way in which specific examples had been generalized and particular instances had been reported to the Holy See, instances which from personal and direct knowledge they knew not to have taken place as depicted.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, they did take seriously all of this information because it obviously influenced the negative way in which the Holy See sometimes saw the Society, even when the Holy See itself emphasized at the beginning of one of its documents that most Jesuits were serious religious who lived out loyally their obligations and engaged in apostolates of great value and service to the Church.

After considering this and much other material, the commissions wrote a provisional report and asked for written comments on it from the delegates individually or gathered in assistancy groups. Those comments formed the substance of another report to the delegates. The commission members identified what each of them saw as the most significant negative and positive elements about the state of the Society. A synthesis of all this material was voted on, item by item, by the commission, and those items that were accepted by majority vote became the basis of the definitive report which went to all the delegates on December 31.

That report began by noting the overwhelming climate of change which had operated in the world and the Church and the Society in the years since Vatican II, the differences in problems and solutions from region to region, the difficulty of judging as positive or negative the elements which were

still in flux, and the confidence in the Lord, the Church, and the Society which ought to undergird any judgment about where God was working among Jesuits and about where they interposed obstacles to his work in the life and activity of the Society. The report was structured in several broad categories: adaptations and renewal and their effect on Jesuit spirit and identity; the apostolic life and activities of the Society; the personal life of Jesuits; the community life of the Society; formation of younger Jesuits; the government of the Society.<sup>36</sup>

Adaptations and renewal had brought crises of spirit and identity, whether from a hankering for the past and for a historical literalness or from a rootless desire for contemporaneity. Both tendencies had brought on problems, especially in the earliest years of change after Vatican II, but the commission saw a gradual renewal of confidence in the Society and a greater simplicity and openness among its members. In its apostolic life and activities there had been excessive individualism, strained relations with some members of the hierarchy, and at times a blurring of the priestly character of Jesuit work. At the same time there were creativity, mobility, a critical identification with the culture in which Jesuits worked, and an increasing awareness of social problems as often at the root of a modern man's or woman's inability to make a personal commitment to faith. There was a great desire to help the marginalized of the world, in apostolates where, to use the words of St. Ignatius, the need was greatest.

As to the personal life of the Jesuit, personal responsibility, when well integrated into his life, had led to a deepening of prayer, better spiritual direction, and a more vivid awareness of the spiritual life and the Spiritual Exercises. When personal responsibility turned to a preoccupation with personal freedom, it had sometimes led to self-seeking, forgetfulness of the cross in the life of a Jesuit, excessive independence in poverty, and deficiencies in the practice of chastity and in teaching about it.

Community life had prospered in the growth of brotherly union, better personal and group communication among Jesuits, and a strengthening of community prayer. It had faltered in some instances, for example in failing to provide the support that individuals needed, in setting up physical and psychological structures which made community life difficult, in excessive concern for financial security, and in the loss of a sense of a mission common to the group. Formation had suffered from some ill-conceived and

quixotic experiments, from lack of integration throughout the whole process, from a permissive attitude without concomitant success in developing personal responsibility. Formation had benefited from more realistic goals and programs which were better adapted to current situations, and from a greater personal attention to the particular strengths and weaknesses of the individual Jesuit. Government in the Society in the years since Vatican II had sometimes become too indefinite, too vague and ill-planned locally, provincially, and Society-wide. Local superiors especially were uncertain about their authority and hesitant about its exercise. The other and positive side of the coin showed a more personal government, a greater appreciation and more successful use of the account of conscience, less formalism and more personal conviction, a deeper sense of participation in a common enterprise, and incipient inter-provincial and international cooperation through new structures. Finally, there had been an impressive strengthening of the personal and spiritual character of Jesuit governance through the example, the journeys, the writings, and the activities of Fr. General.

This report on the state of the Society formed the basis of discussion in a plenary session of January 2, at which the chairman of the commission, Vincent O'Keefe of New York, responded to questions and elaborated on particular items for the many delegates who wished to comment on the report.

After that discussion, the General, out of his experience of nine years in office, presented his own impression of the state of the Society and his view of the state of relationships between the Jesuit curia and the Holy See and its Vatican offices. Among the central points of a very frank and warmly personal talk were the following. He saw as a "common denominator for understanding the current situation . . . the need for [the] Society to undertake a true apostolic adaptation to the new conditions of the contemporary world, conditions that find themselves in constant change."<sup>37</sup> For change to be helpful, he judged necessary "(1) an acute sense of discernment . . . and internal freedom; (2) a certain maturity, both spiritual and human; (3) a humble and apostolic desire to learn new things." He thought the Society was a basically healthy body, at times undergoing a variety of tests which occasionally may have fatigued it. Continuing the analogy of a body, this fatigue could have come on because of tasks for which it was unprepared, or because of a functional disorder at the attempt to assimilate elements abnormal in type or quantity, or because of a reaction which rejects elements

which are harmful. In the Society there was "movement of spirits" on vital subjects such as contemporary faith, union of minds and hearts, the apostolate, faithfulness to the hierarchical Church, and poverty. These he regarded as basically positive and potentially productive of much good.

To one defect the General called specific attention. It was "a lack of fidelity toward the Society among [Jesuits] who . . . see themselves as not a part of it, but rather judge it from outside and seem to reserve to themselves the right to accept or reject what the Society, through its superiors, or even through a general congregation, has decided to decree, and to pass judgment, even publicly and in harsh language and with bitterness, on what others do."<sup>38</sup> He spoke too, of formation, departure from the Society, spiritual governance, participation and responsibility and discernment, creativity in novel circumstances, and the importance of encouraging the development and growth of the positive elements in the Society rather than simply concentrating on the elimination of the negative. He thought it necessary for the governing of the Society that the Congregation set forth, even if only quite briefly, some definite principles and some clear practical norms which would serve as a basis for a man's truly belonging to the Society. The General asked the delegates to give him such clearly stated and concrete programs in order to enable him to implement its decrees.

In emphasizing the need to accept sincerely the decrees of the General Congregation as essential to union and charity in the Society, he made a somewhat surprising comment. "It will be impossible to allow to happen again what happened in recent years, namely, that some regarded the 31st General Congregation as something of a deviation from the spirit of St. Ignatius, that they should have revealed this publicly and not infrequently in the unsuitable form of anonymous letters. If this were to happen again, it would render the government of the Society impossible."<sup>39</sup>

Relations with the Holy See came up explicitly because a request had been made that the General speak to the whole Congregation on the subject. His remarks followed immediately after those on the state of the Society. Delegates clearly had been perturbed by rumors at home or in Rome about the state of those relations.<sup>40</sup> The General said that his abiding purpose had been to achieve "great simplicity, reverence, and fidelity" in such contacts. He first spoke of his relations with the Holy Father and it was evident how genuinely he esteemed Pope Paul VI. He said that he was not aware of

any notable differences in matters of judgment between himself and the Pope, but that if they existed he would gladly change. He assured the delegates that the Pope, in turn, truly loved and esteemed the Society and understood the difficulties of governance even when he was distressed by the faults of Jesuits, especially thoughtless and public criticism. Doctrinal questions, whether propounded in classroom or journal, were a special preoccupation and concern of the Pope. As to the offices of the Roman Curia, there too the General thought that relationships in general were good, even if in particular cases there were difficulties which arose out of doctrinal or disciplinary affairs and the way to handle them. He thought that the Society had suffered great harm from the rumors in recent years about supposed mistrust in the relations of the Holy See and the Society, and he said that certain Jesuits could not think themselves without blame for such rumors. The current means of gathering the information which would present a complete, documented, and reasonable objective picture of the reality of the Society were, in his judgment, inadequate. Hence partial, or even strongly negative, images of the Society may have developed in some of the Vatican congregations. He concluded by saying that even with the mistakes which inevitably arise out of the difficult problems of change and adaptation, if collaboration with the Holy See and the Pope was positive and generous, then such faults did not mean that the Society was unfaithful in its vocation to serve the Church.<sup>41</sup>

Questions followed. In a quite unprecedented move, the General opened himself to any and all queries from the delegates about what he had said. At first only a few lights on the voting board flashed rather hesitantly to indicate the wish to speak. When Fr. Arrupe answered the first questions with complete frankness and simplicity, and with touches of humor, a rush of lights went on. The questions ranged all the way from the sources of malicious rumors ("I think I ought to tell you that in private") to communal discernment, from departures from the Society to means to improve relations with the Holy See, from violations of secrecy to ways to keep the Society better informed of its fundamental soundness. Some postulata sent to Rome had asked for a vote of confidence in the General, and some delegates may have come to Rome wondering how well the years of Fr. Arrupe's generalate had gone. Hesitations might still have remained, but the vigorous and continuing applause at the end of that most unusual session was a more evident witness



to the basic solidarity of the Society with the General than any such vote.

### 8. Going in Circles

By the beginning of the second week in January, each of the ten working commissions had furnished its *relatio praevia* or preliminary report. All of those reports had been printed and distributed to the delegates. Soon the time was to come for the formal debate described earlier in this study. One would think it an occasion for a sigh of relief. It was not. Instead there were murmurings of apprehension. On January 10 the Secretary published the results of a questionnaire on the progress of the Congregation, given to the delegates several days earlier. Those results and worry about what seemed increasingly cumbersome working procedures sparked on January 13 and 14 a debate, always vigorous, sometimes circular, once in a while obscure, rather inconclusive. It bore witness to a congregation temporarily confused.

The results of the questionnaire brought out what so far the delegates had found of positive value and of negative impact. Many thought very positive the Eucharistic concelebrations in or across relatively small language groups, the general atmosphere of kindness, patience, and humor, the behind-the-scenes staff work of the Jesuit curia, and the discussion sessions in the small-group or language or assistancy contexts. Problems were evident in the slow pace of the Congregation, the constriction of working from postulata rather than from the basic questions underlying them, the overly large size of the commissions, the uncertainty of when a decision would be made about what really to concentrate on and what of less importance to drop from an overcrowded agenda, and the difficulty of communication and collaboration across commission lines. Most important and unsettling was the uncertainty about what to do and how to do it in the days ahead. The General had consulted with the chairmen of all the commissions and with the commission on screening postulata about these matters.

Especially important was the question of how to prepare documents in a form usable by the Congregation without involving everyone in the Congregation in a wearying and unprofitable marathon composition session. Committees on the whole are not good drafters of concise, clear, and coherent documents. It was important that from now on the generality of the membership have the time to discuss, discern, and deliberate. Two options were proposed. The Congregation could continue its present procedure, which involved all the

commission members working at the second and later drafts of the documents. Or the current commissions could be disbanded and small drafting committees of three or four members could be established to prepare those revised reports. This would free most of the delegates to start discussions on the substantial matters now before them in the commission reports and to begin to weigh and choose among the alternative proposals set out in those reports.

These options may not have been clear enough in themselves or in the minds of the delegates. Whatever the reason, the debate went round in circles. It paused only for the further complication of "points of order," amendments which made "option one" into "option two" or vice versa, and comments which, presented as "related questions," were sometimes as far from the central topic as the goal posts on a football field. A slight majority vote for the first proposal brought no clarity because of contradicting amendments to the proposal. The delegates decided to return the next day to try again with several written variations of the first option. This was not just weariness and confusion taking its toll, although they were part of the problem. Rather, the members of the Congregation were caught in a dilemma. They realized that not everyone could be involved in writing every decree; at the same time they had a high sense of their individual and collective responsibility for the results of the Congregation and they were reluctant to commit that responsibility to small groups of three or four delegates.

The proposal adopted the next day resolved the dilemma. The full membership of each commission would choose from among its members an editorial or drafting team for the document which was to be presented. The entire commission would then give its judgment on the text so drafted, sending it back for revision if there were serious changes to be made, but not attempting to act ensemble as an author. This decision set the course for the next several weeks. It had the advantages of using the commission members who were most knowledgeable about the subject and most apt at writing and at the same time of engaging the responsibility of the entire commission. There were two main disadvantages to the decision. It imposed very heavy burdens on relatively few people, and it left some of the members feeling at loose ends with little to do at times but wait for material to come to them.

The "related questions" that some wished to speak to came next to the floor. They dealt mainly with the kind of documents that the Congregation might wish to produce. Were they to be legal texts or mere declarations?

Would they take into account regional differences and pluralism of viewpoints? When would it be best for the Congregation to decide what the style and nature of a particular document should be? There were, of course, no ready answers until texts began to appear. When such texts did begin to make their appearance, the drafters, the commission, and then the whole Congregation made the decisions case by case. Finally, several members pleaded, as a related question, for brevity in the documents; they sometimes did so in speeches which, by this time, seemed to lack that admirable quality.

At the end of this session the General spoke about how he saw the interior state of the Congregation so far. He judged that basically it was very positive. He spoke also about communal discernment as a need of the Congregation; he saw such discernment as relatively successful so far in an informal manner, in smaller groups and in liturgies, but able to be done only with difficulty in so large a group as 235 delegates. He then emphasized the freedom that the members had to gather in informal groups for prayer and discernment.

After these days of what seemed at first like circumambulation, the delegates were granted the next day, January 15, off for recreation. It joined Christmas and New Year's as the only three full days free in three months, other than Sundays. Historians among the delegates spent that afternoon in a specially arranged visit to the Vatican Archives. There they could put the Congregation in a perspective larger than itself, longer than the present, and wider than current problems and opportunities. This was easy to do when they saw or held in their hands such documents as the papal copy of the Brief of Suppression of the Society of Jesus, or pages from the transcript of Galileo's trial, or purple vellum documents in script of gold from Byzantine emperors, or the bull *Exsurge, Domine* excommunicating Luther, or letters from a dutiful daughter to her dear father, Lucrezia Borgia to Alexander VI.

More to the present, three of the commissions, those on the criteria and orientations of our apostolates, on mission and obedience, and on the promotion of justice, had already set to work on an experiment in collaboration. They gave to a small common group of their members the task of drafting a single text which would integrate the complementary concerns of the three commissions. Discussions on this had started as informal private suggestions, had moved toward trying such an experiment, and now had found formal support

in the discussions and decisions of the several previous days. The circumstances of contribution from three different commissions were to account in part for the richness but also in part for the ambiguity of some of the material on faith and justice which the Congregation would deal with in weeks to come.

Very quickly each commission chose its drafting committee or editorial team. The Americans who served on them were Joseph Whelan (Maryland), Robert Harvanek (Chicago), Gordon Moreland (Oregon), John Sheets (Wisconsin), James Connor (Maryland), John Padberg (Missouri), Richard Cleary (New England), and James Yamauchi (New Orleans). At about the same time, the commission to screen postulata set up three special ad-hoc committees to consider three topics that might come up for later discussion. They were on "the Roman houses" common to the whole Society, such as the Gregorian University or the Biblical Institute, on the apostolate of education, and on indigenization. Michael Buckley (California) and Charles Casassa (California) served respectively on the first two of these. The third had members only from non-Western lands. Ultimately, the first two of these committees, after studying their subjects, did not propose specific decrees to the Congregation. The third committee was to be most influential in producing the brief but cogent document on inculturation.

#### 9. Straw Votes--Poverty

The commission on the legislation and practice of poverty in the Society provided on January 17 the first major occasion for the use of straw votes or ballots. Such votes, without yet committing the Congregation, indicated the ways in which it was tending to view a particular matter. Before voting on a series of seventeen propositions which they had earlier received, the delegates in full assembly had the opportunity to hear from a chosen representative of each assistancy the reaction of the assistancy delegation as a whole to the proposals on poverty. Then the spokesman or *relator* for the commission itself answered in detail questions from the floor. Finally, he gave a clear, brief but comprehensive account of the history of the legislation of the Society on poverty and of the principles upon which the commission had relied as it prepared its proposals.

