





# STUDIES

## in the Spirituality of Jesuits

Eliciting Great Desires:  
Their Place in the Spirituality  
of the Society of Jesus  
by  
E. Edward Kinerk, S.J.



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

## 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 to 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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## ELICITING GREAT DESIRES:

### Their Place in the Spirituality of the Society of Jesus

by

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#### Introduction

One of the paradoxes of the group of early Jesuits was that Ignatius attracted to his company men like Pierre Favre and Jerónimo Nadal. A Francis Xavier we would expect: he and Ignatius came from the same fiery soil. But Favre and Nadal were timid men, often depressed, and bothered by self-doubts--hardly promising material for the spiritual and apostolic rigors of the Society. Nonetheless, Ignatius saw beyond their fears, and he uncovered in them intense desires to follow Jesus Christ and give service in His name. We know the rest: Nadal is considered our greatest source for understanding the mind of Ignatius, and we honor Favre as a "blessed" of the Church.

It was the genius of Ignatius ordinarily to win his men to his viewpoints, rather than to impose on them or the Society a particular way of responding to the gospel. He went to great pains to draw the best out of his men by helping them to discover for themselves what they most deeply desired; and he always assumed that the most effective and energetic Jesuits would be those who could generate their own zeal. In fact, he did not want any other kind around, since the far-flung and ambitious mission of the Society demanded men whose energy and apostolic desires would in turn be sources of animation for others.

#### A. Desire

Desire is an enormously complex word. In spirituality we talk about "holy" desires, desires which orient a person towards God and which are considered, therefore, to be graces from him. In competitive athletics we hear men and women speak about that spark of desire which transforms a mediocre team or performer into a champion. In our schools we promote the desire for

excellence, which in its most positive rendering indicates a desire to develop one's talents to the fullest in order to place them at the service of others. We also speak of desires for love, for companionship, for meaning; and we know, too, the strength behind our sexual desires as well as our desires for food, drink, and the like.

Desires are powerful. A particular desire might be weak, or we might be timid in carrying it out, but there is nothing passive or emasculated about the word itself. Desires give powerful and energetic orientations to the psyche. Catherine of Siena, by no means a shy and retiring type, began her *Dialogue* by describing herself as "restless with tremendous desire for God's honor and the salvation of souls."<sup>1</sup> Such is the power of our desires, Catherine declared, that they are one of the few ways of touching God because "you have nothing infinite except your soul's love and desire."<sup>2</sup>

Desires are passions and from this they derive their strength. Even "holy" desires tap into an energy which is at least partially physical, and if a man or woman is called a person of great desires--as all saints are--we do not expect a bloodless, unfeeling soul but someone who is great-hearted with a depth of human compassion. Of course, power may also prove dangerous, and strong desires always hint of risk. They can be ravenous and compulsive: some enslave us and others dissipate our energies by pulling our hearts in opposite directions.

Our desires generate power, physical energy, and often peril, but they also galvanize our spirituality and our mission as Jesuits. If we hesitate too much, if we are timid about our stronger desires for God and his service, we will have failed to utilize the greatest source of human vitality and passion which God has given us. Likewise, if we vacillate because of an unwillingness to let go of desires which conflict with our mission and vocation, we will endlessly burn away our limited energies in needless frustration. In either case we rob ourselves of the wholesome happiness which God intends for his servants and which Ignatius envisioned for his companions. This essay is about desire in Jesuit spirituality and about the power latent in our desires to make us happy apostolic men.

## B. Definitions and Presuppositions

At the risk of freightening the essay with useless technicalities, perhaps some clarifications in the beginning will avoid confusion later on. Webster's



complete definition looks best in a footnote,<sup>3</sup> but streamlined it says that a desire is an *inclination* toward some *object* accompanied by a *positive affect*. The quality of a desire is determined by the object whereas its intensity comes from the affect. This is all quite consistent with Ignatius' use of the term some five hundred years ago, although he was hardly one for definitions.

Fears can be thought of as desires with a negative pole. While the essay is primarily concerned with desires, much of what will be said about the effects of conflicting desires applies equally to fears. Thus a person could be paralyzed by desiring options which are mutually exclusive, or by desiring an object and fearing it at the same time, or by fearing two options when one of them must be chosen.