In twenty-two separate straw votes, with large majorities in all but one, the Congregation accepted fourteen proposals and rejected three and gave the commission a clear idea of its desires for the draft legislation. The

Congregation said "No" to accepting permanently and without change the interim statutes on poverty of 1967, to reviewing each of those interim statutes one by one, and to approving fixed revenues for Jesuit communities. It said "Yes" to the following proposals: general directives for a revision of the statutes on poverty; a distinction between community and apostolic work; the prohibition of turning to the profit of Jesuits, other than for an appropriate remuneration, any income or capital from such an apostolic work; the permission for the apostolic works of the Society to have resources, even revenue-producing ones; a clear definition of "fixed revenues"; permission for salaries for ministries unable to be undertaken gratuitously; permission for remuneration for stable ministries such as those of chaplain and teacher; the requirement that a community dispose of any annual surplus; a special province fund or participation in "social security" plans to provide for the sick and elderly; an organized procedure for disposal of a community's surplus; province sharing of resources by authority of major superiors; the establishment by the whole Society of a current-income apostolic and charitable fund for the benefit of needy communities or works; an annual community budget and balance sheet; and the recognition of the canonical ability of the provinces and of the Society as such to possess capital and income. As a matter of fact, with the appropriate specifications and nuances, these proposals became the bases for the actual legislation passed later in the Congregation and then for the work after the Congregation on the statutes written in conformity with that legislation. No wonder that, on leaving the plenary session that day, the mood of the delegates was notably different from just a few days before. They had a sense of real accomplishment, and a mood of quiet euphoria was everywhere obvious.

#### 10. Straw Votes--Grades

The next centrally important matter on which a working commission wanted further guidance from the Congregation was the question of grades. This present account earlier mentioned the letter of December 3 from the Secretary of State on behalf of the Holy See.<sup>42</sup> With what seemed to be the caution expressed in that letter clearly in their minds, and with a sense of responsibility to the 54 out of 85 province congregations which had sent in official postulata on the matter, the members of the commission had done their work. Those postulata from all over the Society had made inescapable

the obligation of the Congregation at least to treat the matter of grades.

By early January, as noted previously in this account, each of the ten commissions had completed for the whole Congregation a *relatio praevia* or preliminary report on its work. Commission VI, On Formed Members, gave the Congregation fifty-four pages of such material. That document analyzed at length the postulata on the subject. It explored the implications of the 31st Congregation's statement that the vocation of all Jesuits is a single vocation. Then it detailed the juridical meaning of each of the grades, especially in view of the Society as a clerical religious institute, and decided, at least for the sake of information, to sketch out all the options on grades which might be theoretically possible as they affected nonprofessed members of the Society with final vows, that is, the spiritual and temporal coadjutors. Those options ranged from the one extreme of simply abolishing the grade of spiritual coadjutor to the other extreme of making absolutely no change de jure or de facto in the current legislations. The commission had also asked the delegates for their tentative informal reactions to all of the options and had provided a special form to be returned to the commission.

Now on January 20 the commission introduced its formal report. Because some of the material touched on pontifical law or on the fundamental characteristics of the Institute of the Society, the Congregation as a whole had to take a preliminary vote to ask whether it even wanted to discuss the material. That vote was overwhelmingly favorable to such discussion. Then the delegates met in eighteen small linguistic groups to discuss the specific proposals in the report. Finally, just before actual general discussion and debate took place on January 21 and 22, the Congregation invited ten brothers or temporal coadjutors from ten different provinces to sit in on that discussion, and the General invited two of them, chosen by that group, to speak to the delegates in the general debate.

Fifty-seven speeches were given. There were several fundamental themes around which speakers circled, and each of those themes, depending on the delegate's point of view, could serve as a reason for or a reason against change in the Society's legislation on grades. The Ignatian or Jesuit charism was invoked. It demanded fidelity to what Ignatius had decided, or it stood for the openness to seek those changes which best put the Society at the service of Church and world. Justice and equality were called upon,

either as values essentially social and psychological or as religious values of the gospel and of Vatican II, but in both cases mandating changes in grades. The priestly character of the order was adduced. Some saw it as linked essentially to the fourth vow and grades and therefore forbidding change, a change which could even move the Society toward becoming a secular institute. Others were convinced that neither historically nor theologically was the priestly character necessarily linked to grades or the fourth vow. It should be clearly stated that no participant on either side of this part of the question exhibited the least desire to change that priestly character of the Society. The "mission" receivable from the Pope was appealed to. Some said that only professed priests could be so summoned to such missions; others held that all Jesuits were capable of receiving those missions, and, even if not by the fourth vow, were already bound to accept them. Several considerations dealt with the consequences of change or failure to change. Some said that dissatisfaction would be rife among Jesuits if something so fundamental was changed; others countered with the evidence of the enormous number of official requests from province congregations that change be undertaken. The need or desirability, or advantages or disadvantages, of taking up change among both the spiritual and the temporal coadjutors complicated the issue. Delay was suggested. Some saw delay as the prudent course; others saw it as a sign that the Society was incapable of renewing itself and of dealing with the obvious differences between theoretical structure and lived reality.

Obviously on the minds of all the delegates was the question of the mind of the Pope on the matter. Some were sure that it was already clear and, hence, the only appropriate response of the Congregation was to drop the whole subject. Others still judged that the letter from the Secretary of State had not foreclosed further consideration of the matter. A third group thought that even if that letter had meant that the subject was settled in favor of no change and no discussion of it, still a twofold responsibility both urged and allowed a further pursuit of the issue. There was, first, the responsibility to the Society itself. But, more importantly, there was a responsibility to the Holy See. The Congregation had to make sure that officially from the Congregation itself, and not from any other unofficial source, no matter what it might be, the Holy See would hear the opinion of the Congregation on what was obviously an urgent issue in the minds of Jesuits around the world. These delegates who wished to continue to deal with the

matter said that the tradition and documents and past practice of the Society, of which they gave examples, made fully possible within the context of obedience a "representation" to the Pope. They urged this, in addition, because of an obvious inconsistency which confronted them. There were on the one hand the clear intentions of Vatican II's decree, *Perfectae Caritatis*, on the renewal of religious life, and later general declarations from the Holy See itself on the same matter; and there was on the other hand what was now presented as a particular intimation of the Pope's mind.

Finally, after all the wide-ranging and careful discussion and much prayer, the Congregation took a series of indicative or straw votes on a variety of options. They were meant to indicate to the commission the direction in which the Congregation wanted work to proceed in the drafting of a definitive text. That text would be presented to the whole assembly for its final discussion, emendation, rejection, or approval. The first question on which a straw vote was taken asked whether it was the will of the Congregation, in the light of the reasons presented and considering the very nature of the matter under discussion, that grades be abolished in such wise that all formed Jesuits would be able to pronounce the same four vows without changing the sacerdotal character of the Society. The second question asked whether it was the will of the Congregation so to act even while taking into account the divergent views presented and the circumstances noted in the letter from the Secretary of State. The third question asked whether it was the will of the Congregation that a "representation" of the mind of the Congregation should be made to the Pope. By a majority so very large that it surprised even the advocates of change, these votes indicated that the delegates were presently inclined to favor simply abolishing grades in the Society. On each of these questions, the vote was more than two-thirds affirmative. This produced a strong effect. As one of the minority was reported to have said privately, "This vote has made me think, far more than all the previous arguments. I shall have to rethink all my ways of looking at things."

Abolition of grades, of course, was not the only option, so further straw votes followed on other possibilities. Even if grades were to continue to exist, very heavy or strong majorities favored these further possibilities: removing the present conditionality of the coadjutors' vows, taking steps to increase coadjutor participation in province congregations



and possibly in general congregations, eliminating distinctions between professed and spiritual coadjutors, and revising the criteria for profession of four vows. However, lesser but still large majorities showed a willingness, with grades still existent, to abolish the one grade of spiritual coadjutor and showed willingness at least to abolish the grade of spiritual coadjutor and to permit both groups of coadjutors to take three solemn vows. A proposal to have all members become formed coadjutors first, with some of them taking solemn vows later on, lost. And finally, down to defeat by an overwhelming margin went the proposal that the present Congregation do nothing at all about grades.

Again, with a certain sense of quiet euphoria the session concluded. Nothing was decided, but at least and at last all had some sense of where a very great part of the Congregation stood at present on a most urgent question. Everyone recognized the seriousness of the straw votes in themselves for the further work of the Congregation and in the context of the unresolved uncertainties about the position of the Holy See. The regular procedure of the Congregation to keep the Pope informed of its actions was, therefore, especially important on this occasion. Carlo Martini, the delegate who had officially been deputed regularly to inform the Secretariat of State of the Congregation's actions, did so too on that very day. The results were not slow in coming. They turned the mood from quiet euphoria into surprise and deep dismay.

### 11. Missed Signals

The news of the indicative or straw vote upset the Pope greatly. The first reaction came the next day, January 23, in the form of a letter to Father General from the Secretary of State, whom the Pope had expressly commissioned to write it. The General made the letter known to the Congregation immediately. A plenary session was scheduled for the following day to address the whole matter, especially the questions raised by the letter itself.

The Secretary of State, Cardinal Villot, said that the mind of the Pope had been communicated to the General by his earlier letter of December 3 and by word of mouth, and that this ought to have been made known to the delegates. (This reference to word-of-mouth intervention was news to the Congregation.) He went on to say that since his December 3 letter was public, and since the oral explanation later given removed any doubt about the correct

interpretation of that letter and about the mind of the Pope, it should have been a major duty of the General to take steps to deflect the Congregation from moving toward positions or decisions not in conformity with the Pope's attitude. This latter remark caused yet further surprise to the delegates since it seemed to imply a fundamental misunderstanding of the position of the general in a general congregation. He presides, his opinions are taken very seriously, his influence is great, but he is not in any sense the master of the congregation and he cannot order it to take or omit any action. The Cardinal said that the Pope wished to receive a written report of the reasons which the delegates had adduced for choosing the direction indicated in the straw vote. He told the General that he should take care that the Congregation refrain from any deliberations contrary to the norms of the Cardinal's earlier letter of September, 1973, and the papal address of December 3, 1974, at the beginning of the Congregation, and that profession of four vows continue to be available only under the conditions then in force.

A long and complicated plenary session took place on January 24. The General set forth the background to Cardinal Villot's letter, and was assisted in so doing by two of the members of the Congregation who had worked with him in the measures about to be described here. In the early evening of December 17, soon after the commissions had been set up, the General, together with those two delegates who were officially and intimately involved in the work of the Congregation, went on an unofficial and confidential visit to the Secretary of State. It was unofficial because they were in no sense representing the Congregation; it was confidential because they wanted to leave to the Pope and the Secretary of State full freedom to respond or not. They told the Cardinal that it looked as if the Congregation was inclined to deal fundamentally with grades. In view of that, they asked whether, despite the remarks of the Pope, the Congregation could in a hypothetical case apprise the Pope of the reasons for which the Congregation might make a request of the Holy See on the matter of changing the present legislation on grades, always presuming the two-thirds majority vote necessary in such a case.

They made clear to the Secretary that the Congregation was completely willing to accede to the wishes of the Pope. At the same time, they told him of the great number of postulata from province congregations on the question of grades. They gave reasons for which it seemed to them not prudent to forbid any discussion of the matter right at the beginning of

the Congregation. Briefly put, those reasons were: First, it would damage the morale of the Congregation itself if it could not discuss what it thought good, and indeed necessary, to discuss. Second, it might not be good that the Pope enter into the matter even before he could know what the Congregation really thought. Third, it would not be good for the Society as a whole if the moral authority of the Congregation, the highest governing body in the Society, were to be reduced or nullified right at the beginning of the meeting. With all this in mind, the Secretary's visitors asked if the Congregation could present to the Pope its reasons, should it decide to move ahead on the possibility of granting the profession of four vows to all Jesuits. The Secretary of State replied that he did not wish to respond personally, that he thought the Pope's mind was already rather well made up, but that he would let the Pope know of this visit and of the question. All agreed that there was to be no news of the visit.

Several days later, just before Christmas, the Secretary of State asked the General to come to his office or to send someone in his place. The General sent one of the men who had accompanied him on the prior visit. On return he reported the details of the meeting to the General. The Secretary had asked him at the meeting to read a note on his desk which stated that the Pope wanted matters to remain as they were and as expressed in the Secretary's letter of December 3. Judging that the request made at the visit several days earlier was not directly responded to by the note which he had just read, the General's representative had then asked directly whether or not the Congregation could discuss the question of grades with a view to changing present legislation. He told the Secretary that it was hard for anyone other than the Congregation itself to exclude anything from its work. Cardinal Villot could not and did not wish to comment at all on the note. All parties had wished to keep the matter confidential, even though some rumors were beginning to seep around the corridors of the Vatican. Still, the delegate who was the General's representative said he would do everything to maintain confidentiality, and he had had the impression that such was also the mind of the Secretary. He reported fully to the General what had taken place.

At this point, after the preceding account of the facts as the General understood them, both of the delegates who had accompanied him corroborated the details which Father Arrupe had given. One of them remarked that certainly

after that first meeting with the Secretary of State he had had no doubt about the mind of the Pope on the question of grades, but that he had felt bound by the secrecy imposed upon all participants in the meeting. The General and the other delegate also agreed at that time that they were indeed bound by that secrecy. This obviously presented problems. The main one was given as an example. When in the usual course of conversation about grades among the members of the Congregation (who knew nothing of the visit), someone would happen to ask the General or either of his two companions what he thought personally was the mind of the Pope, each tried to indicate it as well as he could without saying anything which might reveal the meetings upon whose confidentiality they had all agreed.

There was the nub of the problem. "Confidentiality" for the Jesuits who were privy to the situation embraced both the fact and the substance of the conversations, including that they personally from those conversations had learned definitively the mind of the Pope. "Confidentiality" for the Secretary of State included the fact of the conversations, but not the substance. Hence, when the straw votes were taken, the Holy See was outraged, because it thought both that the Pope's mind was eminently clear and that the Congregation had had every reason to know it. The three men who had visited the Secretary of State were caught in the middle of several conflicting responsibilities as they understood them. They regarded as beyond question both the mind of the Pope and the obligation not to reveal how they had acquired such certainty. The General himself was stretched out between a rock and a hard place in seeming to disregard the wishes of the Holy See, both because he, too, thought himself bound by the confidential nature of the conversations and because the Holy See did not seem to understand the position of the General vis-à-vis the Congregation itself.

The members of the Congregation were now by turns and in varying degrees surprised, puzzled, amazed, angry, dismayed. They were surprised, obviously, because this was the first they knew of the visit with the Secretary of State. They were puzzled at the mutual incomprehension of what each of the two parties had understood by the words of the other. They were amazed at the position in the Congregation seemingly attributed to the General by the Secretary of State and presumably also by the Pope, and at the seeming lack of knowledge on their part as to what "representation" meant in the Society. They were angry at the blame which the letter imputed to the General and at

what seemed to many the inability or unwillingness of the Holy See to make clear and direct statements of intent, or to answer clearly the question: "May we present reasons for a change?" They were dismayed at the position in which the Congregation now found itself in relation to the Pope.

The General then opened the session to any and all comments from the floor. They ranged across the whole situation. Some asked about the implications of "representation." Several requested to know what the Pope's reasons were for refusal to allow change or even discussion of it, and how he might have been influenced to that decision. The General did not know; the Pope had told him nothing. Many wondered how to explain the situation to the Society (and to the press). Bluntly asked were questions about breaches of confidentiality in the Congregation itself. Tentatively advanced were proposals on how to correct misinterpretations. Each of the questions the General answered; each of the comments he acknowledged by a response. To the remark on confidentiality he replied that it was the obligation of each delegate to ask how he himself was fulfilling that responsibility among adult mature Jesuits. He went on to say that most fundamentally the delegates had to have confidence in each other, for without that the Congregation simply would not function. Lastly, the General spoke movingly about considering the situation with serenity and seeing in it the Lord's gift of the cross. He tried to point out the unexpected ways in which God fulfilled desires, because through this painful episode the Congregation, now at the explicit wish of the Pope, had the very opportunity it had sought, to give to the Pope its reasons for action on the question of grades. The General's remarks and the spirit in which he made them were of great importance in calming the mood of the Congregation.

A group of delegates was deputed to prepare for the Pope a full account of the actions of the Congregation on the question of grades and the reasons for them. Several days later a draft of it occupied the delegates in another plenary session, after they had had the opportunity to consider it in assistantcy meetings. When revised it went to the Holy See. Basically but at greater length it set forth what has earlier been recounted in this study. It gave a historical background and a detailed account of the reasons, one by one, given against and for changes.

In reply, Pope Paul on February 15 sent a personally written letter to Father General stating that there could be no changes in the matter of the

fourth vow and asking that all of the decrees of the Congregation be sent to him before they were to be published. There was no way, of course, that the press would not know these decisions of the Pope. *The Times* of London, *Le Monde* in Paris, the *Corriere della Sera* of Milan, and the *New York Times* were among the papers for which it was headline news, often somewhat simplified in the text if not sensationalized in the headlines.<sup>43</sup>

Five days later, on the morning of February 20, Father Arrupe had a meeting with the Pope on which he reported to the Congregation that afternoon. It had not been an easy encounter. The Pope had been very perturbed at the actions of the Congregation. He regarded himself as the "custodian" or guardian of the Society's Institute (*custos Instituti*). The essential point made at the meeting was that there was to be no legislation extending the fourth vow. He regarded fidelity of Jesuits to himself as fidelity to themselves. He was surprised that the Congregation had not understood him and had not seen his talk at the beginning of the meeting as a program for its action. He thought the possible change in grades a damage to the Formula of the Institute, particularly because, according to him, it would change the distinctive characteristic of the Society as a presbyteral order. He was also concerned that such a change might be connected with certain theological theories about the nature of the priesthood and with a thrust toward promoting justice which could undermine directly priestly ministries if it put undue emphasis on the political and social involvement of priests. This would be to the detriment of tasks proper to the layperson and the priest alike. He felt that the Congregation had not paid enough attention up to the present to the spiritual and religious life. He said that there had been deviations in doctrine and discipline with regard to the hierarchy and the teaching authority of the Church during the period since the last congregation. He stressed his willingness to see the General at any time, and the General emphasized again and again to the delegates that it was clear to him that the Pope genuinely loved the Society and hoped for great assistance from it in the difficult times that lay ahead.

For the members of the Congregation, the previous several weeks, from the papal reaction at the straw vote on grades to this visit of the Pope and the General, had been a very difficult time. St. Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises* speaks of "consolation without cause." Those weeks from late

January to that present time could have been described spiritually as a period of "desolation with cause." Popularly they could have been characterized by the term "depression." There was not the least doubt that the delegates had great respect for the Holy Father and quite deeply wanted to maintain that respect. They were happy to appeal to motives of faith in accepting his decision. They had no desire to disturb or embarrass him by their actions. Yet clearly he was disturbed. This was enough to disturb them in turn.

Equally conducive to this mood of dejection was the way in which, after a reasonable examination of the facts before them, they could not help but perceive the reaction of the Holy See. A serious group of men had been chosen by their brethren and, through postulata from all over the world, had been firmly enjoined by the Society itself to deal with a subject of great importance. They were now told that they should have known not to deal with it at all, that they were forbidden to treat the subject any further, that even the tentative treatment which in good faith they had so far accorded to the subject was a possible manifestation of even more widespread problems, and that the person who presided at their meeting and whom they greatly respected had neglected a clear duty to turn them away from a consideration of the subject of grades. It was especially difficult to understand that a decision on a matter so important to the Society had been arrived at even before the Society's representatives had gathered to discuss the matter. Who in the Society was more legitimately placed than they to give to the Pope reasons for actions which the Society had asked them to consider? When, in innocence of the Pope's attitude, they had taken up the matter, even if only to let him know a tentative judgment of the Congregation and to present it to him as a possibility, the prohibition to continue even this had implied that they were incapable of an informed judgment about the Society and its needs. The delegates could not help wondering about the unofficial sources of information and advice to the Pope which might have led to his antecedently unknown judgment and to his present reaction.

As a result, there were ambivalent feelings of dismay at failing to know the wishes of the Pope, anger at the way in which those wishes had been transmitted, and bafflement at how he could have acquired such impressions as would lead to his decision to cut off consideration before it even began. All of this to varying degrees had an obvious effect on members of the Congregation. For some delegates it was a very deep experience of spiritual desolation. In other

ways, too, the effects of the situation were evident. The work of the Congregation was tiring enough in itself, but an even heavier physical weariness fell upon many of the members. They recognized the temptation to impatience, brought on by the strain of this whole affair, and attempted to counter it by being at times almost elaborately polite to each other. Regularly there had been minor illnesses among so large a group of men; the number and variety of such illnesses increased perceptibly in these weeks. Whatever the means by which the Pope had come to think that the delegates were prone to alter the Society fundamentally, and whoever had helped to convey the mistaken impression had done a great disservice to the Congregation, to the Society, and to the Pope himself. Fortunately for the Congregation, it had in the General a person who calmed its spirit, encouraged its devotion, brought it out of its discouragements, and led it in serenity to carry on its responsibilities.

Eventually the work of the commission on formed members or grades was embodied in the very brief eighth decree of the Congregation and in several paragraphs in the official historical preface to the acts of the Congregation. The decree laid "very great stress on promoting the unity of vocation of the entire body of the Society, as enshrined in our Constitutions," and asked "each and every member to make this unity shine forth . . ."; and "to ensure that grades be not a source of division."<sup>44</sup> It also commended and urged that the "participation of the temporal coadjutors in the life and apostolic activity of the Society be further promoted" and that "the norms for the promotion of priests to the profession of four vows, better adapted by the 31st General Congregation to today's circumstances, be put into practice. . . ."<sup>45</sup>

The three paragraphs in the historical preface were themselves the subject of brief but spirited comments. A first draft had included the remark that the Congregation had not wished to treat of the subject of grades. Several members of the Congregation pointed out in the assembly with some vigor that that simply was not in accord with the facts and could hardly be voted for with any integrity. So, the three paragraphs confined themselves to stating that the Congregation had subjected to careful examination those postulates dealing with the question of grades, that it had presented the whole question, together with the reasons, to the Holy See, that since the Pope had expressed his will that the fourth vow should remain reserved, the Congregation "accepted the decision of His Holiness obediently and faithfully," and that the



Congregation wanted by means of the eighth decree to "continue to strengthen the unity of vocation of all our members. . . ." <sup>46</sup> Much remained unsaid,

## 12. Our Mission Today

Meanwhile, of course, other work had to go on even in the midst of the January and February reactions of the Holy See. So it did, but in a rather troubled atmosphere. Fortunately, on the next major topic much had been done in some serenity before the storms of late January. On the 24th of that month, the delegates had all received a draft text of almost fifty pages on the subject of "Our Mission Today." It was to be the object of vigorous debate, rigorous questions, careful explanations, and ultimately of very helpful suggestions on what to do with the topic itself and with the draft text. That text had emerged from the joint work, earlier mentioned, of the three commissions on apostolic orientations and criteria, on our mission and apostolic obedience, and on promoting justice in the world. For the rest of the Congregation the document to be proposed was the product of those three groups.

At its very beginning the text made note of its literary form. It was not so much a juridical decree as it was a message of guidance and inspiration to Jesuits everywhere. What it was proposing could not come about as the result of legislation but of insight and conversion. It tried to avoid theological positions still in dispute and it wished to look at the implications of a fundamental option to serve the faith and to promote justice in a context which was simultaneously biblical, theological, and Ignatian. The five central chapters dealt with the contemporary world and the Jesuit mission, service of the faith, promotion of justice as an apostolic priority, choices of apostolic activity in that perspective, and, finally, a "body for the mission," or the possibility of a corporate oneness across the multiform apostolic endeavors of the Society. At its conclusion this first sketch, without going into specific details, made some general suggestions about the results to be hoped for. They included reviews of and changes in apostolates, a serious, organized effort at "conscientization" and discernment, a deadline three years in the future for report to the General from each province on activities in accord with this view of the mission of the Society, a cautious but explicit confronting of the political implications of such possible changes, and international coordination and practical support for activities undertaken on behalf of justice.

After an oral introduction of the text to the whole assembly, assistancy groups met and focused on a set of fifteen propositions provided by the joint commission. Reactions from the assistancies were thoughtful but direct and even blunt. Among such reactions were the following. What the document wished to do was worthy of praise, and basically so were its contents. But it was too long and diffuse; it did not adequately integrate the two components of the service of faith and the promotion of justice; it wandered back and forth between a gospel sense and a socio-economic sense of "justice"; it did not highlight adequately the spiritual component of this concern or task; it imperiled the priestly character of the Society; it embroiled the Society in partisan and ideological politics. As if that were not enough, particular words or phrases were judged to be ambiguous, wrong-headed, contrary to fact, or pejorative.

Then individual delegates had their say after those kind words from the twelve assistancy reporters. Twenty-seven delegates had, previous to the actual debate, asked to speak; one mercifully abstained when he heard his views already propounded; twelve more delegates asked in the course of the debate to have their say. Patience was a needed virtue in the course of the debate, but it was rewarded by clarity and honesty and a genuine desire to face up as well as possible to what almost everyone recognized as a serious question for the Society in its service of the Church. The multiplicity of comments revolved around three main concerns, the priestly character of Jesuit endeavors, the ambiguities of political involvement, the frailty of the theological and spiritual underpinnings for the weighty structure and stressful activities which the document proposed.

The concerns about priestly character centered on the supposed confusion, sometimes explicit but more often implicit, in the document, between the specifically ministerial priesthood and the more general priesthood common to all the faithful, and on the unacknowledged shifts back and forth between the two. But that concern became entangled with another problem. Were activities on behalf of faith and justice necessarily first to be directed to the individual conversion of hearts or at least concomitantly to changes in social structure? Questions of priesthood need not logically be caught up with questions of individual and society, but in this debate they were. To the credit of the members of the editorial team, they heard the underlying anxieties about genuine personal conversion, no matter what the surface

inconsistencies of their expression, and the document which was finally adopted by the Congregation attempted directly to respond to those anxieties. On this same question, other delegates pointedly noted that a change of heart from sin to virtue does not necessarily bring a change of structure from oppressive to beneficent. Saints have been known to support, with a completely innocent ignorance, social structures which were viciously oppressive.

The question of political involvement drew comments and questions just as blunt. Was political involvement priestly? Why was it less priestly than intellectual or academic involvement? Should not such involvement be left to laymen? ("Laywomen" was not used; sex-exclusive language was not yet a conscious concern of the delegates.) What if there were no laypeople yet capable of taking even the first steps toward the justice proclaimed by Jesus? Why not distinguish civic action groups from political parties? Some pointed out with the anguish of experience that opponents of any change in an oppressive social structure would not allow such a distinction; any amelioration of the lot of the oppressed is all too facilely regarded as political subversion. How as Christian and Jesuit does a person deal effectively with regimes based on a social system which allows no questioning at all of the premises of that system? (No one could forget that the Congregation included delegates from other than western democracies.) No matter what the actual circumstances, could the Society really stay silent without abdicating all right to be taken seriously in a world of pressing moral and pastoral responsibilities?

A large number of the delegates were convinced that the theological and spiritual bases for whatever the Society did in the area of faith and justice had to be set down as a firm foundation for such activity.<sup>47</sup> They asked that in a revised text justice first be dealt with in the scriptural context of the Gospels and Paul and in the Jesuit spiritual context of the meditations on the Kingdom, the Incarnation, the Two Standards, and the final Contemplation on Love. Other delegates were uneasy with what seemed to them an avoidance of the awful and obvious facts of the unjust and degrading conditions in which a great part of humankind could barely exist. They worried about the comfortable ease, attested by experience, with which theological statements and pious platitudes could tranquilize even the fervent Christian and the committed Jesuit.

It had to be an optimistic coordinator of the further work of this document who said, at the end of the debate, that there were some clear points

of convergence, and it had to be almost a rash one who said that he expected to return later for straw votes on several points which would bring consensus. At this point not many wagers were taken on those possibilities even though, again, the delegates felt good that everyone had had the opportunity for an honest statement, that the basic positions had been set forth, and that the air had been cleared. In the event, the coordinator was proven right.

### 13. A Month to Go

Near the end of January, 1975, after about two months in session, the Congregation looked carefully again down the distance. It looked at the road that led to its goals and how it was to sprint or trudge toward them without being too often nudged off the path or delayed on the journey. The topic of governance had not yet come to the floor. Questions on final vows and tertianship were yet unresolved. The poverty document had yet to have a full debate. The way of best responding to the papal concerns was in the background. And always intrusive, whether one wanted it to be or not, was the simple question: When is it all going to end?

If the pace of this present narrative both moves somewhat faster and yet seems to circle back to concerns already dealt with at length, it does so because such was now the rhythm of the Congregation. Many of the major issues had had agonizingly detailed first presentations and had gone back out of sight for further development in the light of the responses they had received. Now those issues appeared on stage again, but they could be dealt with more quickly, with the final results embodied in the actual decrees of the Congregation. Some other issues of importance since the very beginning of the Congregation had yet to be treated even for the first time in plenary session. A few issues were even now new but pressing. Some questions simply would not be treated at all, and that for several reasons. Either they were matters pertinent not to the Congregation but to the General, or they were not yet mature enough, or, in simple fact, they were not so important as to keep more than two hundred Jesuits from all over the world longer in session than they need be.

Late in January the General and his council had given the delegates a list of forty-one topics drawn from the postulata. These topics had not earlier been set for priority treatment in the Congregation, but they had

been subjects of ongoing work on the part of various commissions. Now the delegates were asked to indicate which of those topics should yet be dealt with as priority items. Four of the topics gained more than two-thirds of the positive votes of those responding. Those topics were then put on the priority agenda. Three of them involved governance. The governance questions included the matter of general assistants and assistants and a council for the general, the size and the frequency of general congregations, the participation of the nonprofessed in future congregations, and the revision of the formula or rules of procedure for the various types of congregations. The fourth item dealt with final vows and tertianship. Besides these new priority items, the other central topics, of course, would be coming back to the floor in the form of definitive proposals ready for a final debate and, so the delegates fervently hoped, a final vote.

On January 28 and 29, the material on the structure of the central government of the Society came up for discussion. The 31st General Congregation had installed the current system of general assistants and consultors. The governance commission of the present congregation suggested ways in which the system could be improved in structure and functioning. The previous congregation had spoken of a "council" for the general; the commission proposed to clarify in law what this group was and to propose that on a regular basis it meet to advise the general precisely through consultation as a group. The commission also urged the setting up of a better system of communication and cooperation among the general consultors, the regional assistants (now twelve), and the expert consultants in particular areas. The right hand of the curia, as was true of any organization that large, had its own problems of knowing what the left hand was doing. Further suggestions dealt with the number of officials and the length of their terms of office, and with the possibility of having a study done of the structure and functioning of the curia, even possibly by outside experts.<sup>48</sup> All the assistancies discussed the material in small group sessions. Then the whole long morning and afternoon sessions of January 31 were very unusual exercises. Delegates from all over the world were invited to question the General and his general consultors and principal officials on the central government of the Society and to make comments on how best to improve it. After the General had presented his comments, he left the congregation hall so that the delegates would treat with full frankness questions and matters which might touch him personally.

"Communication" was the opening byword. There seemed to be real need for greater communication among all groups and across all lines in the curia. Next came the rather obvious need not to let the urgency of the immediate get in the way of the importance of long-range planning for the Society. The number of assistancies and regional assistants came in for question. One delegate from the Far East remarked, to the evident surprise of some of his western brethren, that if one assistancy sufficed for all the nations of Southeast Asia, he could not see why so many were needed for Europe! The suggestion of a management study of the curia by outside experts was seconded. The necessity that men assigned to the curia be capable of working as a team was stressed.