I have four overlapping presuppositions about desires. It would require a book to explain them fully, but I offer them in their present baldness as one possible framework for speaking about desires in the spiritual life.

*First:* All desires are real experiences, but not all desires are equally authentic. For example, a Jesuit who has been hurt by another might experience both a desire for revenge and a desire to forgive, but he would probably regard the desire to forgive as more authentic. He would say that the desire to forgive springs from a more profound level of himself: "I feel more truly myself when I imagine myself forgiving, and I experience alienation from myself when I harbor the desire for revenge. The desire to forgive is more authentic because it more accurately expresses what the Jesuit *really* wants, even though the desire for revenge might be more intense. In the language of Thomas Merton, authentic desires come from our "true selves" instead of our superficial "false selves."<sup>4</sup> In the language of Ignatius, authentic desires come from--or at least are supported by--the action of the good spirit.<sup>5</sup>

*Second:* Our authentic desires are vocational. The question "Who am I?" can never be answered directly. Only by asking the further question "What do I want?" do we begin to approach the nature of our unique vocations in life. The more honestly we seek to identify authentic desires, the more these desires will reveal what we really want and who we really are. Jesuit vocation directors place great emphasis on a candidate's *desire* to become a Jesuit, because probing this desire will reveal the heart of the man. Someone may want to be a Jesuit because he went to a Jesuit school and liked his

teachers, because he wants to belong to a group committed to justice, or because he experiences deep peace whenever he imagines himself in the Society. These and a thousand other factors--some only dimly known, if at all--influence and shape desires; and these factors are necessary, for desires can take form only in the soil of our environments and personal histories. The task of both examiners and candidate is to see if the man's desire to be a Jesuit is also rooted in freedom.

*Third:* The more authentic our desires, the more they move us to glorify God. Every human being experiences in some measure a restless longing for God, and we believe that whenever we sincerely respond to this desire we are also responding to God's grace. Our most authentic desires ultimately spring from this level of ourselves. They are not always expressed in explicitly religious language, but they always take a form which rejects self-centeredness in favor of self-donation to God and to others. At this level the distinction between "what *I* desire" and "what desires *God* gives me" begins to blur. The more profoundly we reach into ourselves, the more we experience desires which are uniquely our own but also God-given.<sup>6</sup>

*Fourth:* Authentic desires are always in some way public. This is a paradox, for certainly our desires reflect what is most uniquely personal in ourselves, but at the same time the more deeply we go into ourselves the more these uniquely personal desires manifest a communal reference point instead of an individual one. Superficial desires--such as those linked to consumerism--demonstrate all too graphically our cultural narcissism, but more authentic desires always lead us out of ourselves and into the human community. When desires to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to use our gifts for the service of others become more compelling than private concerns, we will know that we have matured spiritually.

A final technical point regards Ignatius' own vocabulary. In the sources used for this study, Ignatius always used the Spanish word *deseo*. Not only does this hold true for sources which we know came from his own hand, such as the earlier letters and text "a" of the *General Examen*, but we also find the same Spanish word in the *Autobiography* (Cámara's choice) and the later letters (Polanco's choice). The single exception is the final occurrence of the word in the *Autobiography*, where Cámara changed to Italian and used *desiderio*.

This essay has four sections. The first will review desire in the life

of Ignatius. The second will outline Ignatius' "methods" for evoking and harnessing the energies of desire in the lives of others, his "schooling" of desires. The third section will examine the desires which Ignatius considered essential in a Jesuit, and in the fourth section I will offer some concluding reflections on the place of desire in our Jesuit lives today.