After all who wished to speak had had their say, a series of easy votes gave to the commission clear indications of the mind of the Congregation. The previous congregation's legislation on assistants and consultors needed improvement. A specific council for regular consultation was to be legislated for. The general assistants were to function as general and canonical consultors. There were to be at least six general consultors, and the general could name as such men who were not general assistants. General consultors were to have responsibility for certain sectors of the Society's life or work. A limit, usually of no more than eight years, was to be placed on a consultor's term of office. An outside study and review of the current international secretariats was simply suggested to the General. One proposal which was not accepted was that there be a general consultor who would serve as coordinator of the activities of the curia, somewhat on the model of an executive or administrative vice-president. The final document which eventually resulted, decree 15 of the Congregation, included substantially all of the points agreed to in these straw votes.

#### 14. Poverty Again

As February, the third month of the meeting, came around, back to poverty again went the Congregation. Round and round it went in a circle that soon became as twisted as a pretzel when a juridical controversy, which was further complicated by a procedural controversy, threatened to entangle the whole subject. To begin with the simple facts, the draft decree had two parts, the pastoral and the juridical. Edward Sheridan, the English assistant and

chairman of the commission who had worked for years on the subject, introduced the pastoral part. Urbano Navarrete, professor of Canon Law at the Gregorian University, introduced the juridical. Together they and their subcommissions had had to consider three hundred pages of comments from the delegates. As if that were not enough, more was yet to come. After quite careful and clear introductions, the Congregation voted for discussion to be held on February 3. Over the intervening weekend a scruple which some few experienced came to the forefront.

Before we recount the story of the appearance and resolution of that scruple, we should make some mention of the pastoral aspects of the document, since we have already noted the juridical elements above on pages 14-15. The introduction recalled the meaning of poverty in the context of the Gospels and of the *Spiritual Exercises*, noted the present circumstances in the world, the Church, and the Society which called for Jesuit commitment to religious poverty, and reminded the Congregation of the connection between this subject and the commitment to the promotion of justice. These circumstances were meant to have consequences in the Society's legislation which would come close to current realities and to the Society's practice in regard to a simple lifestyle. That practice was to touch both individuals and communities. For the former it would imply an honest day's work, authenticity, love of the poor, and work with and for them. For the communities it would mean resources devoted not to their own good but to that of the apostolate. For all, individuals as well as communities, it would imply fraternity across personal and provincial and national lines. For successful practice it would require both conversion of heart and revision of law.

The entangling scruple was brought to the attention of the Congregation before extended discussion began. Briefly put, the proposed legislation set up a new distinction between a Jesuit apostolic work or institutionalized apostolate and a Jesuit community and indicated some consequences expected to result from it. Were this distinction and those consequences in conflict with the Formula of the Institute of the Society and with the *Constitutions*? Obviously the commission proposing this legislation did not think so. It had already reviewed the whole question. So had the special juridical commission of this present Congregation. It had decided by a 4-1 vote that there was no problem and that there was no doubt. But some still doubted. Several distinguished canonists doing preparatory work on the material had

seen no difficulties at all. Several distinguished experts disagreed; they thought that the proposed legislation certainly went against the *Constitutions* and probably against the Formula.

If this view was correct, that the proposal "touched the Institute," then the Congregation had to have a majority vote even to discuss the issue; it had to have a 2/3 affirmative vote to decree anything new; and it had to go to the Holy See for approval of such a change. However, and this was a very important "however," if there was a theoretical doubt about the meaning of the Formula or the *Constitutions* in a particular matter, then a general congregation had the unquestionable right to declare authoritatively what the Formula or the *Constitutions* meant. So, this Congregation could, if it so wished, by a simple majority and without further recourse to the Holy See, decide what the fundamental legislation of the Society meant in this matter. What did the Congregation want to do? As a preliminary step, it wanted to hear the pros and the cons simply put.

On the afternoon of February 3, two canonists, Pedro Abellán, procurator general of the Society, and the previously mentioned Urbano Navarrete, presented and debated the issue before the whole Congregation. For some of the delegates it summoned up shades of long-gone oral disputations! Abellán insisted that there were grounds for a true doubt and that the Congregation would most prudently go to the Holy See. Navarrete argued the opposite side of the question; there was no infringement of the Institute and no doubt about it at all. Then came the voting. In two ballots the Congregation decided by a very substantial majority that the distinction was not *certainly* against the Formula or *Constitutions*. Then, substantial majorities declared that there was a doubt about this. Then a majority voted to take the route of making an authoritative declaration of the meaning of the Formula and the *Constitutions* so as to remove the doubt about their meaning. And there was no doubt at all that the Congregation could do this. A vote on the text of such an authoritative declaration would be taken the next day, February 4. But then, before the session came to an end, some delegates challenged the vote just taken on procedural and substantive grounds.

There was a way to resolve the challenge. The Congregation had a commission on procedure. On the evening of that same February 3, that commission went over all the activities of the day with great care. The next morning the Secretary of the Congregation told the delegates that the



committee on procedure, after that careful review, had found both the procedure and the vote valid. But because some delegates had said that even after the explanations given before the vote, they had still been confused when voting, the commission recommended that the General allow the vote to be repeated. After taking advice from the council of the Congregation, he agreed. Then, before the repetition of the vote, the General told the Congregation that after thinking and praying about it he personally thought that the wiser move might be to go the way of a 2/3 vote and recourse to the Holy See--even though he was convinced that the proposed legislation was good and what the Society needed--and that he hoped that when it came up for a final vote on the last draft it would be approved overwhelmingly, so that it would also gain approval of the Holy See.

Perhaps because of these comments, perhaps because the delegates were at this point understandably gun-shy of possible Vatican reactions, the Congregation now voted on the morning of February 5 to reverse its previous decision to use its right to make an authoritative declaration of the meaning of the Formula and of the Constitutions in this matter. So, no declaration was made.

Just two weeks later, on February 18-19, the final text of the document on poverty came to a definitive and overwhelming vote of approval in the Congregation. It consisted of the two previously mentioned pastoral and juridical sections. The purpose of the document in making quite definite changes in the Society's administration of its material goods was, as the document explicitly states, to strengthen and confirm the individual and communal practice of poverty in the Society. This was to be done not simply by pious exhortations but by a combination of long-needed structural changes and clear calling to mind that it is the law of the Spirit which would best interpret statutes. Law and spirit and structure and process together would determine how the Society's practice of poverty would be consonant with its apostolic works and with the orientation to the service of faith and the promotion of justice which all of those apostolates were to have.

The delegates enjoyed--if that is the word--a vivid example of how much effort process could take as they conducted the final balloting on the document. That process alone occupied more than four hours as the Congregation cast a total of 153 ballots on specific amendments, on each section of each of the two parts of the document, on each of the two parts as such, and

finally on the decree as a whole. Although there were other periods to rival it, this was probably the longest single block of time devoted exclusively to the activity of voting. That may have been appropriate; no longer time, in months and years, had been devoted to research, consultation, discussion, and debate throughout the Society on any other topic for the Congregation's decisions than on the topic of poverty.

The Congregation in sending its documents to the Holy See did have formal "recourse" for approval of this legislation. The Pope in the letter of May 2, 1975, from the Cardinal Secretary of State did approve the legislation on poverty and asked the next congregation to re-examine it "against the background of experience gained in the years ahead."<sup>49</sup> All this forms the background to the questions about the legislation on poverty which were addressed, recently in 1983, to each of the province congregations in preparation for the 33rd General Congregation.

This whole matter was a good example, one among many, of how the members of the Congregation regularly went to extraordinary lengths to insure that the voices of a minority were taken into account in discussion, deliberation, and procedure. It was also a good example of the problems raised by assembling only at lengthy intervals a large group of men who are inexperienced even in the rather normal procedures used by deliberative bodies to assure a smooth and orderly flow of business. And while scruples need to be taken seriously in themselves, and surely were in this instance, they were also an indication of how an inexperience of the history of the Society could foster a caution which makes for immobility.

#### 15. Tertianship and Final Vows

Not at all an example of immobility was the progress that now took place on the work of the tenth commission. That group, of course, had been at work through the preceding months, but now while the discussion on poverty was still in progress, the text of a second report on tertianship and final vows was ready to be discussed. Even though it had not been in the list of items for priority treatment, the Congregation approved of its coming to the floor. One reason among others may have been the realization among the delegates that there were throughout the Society more than 800 priests who had been ordained more than three years and had not yet made tertianship.

On this subject of tertianship and on that of final vows, Richard Cleary of the New England Province presented the material of the commission to the Congregation. It recommended that one need not be 33 years old in order to take final vows, that the 10 years of membership required for priests before final vows could include philosophy and theology, and that priests and brothers make tertianship together. It proposed two models for tertianship. In the first or "A" model, tertianship would be made in the year after theology was completed, with the Long Retreat in its early months, followed by diaconate and priesthood ordination, themselves to be followed by supervised apostolic work, with final vows coming at the end of that year. The "B" model followed more closely the current practice of theology, ordination, apostolic work for several years, tertianship, and final vows. A third proposal would allow both "A" and "B" models in the same province or region. The assistancy groups were in close agreement on the proposals for final vows but they disagreed on the desirability and applicability of the models. The chairman promised a swift review by the commission of all proposals for amendment and hoped for a definitive text and vote very quickly.

The commission fulfilled his promise. Within a very few days, on February 8, a final draft of the document came to the floor. After being more than two months in session, the Congregation experienced for the very first time the sense of accomplishment in bringing the whole process of producing a decree to a specific conclusion. It took fifteen votes on formal amendments and ten definitive votes on specific parts of the document to do so. First, the Congregation voted on amendments, then on a particular passage as amended, and at last on the now amended document as a whole. As that last approving vote registered on the tally board, and as the General raised up and held aloft the hand of the chairman of the commission's editorial committee, everyone broke into applause, and the comments in every language could be reduced essentially to one: "See, it can be done!" The material as finally approved is contained in the Congregation's two brief decrees 7 (on tertianship) and 10 (on final vows), and it follows basically but in some greater detail the earlier recommendations of the commission.

#### 16. Permanent Deacons

One other question of juridical status had to be dealt with. The 31st Congregation had made possible the existence of permanent deacons in the

Society, following upon Vatican II's restoration of this diaconate. At that time the Holy See had yet to make clear how this order was to apply to religious. It had done so in the intervening years and had then asked religious orders and congregations to determine that juridical status of their permanent deacons. This Congregation did so in decree 9, whereby those Jesuits who are ordained permanent deacons "will retain the grade that they already have in the Society."<sup>50</sup> Approved temporal coadjutors could become formed temporal coadjutors; scholastics could, by way of exception, be admitted by the General to the grade of spiritual coadjutor.

### 17. How Proceed?

A few days before the definitive vote on tertianship and final vows, a request had come to the General to put in motion the machinery for setting a target date as the conclusion of the Congregation. A discussion on February 5 showed more than enough frustration at the pace of the Congregation. But it also showed some who thought all the time available was needed for thoughtful care in the work yet to be done. More voting, as usual, took place. A large majority wanted measures taken to limit debate and to facilitate less important business. That the delegates meant business was clear when on February 6 they did something that a congregation is often reluctant to do. They gave to "definitors" the task of preparing the text for changes in the Formula or procedural handbook for province congregations. "Definitors" are a small group or task-force of members of a general congregation chosen by the delegates and given power either definitively to settle (along with the General) a particular item of business or to draft a text to be brought back to the congregation for a final vote. Such a text, however, is not subject to amendment by the congregation and has simply to be accepted or rejected. The willingness to make use of definitors was an indication of the growing feeling that a halt had to be called sometime and that the time could not be too far in the future. Fortunately for morale, no one ventured to predict what really happened, that the Congregation would be in session for yet another month. And just a few days after agreeing to definitors on one subject, the Congregation turned down the proposal for another, the subject of Jesuit spiritual and community life.

## 18. Jesuit Community Life and Jesuit Identity

The commission on spiritual and community life, which was responsible for treating of Jesuit religious life, had to concern itself with postulata of the most diverse kind. They dealt with the spiritual life in general and in particular, with discernment, obedience, pluralism, unity, members, community, rules, prayer, superiors, and almost any subject which touched on the internal life of the Society. In what turned out to be a very successful attempt to develop a structure within which to treat of such a variety of topics, the commission took its cue from the title of the eighth part of the *Constitutions*, "Helps toward uniting the distant members with their head and among themselves." From that beginning, it eventually developed the document on Union of Minds and Hearts. It explicitly meant to approach Jesuit religious life as a phenomenon simultaneously personal and communitarian. The document was written to provide both an inspirational context and practical directives. Finally, it harked back again to that eighth part of the *Constitutions* in choosing as titles of its first three sections, "Union with God in Christ," "Brotherly Communion," and "Obedience: the Bond of Union." A fourth and fifth section gave "Guidelines" and abrogated "The Common Rules," while commending to the General the publication of a summary of the decrees of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations together with a summary of his letters to the Society. This summary could "serve as an index of principal features of our religious life."<sup>51</sup> Finally, a sixth section tried to make somewhat clearer that part of the 31st Congregation's decree on obedience, which dealt with possible conflicts between the dictates of conscience and the superior's will.<sup>52</sup>

In retrospect and when looked at as a whole, the final document is more orderly than the task of producing it turned out to be. Suggestions had come from every quarter when the commission had handed over to the Congregation its first report, and now, in early February, its second report brought yet more comments. Add to all this the fact that the whole faith-justice orientation to the apostolic works of the Society would inevitably influence its religious life and the import of this document. Finally, roil the waters with the contretemps on grades. It was no wonder that discussion was long and earnest, even from such members as wanted the Congregation to go about its business more quickly and expeditiously.

The introductory section on principles of Jesuit religious life noted the stresses on union of minds and hearts in recent years, the rooting of union in the love of God and union with the Lord, the happily growing interest in prayer, liturgy, and the Spiritual Exercises. All of these had had a fortunate influence on Jesuit community life and on communitarian discernment, which had to be grounded in the experience of personal discernment. A consideration of the role of the superior in such discernment served as a transition to his more general role in the community and to the role of the account of conscience.

Among the practical norms which the commission thought necessary if personal religious life was to flourish were the centrality of the Eucharist, regular personal prayer and prayer in common, basic patterns in common life, discernment, spiritual direction, the superior's responsibility as animator of the community, the making of the Spiritual Exercises. For religious life in common, this second report treated of such needs as the following: membership by every Jesuit in a specified community with a particular superior, community structure, program and life in accord with the apostolates of the community, formal communitarian discernment in major matters with final decision in the superior's hands, the account of conscience, meetings among communities.

As usual, discussion on the report took place first in assistancy groups and then in plenary session. If all the individual comments on matters of minor importance were written down one by one, they would be more than this study could contain. Remarks of major importance, either because they came from assistancy groups or from several speakers or because of the subject matter, dealt with the supposedly excessive length of the text, the question of "daily" celebration of or participation in the Eucharist, the again resurrected proposal for a required "hour of prayer," and what to do about conscience difficulties in following an order. Lastly, the suggestion that the complications of subject and document might make it better revised by definitors received support from only one assistancy, no particular support from four of them, and strong reservations from seven. So, on February 7, after yet further debate, this time on how best to pose the question of what to do, the Congregation gave its report back to the editorial committee of the eighth commission with the mandate for a drastic rewriting in the light

of the comments it had heard over the previous days. One concession the Congregation did make which was an indication of its fundamental trust of the editors, no matter the number of comments those editors had had to listen to. The Congregation decided that the revision, when completed, would go to the delegates for formal written amendments and then, without further extended debate, be proposed for a final and definitive vote. That is exactly what happened later in the month.

Perhaps one of the most important statements in the document on union of minds and hearts as it came to be adopted by the Congregation was its very first sentence. "The 32nd General Congregation confirms and commends the declaration and directives of the 31st General Congregation on the religious life contained in its Decrees 13-17 and 19."<sup>53</sup> It then gave the reason for such confirmation and commendation: "We believe them to be as helpful today in promoting our continual progress in spirit as when they were formulated, and hence they are implicitly assumed throughout the following statement."<sup>54</sup> It was no secret that in the Society there were some Jesuits, and outside the Society there were people of both high and ordinary station, who thought the decisions of the previous Congregation a mistake or even a disaster for Jesuit religious life. After the experience of almost nine years, even while clearly recognizing the problems which had arisen, the chosen representatives of the Society from around the world decisively affirmed otherwise.

#### 19. General Assistants

As will be obvious throughout the rest of this account, the tempo of activity was accelerating. On Monday, February 10, the Congregation voted approval to the changes proposed in late January for the structure of general assistants and consultors. Once that was done, within a few days, on February 14 and 15 at the end of the same week, the Congregation elected four new general assistants.

The subcommittee on ordinary governance brought its revised text on general assistants and consultors to the plenary assembly together with eighteen formal amendments. The Congregation voted to accept four of them. Then in the usual detailed but necessary procedure, it took fifteen separate votes to complete its work on that revised and amended text.<sup>55</sup> The decree essentially improved and confirmed the previous Congregation's legislation on assistants and consultors of the general.<sup>56</sup> It also added to it provisions

which, it hoped, would make consultation and communication easier for the Jesuits charged with the central administration and governance of the Society. A new provision made mandatory and automatic the election of general assistants whenever a general congregation was called, whether for the election of a general or for the transaction of major business. This last provision was not retroactive, but several weeks earlier the four general assistants then in office, Paolo Dezza, Vincent O'Keefe, Horacio de la Costa, and Jean-Yves Calvez, had signed and given to the Congregation a joint postulatium which asked that such an election be held now. The Congregation in turn, now that it had passed the decree, took another vote on whether to proceed to such a new election of general assistants. The vote was affirmative. Two of the general assistants, Paolo Dezza and Horacio de la Costa, formally asked not to be considered for another term of office. The General decided to have the elections as soon as possible, after the four days of "murmuratio" or gathering information by and among the delegates about Jesuits who might be the best ones for such a post.

The elections took place on February 14 and 15. Two assistants were chosen on that first morning, one that afternoon, and the fourth on the next morning. Two were veterans in the job; two were new. Vincent O'Keefe was elected on the second ballot. He had been a delegate from the New York Province at the 31st General Congregation and at that time had been elected a general assistant. He was the only one of the four chosen at that Congregation who was to continue in office up to the present. Earlier he had been professor of theology at Woodstock College after Jesuit studies in Belgium, Germany, and Italy. When elected to the 31st Congregation he had been president of Fordham University in New York. Jean-Yves Calvez, elected on a fourth ballot, was from the Atlantic-France Province. He had been a general assistant since 1971. Immediately prior to that he had been the first provincial of all France, a post established in 1968. He came to that position after being director of the Jesuit social-research center in Paris, *Action Populaire*, and with much experience in writing and lecturing on philosophy and political science, on the social teaching of the Church, and on Karl Marx. Cecil McGarry, elected on the third ballot, was present at the Congregation as provincial of Ireland. He had studied moral theology at the Gregorian and taught the subject at the Jesuit theologate at Milltown



Park in Ireland, where he had been rector and had involved himself in ecumenical endeavors. Parmananda Divarkar, elected on a fourth ballot, had come to the Congregation by virtue of his office as the delegate of the General for all the Jesuit works which were common to the Indian Assistency. He was a member of the Bombay Province, had studied in both India and Spain, did doctoral work in philosophy, and had taught and been administrator at St. Xavier's College and at the University of Bombay. He also had been involved in ecumenics and liturgy on a national scale in India.

## 20. Inculturation

The mention of a non-Western country such as India can serve to point up a problem and an opportunity of Jesuit life which this congregation was the first to address seriously, despite the fact that Jesuits had come from and lived in and worked with lands in all quarters of the globe. It was the opportunity and problem of what was first called "indigenization" and then later in the Congregation "inculturation." In mid-January a group had been set up to reflect on and propose ways of dealing with the phenomena of adaptation as they related to community life and Jesuit formation, to philosophy and theology, and to intellectual and spiritual matters in contexts which were not those of the developed lands of Europe and North America. Members of the commission came from the assistancies of Africa, East Asia, Latin America, and India and from the Near East.

Now in February the group presented its first report. It put in organized form the postulata which asked the Congregation to take account of such inculturation. The topic had been an important one in the past year, 1974, at the Synod of Bishops on evangelization, and the Society wanted to look at what it might do for and with the Church in areas of the world where the Church was young, or in a small minority, or undergoing rapid changes in self-understanding. The report was enlightening and helpful, but at this point few expected a specific document on the subject. It turned out otherwise. After two reports, and the presentation of a very brief text, the Congregation adopted almost unanimously what is now the document on the work of inculturation of the faith and the promotion of Christian life. Its brevity is exceeded only by its importance for the possibilities it opens up both for the mission of the Society today and for the formation of Jesuits living in the midst of so many cultures other than those in which traditionally the Church and the gospel have been incarnated.

## 21. Formation

Formation of Jesuits has been an explicit concern of almost every general congregation in the history of the Society. This one was no different. The seventh commission introduced its text to the assembly on February 13. In two parts, one a reflection on formation and the other a series of directives or norms, the text dealt with three central concerns formation for today's apostolic needs, studies, and integration as the axis around which formation revolved, both initial and continuing.

Since every Jesuit has gone through formation in the Society, all Jesuits have at least the temptation to think themselves expert in it. Some without good reason succumb to that temptation. Some are more modest in judging their own expertise. Remarks came from delegates of all three types, and understandably so because the very future of the Society is bound up so intimately with the present preparation of members who are linked to its authentic heritage and spirit and who will carry on its life and work imaginatively in the future. Most of the comments agreed with the document, but stressed one particular point or other which the speakers thought especially important. Among such points were: the need to insist on excellence and the importance of serious learning, the need for adaptation in training in the very diverse cultures in which the Society exists, the importance of spiritual formation *pari passu* with academic and social formation, the encouragement of continuing education for older experienced Jesuits, and, again, apostolic purpose and integration as the central themes of all formation. After all those words, the Congregation had to decide on deeds. What was to follow and how was it to be done, given the fact that time was pressing? Despite the pressure, the Congregation decided not to leave the subject untouched by a formal decree and, just as in the case of religious and community life, decided not to turn the task over to definitors. So back to the editorial committee went the task of drafting yet another text. That text came to be the basis for what we now have as document six, The Formation of Jesuits, Especially with Regard to the Apostolate and Studies.

The pressure of time put pressure on presence too. With the meeting so long in session, some delegates had to return home before its conclusion. They could do so only with permission of the Congregation itself. Already at the end of January five delegates had to receive that permission because

of the urgent responsibilities at home. By close to mid-February two more left. Between then and the beginning of March, seventeen more members made their adieux. And even in the last five days before the meeting finally ended on March 7, another seven delegates left the Congregation. All in all, a total of thirty-one members departed during the course of the last six weeks. When the Congregation began, it counted 236 members; on its last day there were 205. This could not help but affect the work of the Congregation. It surely made quite vivid the problems which were addressed by the commission on governance when it took up the question of the length, size, and periodicity of general congregations. That subject came to the floor in a second report on February 10, but because the subject went on being discussed until the very last day of the whole Congregation, the treatment of it will come later in this account.

## 22. The Fourth Vow Again

Part of what makes specifically for Jesuit identity is the fourth vow taken by the professed members of the Society. Its extension or even further discussion of such an extension had been forbidden by the Pope. But the history, the object, the meaning, and the import of the vow had early in the Congregation been given to the fifth commission to deal with. Those subjects were still open to and, indeed, needed treatment, to judge from the postulata from the provinces. At the same time, the same commission was given the responsibility of dealing with the postulata on fidelity to the magisterium,<sup>57</sup> the way in which Jesuits ought to act in doctrinal matters, and the question of censures. Each of these questions, obviously, could influence all the others. Because the fourth vow itself had been agreed upon for priority treatment, the commission wanted to deal with it as a separate item and then with the other material given to it.

On February 7 a rather succinct text came up for discussion. It was made clear, right at the beginning, that when the text spoke of the "meaning" of the fourth vow, it did not intend an authoritative declaration in the technical sense that the Congregation had earlier discussed with reference to the document on poverty and its meaning in relation to the *Constitutions* or the Formula of the Institute. The report made clear that the vow had to be put in historical context. It suggested that Ignatius and the first companions had asked the pope for guidance in order to make the choice of

the most apt apostolate.<sup>58</sup> They then, according to the report, institutionalized this practice by adding the fourth vow to the traditional three vows of the religious life.

The object of the vow is "missions," or in present-day terms, "ministries" or "apostolates"; that is, the vow was "to go . . . wherever the popes may send us," and "to carry out whatever they may order which pertains to the progress of souls."<sup>59</sup> To the question as to whether that vow extended to doctrinal matters, some commentators expressed an opinion, not held by all, that clearly the vow itself did not deal with such matters. But it was at least possible to think of a pope giving to Jesuits with that vow a particular "mission" to teach or defend a doctrine, even a doctrine which is still legitimately controverted among competent theologians.<sup>60</sup> In any case, the spirit of the vow would urge a sincere attempt to interpret papal teaching as favorably as possible and to show respect for it. The reasons for the vow were still operative today and the service of the universal Church would be made more efficacious through this special bond of union with the pope.

The next day, February 8, the assistancy groups reported on their discussion of the document. Only a few seemed willing to accept the text as it stood. The way in which the document dealt with the question of the vow and its relation to doctrinal matters was the main point of concern. Ambiguity, confusion, untenability were among the terms used in the opinions expressed in the assistancy reports. Later on the same day and again in a further discussion on February 10, individual delegates expressed these same concerns. There was the additional concern as to whether any separate document on the fourth vow was at all opportune at the moment. Given the circumstances of the previous two months, perhaps such a document could only cause further problems of misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Eventually, on February 10, the Congregation decided by quite a heavy majority vote that the text should be revised, resubmitted in that form for amendments from the delegates, and then brought to a vote.

### 23. A Letter from the Pope

A few days later, on February 15, Pope Paul VI wrote an autograph letter to Fr. Arrupe. In it he acknowledged receipt of "the account . . . of the reasons which moved the General Congregation in voting on the problem of

grades and the fourth vow."<sup>61</sup> He confirmed his prohibition of any change related to it, worried about what he saw as "certain orientations and dispositions which are emerging from the work of the General Congregation," asked that the Society maintain and witness to its "spirituality and doctrine and discipline and obedience and service and example," exhorted the Congregation "to consider seriously before the Lord the decisions to be made," and repeated "with fatherly alarm and utter seriousness: Think well, my dear sons, on what you are doing."<sup>62</sup> An earlier letter of September, 1973, from the Pope and his address of December 3, 1974, at the opening of the Congregation had dealt with faithfulness in doctrine and discipline toward the magisterium and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The present letter in conjunction with that material rendered the whole subject far more delicate, wide-ranging, and complex than the Congregation could ever adequately hope to deal with in the circumstances of uncertainty and weariness and misunderstanding in which it found itself.

With all of this in mind, and with the added pressure of time quite obvious, the General, in his responsibility as president of the Congregation, took counsel with the general assistants recently elected and with the council of the president of the Congregation on the schedule of affairs which that body still had to deal with. Given all those circumstances, he decided not to include a separate document on the fourth vow. On the other hand, he did take immediate steps to deal with the question of fidelity to the magisterium and to the pope. The General asked five of the delegates each to write, in the context of the work already done by the fifth commission, a brief paper on "Thinking with the Church." Those five papers served as the basis for a single text which was then sent to the Congregation for discussion in assistancy meetings and in full sessions. This subject as such had not yet been formally introduced into the agenda by the Congregation's own agreed-upon procedures, so a vote was taken to do so. Then the members debated, decided on a very brief, particular decree on fidelity to the magisterium and the supreme pontiff, and gave time and space for amendments. A revised text came to the floor, and on the very last day of the whole meeting, March 7, voting took place on that text, which with several formal amendments is now decree 3 of the Congregation. The fourth vow does not figure in the document. Rather, in the form of a declaration, the Congregation acknowledges an obligation of reverence and fidelity to the magisterium and to the supreme

pontiff and of proper responsibility to the Church, supports Jesuits engaged in the works of scholarship in the service of the Church, regrets failings, recommends the application of the norms of the Church and of the Society, and commends both the intelligent encouragement of freedom and the prevention and correction of failings in service to the faith and the Church.

#### 24. Jesuits Today

The declaration Jesuits Today, which describes itself as "a response of the 32nd General Congregation to requests for a description of Jesuit identity in our time,"<sup>63</sup> is one of the last results of the work of the Congregation.

After the working commissions had been set up at the beginning of the Congregation, a kind of intercommission on "identity and charism" was established and charged with the task of keeping in touch with the work of the individual commissions and gathering from them the points which might emerge as central in describing the Jesuit charism as understood today. This group was to reflect on that material and to attempt to fashion it into a document, to be shared with all fellow Jesuits, which would depict those essential notes, that charism. On February 12 the intercommission made its first report and suggested seven possible forms under which a document on Jesuit identity might be developed. The examples presented ranged from an offering or oblation, to a profession of faith in the Society, to a prayer, to a contemporary reading of the Formula of the Institute, to a declaration. After some discussion, the delegates agreed that there should be such a document and that it should be in the form of a "declaration." For at least two reasons, no one was going to touch the suggestion of a contemporary reading of the Formula of the Institute. First there was the Jesuit concern over the relations with the Holy See and the Pope's seeming conviction that the Congregation was being tempted to tamper with the Institute. Secondly, such an attempt at a contemporary reading would have to summon up far more historical and textual expertise than the Congregation at this point had the resources to command.

There was no lack of comments from delegates on what it meant to be a Jesuit today. The editorial group received just about one hundred suggestions for its text. The next draft, when proposed, received warmer acceptance than probably any other document in the course of the Congregation. "Friendly

amendments" came its way as well as a few formal amendments. The general sentiment was to adopt the text almost as written, so that its combination of clear tone, refreshing vigor, roots in traditional Jesuit imagery, modern accent, and literary style as well as its content might come through unscathed. On March 1 the declaration received an almost unanimous vote, after the suggestion that the traditional "Suscipe" prayer be made its conclusion.

After that overwhelming favorable vote, two changes did take place. A delegate invoked the rather rare formal procedure of an "intercession," whereby further consideration can be given to a matter seemingly definitively settled. He wanted a change in a particular phrase. The Congregation agreed to the move, and an original reading, "human liberation," in the eleventh paragraph became the present "total and integral liberation of man, leading to participation in the life of God himself." Originally the Congregation had voted that the official language of the declaration was to be the English in which the document had been written. It did so in part precisely because of the vigor with which that language had captured what the Congregation wanted to say. Another intercession asked that the official text be the Latin version, with the English the original text for reference in making translations. The declaration lost much of that vigor in the rather orotund Latin, but since a Latin version was hardly what Jesuits and others were going to read and make use of practically, and since the delegates continued to be conciliatory and by now in no mood to spend much time on such matters, they accepted the intercession on March 6, the second last day of the Congregation. The preparation and acceptance of this declaration was, in the minds of the delegates, one of the most encouraging and happiest outcomes of the Congregation.

#### 25. Who and When, Long or Short, Large or Small, Few or Many

Experience had by now taught the delegates about some of the problems to be encountered in general congregations and about some of the opportunities to be provided for province congregations. The preparatory commissions had produced studies which were thoughtful and detailed and comprehensive. Most of the delegates had plenty of ideas and suggestions about what ought to be done to improve future general congregations; over the months of the present meeting, they had not been hesitant in expressing those ideas. But now when it came to agreeing on specific changes and doing anything about what they had

experienced, the members of this Congregation were at best only partly successful. A series of interlocking values was at stake. To enhance one often meant to diminish another. In several instances of proposals for improving a general congregation, this particular one could bring itself to the moment of choice but then could not choose. In other instances of such proposals, those pertaining to provincial congregations, it chose decisively and provided brilliantly for them.

On February 10, John Padberg, the delegate responsible for the section of the commission on governance which dealt with general congregations, introduced to the assembly the report which would be the basis for several weeks of intermittent discussion and work. Intermittent of course, because at the same time all of the events recounted in the immediately previous section of this history were also taking place. The present text was a revision of an earlier general report and had taken account of all the work of the preparatory commission as well as of the comments up to now proffered in the course of the Congregation. This text was at one and the same time an analysis of the experience of past and present congregations and a description of the ways in which each of the elements of a general congregation was usually linked with all the others. It also included a reflection on the fact that while the purpose of a general congregation was first and foremost legislative governance (for no other group in the Society could legislate for the whole Society), still the achievement of efficiency in coming to certain legislative goals had to be put into a context of purposes wider than the simple legislation itself. For example, one wider purpose of a congregation was to foster union among Jesuits. To confirm that, one need only note that the material on general congregations was contained in that part of the *Constitutions of the Society* which treated of the unity of the Society.<sup>64</sup>

The commission proposed four possible areas of reform which the Congregation might wish to consider. The first provided for thorough and "official" preparatory work antecedent to a general congregation itself. Such preparation would include the drafting of preliminary reports or "relationes praeviae." Reports of that kind had been prepared for the present Congregation, but they were not "official" in the technical juridical sense. So, the present commissions of the Congregation had in some instances almost reinvented the wheel, writing all over again their own reports which did little to advance what had already been prepared.



The second possible reform dealt with the number and type of participants in a general congregation. The topics raised here proved to be the most intractable when it came down to making any decisions about them. Should the by-now traditional proportion of one-third ex-officio delegates and two-thirds elected delegates continue to be the norm?<sup>65</sup> Should provincials attend only if elected? This roused the opposition of the provincials; they maintained that they had to attend if they were to implement back home in their provinces the decrees of a congregation. On the other hand, decrees cannot be implemented quickly, and it was a fact that within two years of a congregation's completion, from one-third to one-half of the attending provincials would have been replaced. Should all provinces and vice-provinces have the same number of representatives, or at least should there be a better apportionment of representation? For example, in the present Congregation there were vice-provinces with one delegate and more than twice the number of Jesuit members as provinces with three delegates. In some instances the disparity was glaringly obvious. How large or small should a congregation be? The suggestions had ranged from the present size down to one of somewhere between 100 and 125 members. A problem here, of course, was that any increase in the number of provinces would increase the number of delegates even beyond the present size. Recent history had given little indication that the number of provinces could easily be reduced. There were all kinds of reasons for reducing the size of a congregation, from simple consideration of space--the present aula or congregation hall could hardly accommodate many more members--to complex considerations of how best to employ the talents of several hundred Jesuits over an extended period of time.

Time was the common denominator of the third question. How often should general congregations meet? Should they be on a regular, periodic schedule, say every six or nine years? At one time the Holy See had imposed on the Society this provision of no more than nine-year intervals between general congregations. On the other hand, that decision had followed on a very long period when no congregation had been held, and, as a matter of fact, the average interval at which congregations had been held in the history of the Society was not many years beyond nine. No matter when it met, how long should a congregation meet? The 32nd Congregation was experiencing vividly a long, long meeting. Should it meet for a fixed time, which could only be extended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates, or, as at present, without limit, expressed by one delegate as "interminably"? The fourth area of

possible reform dealt with the types of general congregations. Might there be a congregation, numerically small, with a mandate only to handle the kind of business which a congregation alone can deal with, and a congregation, numerically large such as the present one, called both for business and, most importantly, to elect a general?

The first action required of the delegates was the preliminary vote on whether to take up a matter which might "touch" the *Constitutions*. It passed easily. Then the customary assistancy groups met to discuss the report, and later on the same afternoon all met again in a general session. The assistancy groups here, as in other instances, proved their value in cutting down on the time spent by everyone listening to a large number of individual speakers, although individual speakers were again by no means wanting.

On some points there was widespread agreement. For example, the proposal for improvements in procedure was happily received. For weeks delegates had been saying that weariness came not so much from too much work but from frustration at an overly rigid structure. The call for a thorough recasting of the Formula of a General Congregation was insistent. There was increasing recognition, too, that official preparation of first reports even before the congregation began could have obviated the redoing of so much at the beginning of the meeting. In general, the delegates were inclined to a flexible time limit for a congregation, although no one yet could describe what that meant. There was a lot of doubt about not requiring the presence of all provincials. No one opposed the usefulness of cutting down the size of a general congregation; every specific proposal was opposed for one reason or another. At the end of the discussion, the drafting committee asked that individual delegates and groups hand in written comments and suggestions as soon as possible. It was obvious that specific proposals would have to be set before the delegates in order to test waters before the commission attempted to navigate them. So a questionnaire went to all the delegates, attempting to ascertain the direction which they wanted the commission to follow in its work of proposing reforms.

Meanwhile, the work of the subcommission on province congregations was proceeding apace. As had been noted earlier, a group of definitors had been elected to deal with the greater part of the detailed material on the subject, but the General Congregation had reserved for its own deliberation and decision

the question of enlarging participation in that province gathering. Fifty-eight postulata from the provinces had dealt with opening up to a greater number of Jesuits the possibility of participation in province congregations. The editorial or drafting committee prepared material on the question, but it really could not be dealt with until later in the Congregation because, as a good example of the close interrelationship of many of the topics under consideration, decisions depended in part on questions and decisions about such other topics as grades, tertianship, final incorporation in the Society, and the general congregation itself. Finally, however, there was a long discussion in part about who should participate in a province congregation and in greater part about when he should participate, that is, after how many years as a member of the Society. At times, that discussion and voting might have sounded to an uninitiated newcomer at the meeting like an auction or a bingo game, as one number countered another. Should a Jesuit as yet without final vows be able to vote for province congregation delegates after 2 or 10 years, after 3 or 8 years, after 4 or 7 years in the Society? Could someone be voted for after 5 or 10 years, after 6 or 9 years, after 7 years, after 8 years as a Jesuit? How many members without final vows might be delegates? Were 10 better than 15; were 20 better than 5? A straw vote took place on February 24 on much of this material; the delegates decided, too, not to change the proportion of professed members in a province congregation.

The commission prepared a simplified text. On February 28 a definitive vote was taken on this most important measure to increase participation in a province congregation by introducing delegates thereunto who did not yet have final vows, just as the 31st General Congregation had introduced delegates other than the professed. Now to be involved in their most important official gatherings were more of the Jesuits about whose lives and activities those gatherings debated, recommended, and requested action. The Congregation decided that Jesuits not yet in final vows would under certain conditions enjoy the same rights to vote and be voted for in a province congregation as the Jesuits who already did have such vows. The conditions were as follows: One had the right to vote five years after entering the Society, and the right to be voted for eight years after entering. There could be no more than five such members in a province congregation and no more than three in a congregation of a vice-province. In every instance there had to be at least one such member. One proposal rejected by the Congregation was for certain provinces to have

those not yet in final vows make up a separate and distinct voting group from the rest of the province. There had also been postulata favoring participation in province congregations by Jesuits who were bishops, election by age groups, an order of preference in voting, and publication of the numerical results of the province election. None of these proposals was adopted. The General received the authority to revise in detail the Formula of the Provincial Congregation in accord with the decisions made here and, as was traditional, with the deliberative vote of members of the Jesuit curia who had a right, *ex officio*, to be present at a general congregation.

To return to the material on a general congregation itself, the results of the questionnaire indicated, sometimes by small majorities, the following guidelines for further work: The Formula (or rules of procedure) for a general congregation was to be rewritten in the sections which dealt with expediting business. Official and authoritative preparation would precede future meetings. Congregations of procurators and of provincials could be given greater authority, for example to write a report on the state of the Society or to suspend decrees of the preceding general congregation until the next one could review them. The number of elected delegates was to remain at least a majority but not necessarily two-thirds. Attendance by all provincials *ex officio* was to be maintained. Reduction of the number of delegates to about 180 was called for, but with a further report on this matter to the full assembly. There were no mandates for periodic and regularly scheduled congregations nor for an antecedent limit on the length of a congregation, nor for a double type of general congregation. Even though the delegates knew and spoke of the burdens that their own lengthy meeting imposed on everyone, most of them were reluctant to set a specified length to the meeting, invoking a hesitancy to bind a future congregation. Others pointed out that each and every decree of a general congregation binds the subsequent ones, but that they in turn could rescind such decrees if they judged it appropriate.

Eventually the decree which was passed included most of these provisions either in detail or through a commission given to the General to see to their insertion in a revised Formula of a General Congregation. This revision was to take place with the assistance of a special commission and under the conditions noted above for the revision of the other Formula. Also approved was the election of procurators "*ad negotia*" who were attending

a general congregation to certain of its offices.

The one part of this reform material which on its very last days the Congregation refused to deal with was the reduction in the number of delegates. Despite earlier and repeated determination to do something about it, despite the positive indications from the questionnaire, and despite a slender majority indicating tentative approval, the delegates were not willing to take decisive action. The topic was most vigorously discussed and at the greatest length. Every imaginable reason, pro and con, came to the floor, often with carefully modulated eloquence but deeply felt ardor. To cite but two examples: On the one hand the great debt that the Society owed to ancient provinces, generous and distinguished but now numerically small, was vividly described. No one, surely, would wish to reduce the number of delegates from such provinces which had for so long deserved so well of the Society! On the other hand, the glaring disparities in the number of Jesuits represented by delegates from different provinces were depicted with equal vividness. No one, surely, would wish to talk of justice in the world without considering the implications of justice in a matter so intimate to the Society itself! One of the delegates remarked in frustrated resignation that getting the Congregation to take action in the matter of numbers was just about as easy as doing long division with Roman numerals.

Finally, on the question of reducing the number of participants in a general congregation, this 32nd Congregation wished to do nothing. On March 7, the last day of the Congregation, it voted to recommend to the General that he set up yet another commission to study the matter in greater depth in view of acting on it at the 33rd congregation. Especially to be considered was how to stabilize or reduce the number of delegates, and how to set not only quantitative but also qualitative criteria in apportioning the numbers. No one seemed to know what qualitative criteria really meant, but that part of the recommendation responded to a concern that small divisions of the Society and less traditional apostolates have an influence on a congregation just as, inevitably, the larger and more usual ones would have.

On province congregations the delegates had acted carefully and forcefully. They adopted measures which brought about a more satisfactory participation by members of the Society. In this they continued the work of the 31st Congregation. On general congregations they acted carefully but hesitantly. In some instances they carried forward the work of the predecessor

congregation. In one instance which was experienced and recognized as of great importance, that of the number of delegates, they did only what that predecessor had done, essentially nothing. Several reasons might account for the refusal to act. First, the matter was recognizably important, but it was not as obviously and immediately so as others upon which the Congregation had spent itself with great devotion. One had only so much energy available. Then too, the Pope's interventions, which still seemed to most delegates inexplicable, nonetheless induced caution as they considered anything that might be construed as further fueling papal worries. Thirdly, although the matter of congregations was one of the priority items from the start of the meeting, many of the specific questions came up for discussion and decision only very late in the Congregation. By that time the delegates knew that they had soon to call a halt to the meeting and felt that they had not enough time for the careful reflection which that important subject demanded. Next, the specific question of numbers of delegates involved the sensitivities and interests of a great many diverse groups, and the opportunity was lacking to bring them into active involvement early and then throughout the process of preparing concrete proposals. Lastly, as students of organizational behavior regularly observe, self-reform is the most difficult task any deliberative assembly can undertake.

## 26. Full Circle

On February 25 the delegates had set March 8 as the last date for Congregation sessions. In the interval there was much yet to do. Among the most important of those tasks was the completion of the document on the mission of the Society today. On February 21, a few days before the vote on the closing date, a fourth report and a new version of the text came from the joint drafting committee of the three commissions charged with the subject. It was the result of a huge number of suggestions occasioned by the previous version in French, English, and Spanish earlier in the month. This fourth text enjoyed, if again that is the word, yet more amendments. They and the body of the text with even more amendments came to definitive and overwhelmingly positive votes on March 1 and 3. What had been the subject of strong reservations and intense debate and had seemed almost impossible back near the beginning of the Congregation was now a reality, a decree on

faith and justice enthusiastically accepted by the vast majority of the delegates. It clearly situated the service of the faith at the center of the apostolic work of the Society while at the same time putting the promotion of justice as an absolute and inescapable requirement of that service.

Also among the pressing tasks was to see how well the Congregation had been faithful to the mandates which it had received from fellow members of the Society and how well it had responded to the concerns which the Holy See had voiced. In the former case, it had only to recall the postulata over which it had labored during the previous several months. Those postulata had expressed a great variety of desires, and to them in the fullness of power committed to it the Congregation had tried conscientiously to respond. In the latter case, it had clear and sometimes conflicting indications. But it did have, most recently, the letter from the Pope which in general summarized those concerns.

In his February 15, 1975, letter to Fr. Arrupe, in response to the Congregation's account of the reasons for dealing with the question of grades, Pope Paul VI had said, "Therefore, we repeat confidently the question which we asked in our address on the 3rd of December at the beginning of the Congregation 'Where are you going?'" and he asked the delegates to "consider seriously before the Lord the decisions to be made."<sup>66</sup> In response, the General with the assent of the Congregation quickly named a special committee to look at again and compare the texts of the documents which the Congregation-- as it neared the decisive voting stage--was preparing to approve with the papal address of December 3, 1974, with the letters which the Pope had sent since the beginning of the Congregation, and with other recent papal pronouncements to and for the Society. Its chairman was Carlo Martini, previously mentioned as the liaison person between the Congregation and the Papal Secretariat of State. It had two other members, working with the four recently elected general assistants--and with Paolo Dezza, recently retired as a general assistant, as a special consultant.<sup>67</sup> This task force was to prepare a list of the items to which the Pope had recommended that the Congregation address itself, to look at the work of the Congregation and see if any items had perhaps not been dealt with, and, if so, to suggest ways in which to deal with them.

A week later, on February 24, the task force gave its first report to the delegates. It listed in detail the points which the Pope had thought of

fundamental importance for the Society; it judged that almost all of them were to be found in the documents now in various stages of final preparation and in the documents of the 31st Congregation to which the current texts made frequent reference, very often with the stated intent of confirming them. The task force thought, too, that the document on "Jesuits Today," still in preparation, admirably and in an inspiring way stated the essentials of Jesuit life. It suggested, lastly, that a prefatory decree precede the collection of documents of the present Congregation. That decree would explicitly confirm the 31st Congregation, reaffirm the essential points about the Society which the Pope had emphasized, and introduce the decrees of the present Congregation as it pointed to putting them into practice. The task force had prepared an example of such a text. It occasioned much comment in assistancy meetings and in a plenary session, especially with reference to its second part on those essential points. A further report took shape, shorter and with a different version of that second section.

On March 5, now only two days before the end, the Congregation voted to have an introductory decree, to use this second report as its basis, to have it revised and amended, to consider it in final form once more. On March 7 the revised and amended text was voted in during the second session of that last day. It spoke of the success of the efforts to implement the work of the previous congregation, said as clearly as possible that it "makes its own and confirms all of the declarations and dispositions of the 31st General Congregation," and affirmed that those documents "accurately and faithfully express the genuine spirit and tradition of the Society."<sup>68</sup> The decree recognized, secondly, that progress had not been uniform, described the reasons for that, gave examples of problems, pointed to the concerns of the Pope, acknowledged failings, and recalled that "it was to a balanced renewal of religious life and a discerning rededication to apostolic service"<sup>69</sup> that both the Pope and the General had called the Society. Lastly, it stated the purpose of the present decrees as "an invitation to even greater progress in the way of the Lord,"<sup>70</sup> pointed out that they looked "far beyond words and verbal analysis," and were "offered as a stimulus for conversion of hearts and apostolic renewal."<sup>71</sup>

As the last weeks, so the last day of the Congregation was very busy. Reference has already been made to discussion still in progress and documents approved during those weeks and on that day. During the morning of March 7,



the General and the four general assistants left the session for several hours to go to an audience with the Pope at which he gave a farewell address for the Congregation.<sup>72</sup> On their return, the General and the assistants came into the aula as the Congregation was in session, one of the assistants carrying in a large dark-green velvet and brass-bound antique case a gift from the Pope to the General for the Congregation. The General read to the delegates the Pope's address. It concluded with an observation on how important were the tasks of the Society and how the eyes of contemporary men, of members of other religious orders, and of the universal Church were turned toward the Society and with the wish that such grandly conceived hopes be not frustrated.

Speculation was abundantly imaginative as to the contents of the case. After reading the address, the General opened it and presented the gift. It was the seventeenth-century crucifix which had been the personal possession of the great Jesuit theologian and ardent defender of the Holy See, St. Robert Cardinal Bellarmine. The symbolism was clear and clearly had been known and intended. But as some informally noted later when they had reflected on Bellarmine's life, loyalty to and defense of the Holy See was only the immediately obvious message. Robert Bellarmine had indeed loved and defended the popes of his time. He had also modestly but quite directly told them the truth as he saw it, had pointed out to Sixtus V the clear errors in the Pope's editing of the Vulgate, and had at one time been temporarily sent into honorable exile as an archbishop. Bellarmine had propounded the theological theory of the indirect temporal power of the papacy, and it had been close to being publicly condemned as erroneous by the Holy See, and the book containing it put on the Index. Yet, in the twentieth century that theory was used by the Holy See as the accepted and approved doctrine, and for calling it into question John Courtney Murray was silenced, only to be vindicated by the Second Vatican Council itself presided over by Paul VI. Symbols are rich. The Pope who presented the gift knew that as well as anyone might.

Late in the afternoon of March 7, with every decree at last voted on, the Congregation gave the General the usual powers to complete the details of its legislative work (and the power to dissolve colleges and professed houses until the next congregation, a curious but necessary faculty because the *Constitutions* explicitly reserve that to a general congregation).<sup>73</sup> Fr. Arrupe addressed the delegates assembled for the last time. Then, as

at the beginning they had in the *Veni Creator* begged the Spirit's help, so now in gratitude for it they prayed the *Te Deum* to close the Congregation. Finally, for all the work of 96 days and 83 plenary sessions and more than 1,300 ballots, for uncounted committee meetings, for food and drink and light and heat and secretarial assistance, and for encouragement and friendship and prayers, the General invited in all the Jesuits, brothers and priests, who had helped the Congregation in any way, to receive in the unity of one Society, the recognition and thanks of the delegates as they concluded a Congregation which had surely been "more extraordinary than others."

## II. THE CONGREGATION ON MISSION

However extraordinary the life and activities of this or any other general congregation might have been, the Congregation was meant not for itself but for the ordinary life and activity of the Society of Jesus. Having come full circle from its beginning on Dec. 2, 1974, to its conclusion on March 7, 1975, as a congregation of the Society of Jesus it ceased to be except in Jesuit history, but as an influence on the Society it had just begun. This is not yet the time for an overall critical assessment of the Congregation, of its inner workings or of its long-term results. Rather, this present account has been a brief study of its activities so that one might better understand its current influence.

Through its members returning home, through its documents, through the members of the Society who have accepted and worked at putting those documents into practice, the Congregation has been on mission. The components of that mission Fr. Arrupe succinctly and well summarized in the letter which he wrote to the whole Society on putting into effect the decrees of the Congregation. He said that throughout the documents several concepts repeatedly stood out, and he asked that they be the touchstone to which efforts at implementation regularly return. They are the concepts of mission, of incarnation in human realities which includes "inculturation," of integration in apostolates, in formation, in cooperation among provinces, of union of minds and hearts, of community of friends in the Lord, of authority as service, of poverty, and of humble and open collaboration.<sup>74</sup> The history of that mission has so far been played out over the last eight years up to the

current preparations for its successor, the 33rd General Congregation. Neither is it yet the time nor is this study the place to tell the history of those years, nor is it the place for an analysis of or a commentary on those documents which are the sources of that influence. Many such commentaries have been written; more will surely come.

But the term "Full Circle," employed as a title for the immediately preceding section of this study, can be attached to more than simply the period of the Congregation itself. That gathering also came full circle in complementing and completing the work of its predecessor, the 31st Congregation. Together they constitute a remarkable program for the renewal of the Society of Jesus in accord with the mind of the Church as expressed most authoritatively in the Second Vatican Council. Together they developed the principles for the program of adaptation and renovation that the 31st Congregation decisively chose when it declared:

Thus it has determined that the entire government of the Society must be adapted to modern necessities and ways of living; that our whole training in spirituality and in studies must be changed; that religious and apostolic life itself is to be renewed; that our ministries are to be weighed in relation to the pastoral spirit of the Council according to the criterion of the greater and more universal service of God in the modern world; and that the very spiritual heritage of our Institute, containing both new and old elements, is to be purified and enriched anew according to the necessities of our times.<sup>75</sup>

The Congregation came full circle in an even wider perspective. Much of the contemporaneity, imagination, and daring of the early years of the Society had inevitably been lost in the wrack and ruin of the Suppression in 1773. In theory it might have been possible to restore that freshness at the Restoration in 1814. For all the fidelity, zeal, and goodwill that existed then and later, such was not to be. For a great number of reasons, some internal to the Society, some internal to the Church, some external to both, that freshness did not break forth again with the Restoration of the Society nor did it appear in the following decades. Then Vatican II came upon us and unshackled possibilities in world and Church and in the Society of Jesus too. The 32nd General Congregation, in combination with its predecessor, has given to Jesuits, individually and collectively, the opportunity to return full circle and in contemporary ways back to the élan and imagination of the early Society and of the service it gave to the Church.

That return points up, too, how radically conservative the Congregation was. It had its roots in the fundamental spirit of the Society, in the charism of its founder, in the attitudes which pervade the *Spiritual Exercises*. It was conservative, too, in that it drew from the members of the Society itself the programs which they, through preparations and postulata and province congregations, had requested of the Congregation. Finally, and perhaps paradoxically, this and the preceding 31st Congregation were conservative in being open to the future in a way that for the first time was reminiscent of the founding years of the Society.

All of this return to sources which make possible an openness to the future may have been too much to institutionalize adequately in the work and documents of the Congregation; surely the structures needed in the everyday life of the Society to carry out the decisions of the Congregation are still embryonic. But if one can move to such a future and to such structures only out of a corporate vision which brings together a variety of expectations and fashions them into coherent statements on the nature, life, work, and expectations of the Society of Jesus, statements capable of capturing the allegiance of its members in their journey to that future, then the Congregation came at the right time to set the Society on its way in fidelity to its best self.

In so many thousands of words the 32nd Congregation had tried to witness to and express the contemporary apostolic mission of the Society and the Jesuit life consequent upon it. Now the hope of their fulfillment had to rest on the Lord and on those who would follow Him and witness to Him in the community of the Church and in the fellowship of the Society of Jesus. As the delegates prepared to leave Rome, there was an ever recurrent symbol for that hope. On ground where, it is said, early Christian martyrs had once witnessed to the faith, within sight of St. Peter's, watched over by the heroic-sized statue of Jesus Christ, in the garden of the curia of the Society of Jesus, the first flowers of spring had opened wide.

## APPENDIX I

REFERENCE LIST OF THE GENERALS AND GENERAL CONGREGATIONS<sup>1</sup>

## THE GENERAL CONGREGATIONS

G.C.	Year	No. of Jesuits	Members in GC	% in GC	Father General	Days
I	1558	1,000	20	2	Layne	92
II	1565	3,500	31	0.88	Borgia	75
III	1573	3,905	40	1.11	Mercurian	65
IV	1581	5,165	57	1.10	Acquaviva	74
V	1593	8,519	63	0.73	Acquaviva	76
VI	1608	10,640	65	0.61	Acquaviva	36
VII	1615	13,112	75	0.57	Vitelleschi	144
VIII	1645	—	92	—	Carafa	145
IX	1649	—	80	—	Piccolomini	73
X	1652	—	77	—	Gottifredi & Nickel	73
XI	1661	—	78	—	Nickel & Oliva	79
XII	1682	17,655	85	0.48	de Noyelle	76
XIII	1687	—	86	—	González	77
XIV	1696	—	86	—	González	60
XV	1706	19,998	92	0.46	Tamburini	74
XVI	1730	—	80	—	Retz	91
XVII	1751	22,589	91	0.40	Visconti	76
XVIII	1755	—	87	—	Centurione	73
XIX	1758	—	89	—	Ricci	44
XX	1820	1,307	24	1.83	Brzozowski	66
XXI	1829	2,137	28	1.31	Fortis	49
XXII	1853	5,209	55	1.05	Roothaan	71
XXIII	1883	11,221	72	0.64	Beckx	71
XXIV	1892	13,275	73	0.54	Beckx & Anderledy	39
XXV	1906	15,661	72	0.45	Martin	74
XXVI	1915	16,946	87	0.51	Wernz	48
XXVII	1923	18,304	102	0.45	Ledóchowski	104
XXVIII	1938	25,683	161	0.61	Ledóchowski	58
XXIX	1946	28,191	168	0.59	Ledóchowski	58
XXX	1957	33,732	185	0.54	Janssens	49
XXXI	1965-66	36,000	226	0.62	Janssens	68
XXXII	1974-75	28,500	236	0.83	Arrupe	140
					Arrupe	96

1 This list is taken from *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus. An English Translation of the Official Latin Texts*. Prepared by the Jesuit Conference, Washington, D.C., and edited by John W. Padberg, S.J. St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977. This list is on page 577.

## APPENDIX II

Delegates from the American Assistency  
to the 32nd General Congregation

## California Province

Michael Buckley  
Charles Casassa  
Richard Vaughan \*

## New Orleans Province

Thomas Clancy \*  
Louis Lambert  
James Yamauchi

## Chicago Province

John Connery  
Daniel Flaherty  
Robert Harvanek \*

## New York Province

Joseph Browne (Procurator)  
Thomas Clarke (Procurator)  
Martin Mahoney  
Robert Mitchell \*  
Vincent O'Keefe (General  
Assistant)  
Ladislav Orsy (Procurator)  
Eamon Taylor \*

## Detroit Province

Paul Besanceney \*  
Walter Farrell  
John O'Malley

## Oregon Province

Kenneth Galbraith \*  
Leo Kaufmann  
Gordon Moreland  
Harold Small (American  
Assistant)

## Maryland Province

James Connor  
J. Allan Panuska \*  
Joseph Whelan

## Missouri Province

John Padberg  
Gerald Sheahan  
Leo Weber \*

## Wisconsin Province

Bruce Biever \*  
Paul Prucha  
John Sheets

## New England Province

Richard Cleary \*  
William Guindon  
Paul Lucey  
Maurice Walsh (Jamaica)

\* The Provincials are designated by the asterisks.

1. For a list of all the members of the Congregation, see *DocsGC31&32*, pp. 551-556.

APPENDIX III  
Working Commission Memberships  
of American Delegates

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <i>On Criteria for Apostolates</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Charles Casassa<br/>John O'Malley<br/>J. Allan Panuska<br/>Joseph Whelan</p> | <p>7. <i>On the Formation of Ours</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Joseph Browne<br/>Michael Buckley<br/>Louis Lambert<br/>Gordon Moreland<br/>Richard Vaughan</p>    |
| <p>2. <i>On Mission and Obedience</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Bruce Biever<br/>Leo Weber</p>  | <p>8. <i>On Spiritual and Community Life</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Daniel Flaherty<br/>Kenneth Galbraith<br/>Paul Lucey<br/>John Sheets<br/>Eamon Taylor</p>   |
| <p>3. <i>On Poverty</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Thomas Clancy<br/>Robert Harvanek<br/>Paul Prucha<br/>Gerald Sheahan<br/>Maurice Walsh</p>    | <p>9. <i>On Government and Congregations</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">James Connor<br/>Walter Farrell<br/>Martin Mahoney<br/>Vincent O'Keefe<br/>John Padberg</p> |
| <p>4. <i>On Promoting Justice</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Paul Besanceney<br/>John Connery<br/>William Guindon</p>                            | <p>10. <i>On Final Incorporation<br/>into the Society</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Richard Cleary<br/>James Yamauchi</p>  |
| <p>5. <i>On the 4th Vow</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Thomas Clarke<br/>Ladislav Orsy</p>   |   |
| <p>6. <i>On Formed Members</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Leo Kaufmann<br/>Harold Small</p>  |   |

## APPENDIX IV

## List of All the Members of the Working Commissions

The Commission on Screening Postulata, together with the Congregation's presiding officer, Father General, handed out commission (or committee) assignments over the weekend of December 14-15, 1974. Previously all the delegates had indicated to their respective assistancy groups their special interests with regard to the various commission topics. The groups then recommended members from their ranks for each of the ten commissions created on December 12. The following list will name the members appointed to each commission with an abbreviated reference (from the Latin titles) to assistancy membership.

AF = African Assistancy	GA = French Assistancy
AM = American Assistancy	GE = German Assistancy
ALM = South Latin American	HI = Spanish Assistancy
ALS = North Latin American	IN = Italian Assistancy
AN = English Assistancy	SL = Slavic Assistancy
AO = East Asian	

## THE COMMISSIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS

I - ON CRITERIA FOR APOSTOLATES: AF - Xavier Tabao; AM - Charles Casassa, John O'Malley, J. A. Panuska, Joseph Whelan; ALM - Jorge Bergoglio, Joaquin Pina Battlevell, Hindenburg Santana; ALS - Luis Achaerandio, Carlos Soltero González; AN - Edouard Boné, Patrick Malone, Louis Van Bladell; AO - Robert Hardawiryana, Vicente San Juan; GA - Peter Hans Kolvenbach; Alain de Survilliers; GE - Eduard Huber, Gedimines Kijauskas; HI - Melecio Agúndez, Alfonso Alvarez-Bolado, Urbano Valero, José Vives; IN - Leo Cachet; IT - Enrico Baragli, Tarcisio Botturi; SL - Paul Berden, Tadeuz Koczwara.

II - ON MISSION AND OBEDIENCE: AF - Victor Mertens; AM - Bruce Biever, Leo Weber; ALS - Enrique Gutierrez Martin del Campo; AN - Gerard Hughes, Louis Laurendeau; AO - Mark Fang, Michael Mutsuo Yanase; GA - Marc Hoël; GE - Bernward Brenninkmeyer; HI - Ignacio Iglesias, Luis Sanz Criado, Manuel Segura; IN - Noel D'Souza, Philip Ekka; IT - Paolo Molinari; SL - Stephan Moysa-Rosochacki; ALM - Enrique Fabbri.

III - ON POVERTY: AF - Meinrad Hebga; AM - Thomas Clancy, Robert Harvanek, Paul Prucha, Gerald Sheahan, Maurice Walsh; ALM - Antonio Menacho, Laercio



Dias de Moura; ALS - Gerardo Arango; AN - Florian Lariviere, Edward Sheridan; AO - Shogo Hayashi, Paul Suradibrata; GA - Michel Dortel-Claudot, Edmond Vandermeersch; GE - Eugen Hillengass, Johann Pilz, Herbert Roth; HI - Manuel Cuyás, Ignacio Moragues, Urbano Navarrete, Tomás Zamarriego Crespo; IN - Paul Vadakel; IT - Donato Petruccelli, Mario Scaduto; SL - Miljenco Belic.

IV - ON PROMOTING JUSTICE: AF - Ekwa bis Isal, Michael Hannan; AM - Paul Besanceney, John Connery, William Guindon; ALM - Leopoldo Adami, Ignacio Grez Reyes, Alberto Sily; ALS - Gustavo Jiménez, Xavier Scheifler; AN - Guy Bourgeault, William Ryan; AO - Catalino Arevalo, Benigno Mayo; GA - Noël Barré, Bernard Lapize de Salée; GE - János Adam, Heinrich Krauss; HI - Juan Alfaro, Emmanuel Antunes, Luis Vela Sanchez; IN - Ambrose D'Mello, Joseph Knecht, Arul Maria Varaprasadam; IT - Bartolomeo Sorge; SL - Jan Popiel.

V - ON THE 4TH VOW: AF - Charles Remy Rakotonirina; AM - Thomas Clarke, Ladislav Orsy; ALM - José Luis Fernández-Castañeda, Juan Ochagavía; ALS - Gustavo Sucre; AN - Simon Decloux, Bernard Hall; AO - William Daniel, Miguel Mendizábal; GA - Louis de Vaucelles; GE - Johannes Günter Gerhartz, Walter Kern; HI - Pedro Abellan, Héctor Domínguez; IN - Vito Perniola; IT - Iginio Ganzi, Roberto Tucci; SL - Josef Kolacek.

VI - ON FORMED MEMBERS: AF - John Counihan; AM - Leo Kaufmann, Harold Small; ALM - Joaquim Figuerido Pereira; ALS - Fernando Londoño Bernal, Mariano Tomé; AN - Julien Harvey, Roger Troisfontaines; AO - John Russell; GA - André Costes; GE - Georg Hoffmann, Johannes Schasching, Friedrich Wulf; HI - José Arroyo López, Antonio Leite; IN - Parmananda Divarkar, Casimir Gnanadickam; IT - Angelo Macchi; SL - Antoni Mruk.

VII - ON THE FORMATION OF JESUITS: AF - Pasupasu; AM - Joseph Browne, Michael Buckley, Louis Lambert, Gordon Moreland, Richard Vaughan; ALM - Jesús Hortal, Fernando Montes; ALS - Luis Cruz, Francisco Pérez-Lerena; AN - James McPolin, Michael Kyne; AO - Bernard Chu, Patrick O'Sullivan; GA - Jean Odilon de Varine-Bohan, Claude Viard; GE - Emerich Coreth, Vitus Seibel; HI - José Aldecoa, Marcos Diaz Bertrana, Francisco Javier Egaña; IN - Thomas Athazhapadam, Bertram Philipps; IT - Alfredo Marranzini, Ugo Vanni; SL - Josip Curić, Roman Darowski, Stephan Miecznikowski.

VIII - ON SPIRITUAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE: AF - Pelenda Bikakala; AM - Daniel Flaherty, Kenneth Galbraith, Paul Lucey, John Sheets, Eamon Taylor; ALM - Carlos Meharu, Quirino Weber; ALS - Ignacio Huarte; AN - Joseph Dargan, Luk de Hovre; AO - John Begley, Anthony Soenarja; GA - Henri Amet, Henri Chabert; GE - Erhard Kunz, Hans van Leeuwen; HI - Avelino Fernández, Angel Tejerina Díez, Juan Torres Gasset; IN - William Dullard, Patrick Kullu; IT - Sergio Rendina, Carlo Vergnano; SL - Petar Galauner.

IX - ON GOVERNMENT AND CONGREGATIONS: AF - Philibert Randriambololona; AM - James Connor, Walter Farrell, Martin Mahoney, Vincent O'Keefe, John Padberg; ALM - Felipe MacGregor; ALS - José Luis Echeverría, Benito Blanco; AN - Eugene De Cooman, Cecil McGarry; AO - Herbert Dargan; GA - Jacques Lesage; GE - Stefan Bamberger, Peter Huizing; HI - Manuel Gutiérrez Semprún, Mariano Madurga; IN - Romuald D'Souza, John Guidera; IT - Roberto Bortolotti, Paolo Dezza; SL - Sigismund Perz.

X - ON FINAL INCORPORATION INTO THE SOCIETY: AF - Joaquim Leão; AM - Richard Cleary, James Yamauchi; ALM - Luciano Mendes de Almeida, Ignacio Muguero Gil de Biedma; ALS - Manuel Acévez; AN - Terence Walsh; AO - Charles McCarthy; GA - Yves de Colnet; GE - Jan van Deenen; HI - Julio Moreira Fragata; IN - Douglas Gordon; IT - Giovanni Giorgianni; SL - Stefan Senčik.

FOOTNOTES

## A B B R E V I A T I O N S      Used in the Appendices and Footnotes

<i>ActRSJ</i>	<i>Acta Romana Societatis Iesu</i>
<i>Cons</i>	<i>The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus</i>
<i>ConsMHSJ</i>	<i>Constitutiones Societatis Iesu</i> , the 4 volumes in the series of the Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu
<i>DocsGC31&amp;32</i>	<i>Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations S.J.</i>

- 1 For a general overview of past general congregations, see John W. Padberg, S.J., "The General Congregations of the Society of Jesus: A Brief Survey of Their History," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, VI, nos. 1 and 2 (Jan. and March, 1974).
- 2 *Cons*, [680].
- 3 Current norms generally allow the subject matter dealt with in a Congregation to be known publicly, but particular opinions advanced in the Congregation are not to be attributed to specific persons. The outcome of voting can be revealed, but not the number of votes received by different persons. See the *Formula Congregationis Generalis*, no. 31, 3, in *ActRSJ*, XVI (1976), 836.
- 4 *ActRSJ*, XV (1970), 613.
- 5 At Easter, 1972, Fr. Arrupe wrote to Pope Paul VI that he intended to call a general congregation in 1974 or early 1975, and that he was therefore canceling the congregation of provincials which, according to decree 39 of the 31st General Congregation, would have been held in 1973. This would have been the very first such congregation of provincials; it is a new gathering, alternating with the congregation of procurators. Cardinal Villot, Vatican Secretary of State, acknowledged on behalf of Pope Paul VI the General's letter on April 18, 1972.
- 6 Letter of Convocation, Sept. 8, 1973, in *ActRSJ*, XVI (1972), 109-115.
- 7 *ActRSJ*, XIV, 970.
- 8 The source for this material on the delegates is the *Elenchus Patrum Congregationis Generalis XXXII* (Roma: apud Curiam S.J., 1974); for the members, see also *DocsGC31&32*, pp. 551-556.
- 9 See, in Appendix II above, p. 92, the complete list of the delegates from the ten provinces of the United States.
- 10 See the recent study by John W. O'Malley, S.J., "The Fourth Vow in Its Ignatian Context: A Historical Study," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, XV, no. 1 (Jan., 1983).
- 11 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 113 (d. 9, no. 1 of GC 31).
- 12 *Ibid.*, (d. 6, nos. 5-8 [marginal nos. 137-140]).
- 13 Sometimes forgotten by older members of the Society, or unknown by those who entered the Society since 1966, is the sweeping statement early in

the 31st Congregation about such a renovation and adaptation: "Thus it has determined that the entire government of the Society must be adapted to modern necessities and ways of living; that our whole training in spirituality and in studies must be changed; that religious and apostolic life itself is to be renewed; that our ministries are to be weighed in relation to the pastoral spirit of the Council according to the criterion of the greater and more universal service of God in the modern world; and that the very spiritual heritage of our Institute, containing both new and old elements, is to be purified and enriched anew according to the necessities of our times" (GC 31, d. 2, no. 3, in *DocsGC31&32*, p. 74).

- 14 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 85 (GC 31, d. 4, no. 3) (marginal nos. 50, 52).
- 15 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 88 (GC 31, d. 5, no. 2) and p. 92 (GC 31, d. 7, no. 6).
- 16 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 174 (GC 31, d. 18, no. 20c).
- 17 The distinction of thus making tuition charges possible in Jesuit schools goes to St. Louis University. It received the original dispensation, upon which all other Jesuit schools depended in this matter until the 31st Congregation.
- 18 As one of the delegates remarked, the purpose of summoning a general congregation was to enable the Society to look at itself, to consider its present circumstances, and to chart its future. It was not supposed to gather simply so that before it ever began it could be told by the Pope what to do. He had regular and ample enough ways of doing that should he so wish, and the Society would accede to his wishes, but a general congregation would be impeded in its very reason for existence.
- 19 *DocsGC31&32*, pp. 519-536. Address of Pope Paul VI, Dec. 3, 1974.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 536.
- 21 A little later Fr. Martini became rector of the Gregorian University, and he is now the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan.
- 22 The prize for imagination run riot went--for the time being--to a hilarious account in a Flemish-Dutch newspaper which said that among the subjects of discussion for the Congregation would be the resignation of the Pope, and that if Paul VI did resign, the Jesuit General, Fr. Arrupe, could be expected to put forward his candidacy for the papacy, even if only to set a precedent!
- 23 A full list of the membership of each of these working commissions is given in Appendix IV to this study, p. 94 below.
- In addition, during the course of the Congregation, several other groups or ad-hoc committees were set up. They dealt, for example, with the educational apostolate, the Roman institutions of higher education entrusted to the Society, chastity, inculturation, and implementation of the Congregation. Most of the groups gave reports to the whole Congregation. Only the one on inculturation actually became the basis for a decree of the Congregation. The work on the Roman houses went to the General and to a special meeting of provincials; the work on chastity, done in cooperation with the commission on formation, to the General.
- 24 *DocsGC31&32*, Doc. II, Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State to Father General, Dec. 3, 1974, pp. 537-538.

- 25 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 532.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 536.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 535.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 537.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 537-538. The original Italian of the sentence and its Latin translation are as follows: "A questo proposito, il Sommo Pontefice . . . desidera che Le sia comunicato che tale innovazione, ad un attento esame, sembra presentare gravi difficoltà, che impedirebbero la necessaria approvazione da parte della Santa Sede." "In hunc finem, Summus Pontifex . . . desiderat ut tecum communicetur talem innovationem, sub luce accurati examinis, videri graves difficultates praesentare, quae necessariam ex parte Sanctae Sedis approbationem impedirent." See *Decreta C.G. XXXII* (Romae: Apud Curiam Praepositi Generalis, 1975), pp. 178-179, for full texts of both versions. The letter was immediately translated into the several vernacular languages used by the Congregation itself.
- 30 The Italian *sembra* and *impedirebbero* and the Latin *videri* and *impedirent* gave this indication.
- 31 GC 32, Session of Dec. 20, 1974, as reported in *News: GC 32*, Dec. 20, 1974.
- 32 By the end of the Congregation all of the delegates had received at least 2,000 pages of material, not including the dozens or hundreds of further pages which each individual delegate received from his particular commission.
- 33 At one of those houses no delegate could ever get from the mother superior a key to the house. Instead, they were told, a sister would wait at the door for them, no matter the hour at which they came in. One of the delegates was tempted on the feast of St. Peter publicly to petition the Saint in the collect prayer for one of his keys.
- 34 *Spiritual Exercises*, [22].
- 35 One delegate, having heard wrongly indicted for one aberration or another many of the institutions of his province except the one to which he belonged, wondered wryly whether his community and apostolate were doing anything at all.
- 36 If "on the one hand" alternates with "on the other" in an obvious regularity in this present account, it is because the report itself moved in exactly the same way. If the report itself thus saw both sides of a situation, it was because, in its estimation, such was the reality. Anathemata and accolades are impressive when they stand alone. They do, however, in that case have the obvious inconvenience of falsity.
- 37 *News: General Congregation 32*, January 8, 1975.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 *Ibid.*
- 40 In Rome, where everything means something, it had not passed without notice that after two hundred years of almost total obscurity, Clement XIV, the pope who suppressed the Society, was the subject of a laudatory

article in *Osservatore Romano* on December 3, 1974, the day of the address by the Pope to the delegates. The occasion for the article was the second centenary of Clement's death in 1774, but that had occurred some months before, in July. The article even noted that "some, it is even said, have received divine graces and temporal favors through his intercession."

- 41 Subsequent events, in the immediate future of the Congregation and now in the immediate past of the Society, make clear that the General's assessment of the state of relationships was far too optimistic.
- 42 It is interesting to note that all the direct communications with the Holy See on this present subject as well as on the Congregation in general went not through the Vatican Congregation for Religious, to which in the usual course of events matters dealing with religious orders would go, but rather through the Secretariat of State, the overall coordinating Vatican office with direct and regular, even daily, access to the Pope.
- 43 For example, the headlines in the *New York Times* were "Pope Paul Vetoes Jesuits' Reforms: Democratization Move in Order Meets Resistance from the Vatican" (*New York Times*, Feb. 28, 1975).
- 44 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 461 (d. 8, no. 1 [marginal no. 191]).
- 45 *Ibid.*, (d. 8, no. 2 [marginal no. 192]).
- 46 *Ibid.*, GC XXXII, Historical Preface, no. 15, pp. 373-375, esp. 375. As a matter of fact, all but less than a dozen of the total membership of the Congregation had in the straw vote responded affirmatively to the question of whether the Congregation should deal with the subject of grades, and almost three-quarters of the delegates, again in the straw votes, had opted for the possibility of simply abolishing grades.
- 47 It did become theologically a little complicated when one delegate got to "justice" only by starting with the internal processions of the Trinity.
- 48 This last suggestion was more unusual than might at first appear. For example, in all the preparations for the 31st and 32nd General Congregations, no formal or explicit suggestion seems to have been made for the use of outside consultants. In the actual carrying on of the two congregations, the Society seems never even to have considered the possibility that it might be helped by persons or agencies which were not Jesuit.
- 49 *DocsGC31&32*, Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State to Father General, May 2, 1975 (pp. 545-549).
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 462 (d. 9, no. 2 [marginal no. 194]).
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 484 (d. 11, no. 54 [marginal no. 255]).
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 485 (d. 11, no. 55 [marginal no. 256]); see also p. 163, marginal no. 279.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 467 (d. 11, no. 1 [marginal no. 199]).
- 54 *Ibid.*
- 55 As the voting sessions increased in this last month, the members could only bless the Lord in his creature electricity; for without the electronics of the tally board, the balloting procedures would have kept the meeting in session long beyond its eventual completion in March.

- 56 *DocsGC31&32*, pp. 274-276 (d. 44 of GC 31).
- 57 The term "magisterium" seemed to have a variety of meanings in the postulata, and that added to the difficulties of a clear and adequate definition of what was being dealt with.
- 58 This reading of the sequence of intent and action is not universally accepted. For a differing view, see John W. O'Malley, S.J. "The Fourth Vow in Its Ignatian Context," in the recent issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, XV, no. 1 (January, 1983). However, both he and the author of the report in the Congregation would agree completely on the prime necessity of serious historical studies in order to understand what Ignatius and the early Society meant by the fourth vow--especially if it is to make sense as "nuestro principio y principal fundamento" (*ConsMHSJ*, I, 162) and to function for Jesuits today as a symbol of the "apostolic dynamism of the Society" (see O'Malley, op. cit., p. 45).
- 59 The Formula of the Institute, of 1540 and again of 1550, *ConsMHSJ*, I, 27-28 and 377-378, cited in English by O'Malley, op. cit., pp. 46-47.
- 60 Here too there is sharp current disagreement on whether the vow can extend to such a teaching or defense of a doctrine. See, for example, José García de Madariaga, S.J., "The Jesuit's Fourth Vow: Can It Extend to What He Teaches?" *Review for Religious*, 41 (1982), 214-238, for an affirmative reply and, for an opposing view, John W. O'Malley, S.J., op. cit. above in fn. 59. O'Malley's article gives references to the Spanish original of Madariaga's article and to other studies of this question in several languages.
- 61 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 539, Letter of Pope Paul VI to Father General, Feb. 15, 1975.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 540.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 401 (d. 2, no. 2, the subtitle).
- 64 *Cons*, [655-718]: PART VIII, "Helps toward Uniting the Distant Members with Their Head and among Themselves."
- 65 Contrary to common opinion, this was not mandated by present legislation.
- 66 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 540.
- 67 Fr. Dezza had for many years been a consultant to various Vatican offices. He was at this time also confessor to Pope Paul VI.
- 68 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 395 (d. 1, no. 2).
- 69 *Ibid.*, (no. 5).
- 70 *Ibid.*, (no. 7).
- 71 *Ibid.*, (no. 9).
- 72 *Ibid.*, pp. 542-544, Address of Pope Paul VI in the Presence of Father General and the General Assistants, March 7, 1975.
- 73 *Cons*, [322, 441, 680, 763].
- 74 *ActRSJ*, XVI (1976), 544-548, Letter to the Whole Society concerning the Implementation of the Decrees of General Congregation 32.
- 75 *DocsGC31&32*, p. 74 (GC 31, d. 2, no. 3 [marginal number 21]).

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