## I. DESIRES IN THE LIFE OF IGNATIUS

### A. A Man of Desires

Nadal once said that God chose Ignatius to found the Society of Jesus, not because of any intrinsic merit or goodness on his part, but "because of his character, a man of great energy, magnanimous, who in battle never admitted defeat."<sup>7</sup> It would be hard to find a better description of the man. By nature he reacted quickly to the stirrings of his own intense desires; he was undaunted by difficulties, ever ready to expend himself totally. For the first thirty years of his life he gladly sacrificed everything--including a prudent concern for his own and others' safety at Pamplona and a piece of his leg at Loyola--to his "great and vain desire to win fame."<sup>8</sup> When God finally called this willing but unenlightened knight into his service, it was not so much through a remorse for past sins but through the stimulus of a desire even more powerful than the desire for honor. Lying in bed in his brother's castle he noticed that he wanted to do what Francis and Dominic had done even more than he wanted to perform great feats in the service of noble ladies.<sup>9</sup>

Ignatius told the Jesuits at Ferrara to "endeavor to conceive great resolves and elicit equally great desires."<sup>10</sup> This line comes straight out of his own life, for no desire for the praise and honor of God our Lord was too difficult or too great for him. When he discovered in himself a desire to imitate the saints, he gave no thought to the consequences but resolved to go to Jerusalem and perform great penances. When he noticed the desire to work for the salvation of souls, he did not shy away from the thought because of the years of study which it implied, but he set out steadfastly on the humbling and arduous path which led him from Barcelona to Alcalá to Paris, a journey which consumed some ten years in the life of a man who was nearly thirty-five when he began. When he imagined Christ our Lord on the

cross, his deepest desire was to imitate him in poverty, in bearing all manner of insults and wrongs, and to share with him in leading souls to the Father.

"Desire," as a noun, appears eighteen times in the *Autobiography*.<sup>11</sup> Except for the initial desire to win fame and a reference to the absence of a desire to eat meat, it always indicated some affective stirring to do a "holy" deed. Since Ignatius told his life's story to Luis Gonçalves da Câmara only that his fellow Jesuits might have some understanding of how God had led their founder, we can take the frequent occurrence of the word as solid evidence that he attached great significance to his desires. He may not always have been in a position to carry them out, but he always took them seriously, often at considerable cost to himself. In the final appearance of the word in the *Autobiography*, Ignatius told how he had felt the desire to go, barefoot and fasting, to visit a former companion who now lay sick some three days' journey from Paris. A more cautious spirit might well have reasoned that it would have been pointless to try to bring solace to a sick man if one placed his own health in jeopardy. Indeed, these thoughts and a good deal of fear did strike Ignatius when he set out the next morning on his mission of mercy. He tells us that he could scarcely make himself get dressed, yet characteristically he went ahead, and after only a few hours of walking the resistance lifted and he continued on his way in great consolation.<sup>12</sup>

One reason why Ignatius took his desires seriously was that he considered them to be graces from God. In several places in the *Autobiography* he tells us through Câmara that "a desire came to him,"<sup>13</sup> as if to indicate that, far from being a matter of willfulness on his part, these movements seemed to have originated from without. He chided Teresa Rejadell for not acknowledging more directly and boldly that "your desires of serving Christ our Lord are not your own, but come to you from our Lord."<sup>14</sup> Similarly, he told Jacqueline de Croy that God "knows what desires of the salvation and progress of souls he has given to me."<sup>15</sup>

Not all desires in Ignatius met with immediate and unflinching execution. He desired at one time to become a Carthusian, but he did not. He desired to enter a corrupt religious community so as to reform it and suffer much in the process, but he did not. He desired to spend the rest of his life in Jerusalem, but he died in Rome. Ignatius desired intensely but not blindly: his spirituality was both experiential and experimental. He once encouraged

Francis Borgia to try different approaches to the spiritual life, for "we will learn by making trial of many methods, so that we may advance along the way that stands out clearest, which will be for us the happiest."<sup>16</sup> Ignatius carefully examined his desires, discarding some and discovering new ones, always seeking to invest himself in those desires which he experienced as most authentic.

### B. Three Special Desires

Three desires, or perhaps categories of desires, initiated major orientations in Ignatius' life and provided vocational touchstones to which he would return time and time again. The first appears in the early pages of the *Autobiography* in the form of those "holy" desires which overturned his worldly desire to win fame and honor. He variously referred to them as "the desire to imitate the saints," "a very great desire to serve our Lord," and "great desires to serve [Christ] in every way he knew."<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere Ignatius called these general impulses the "desire for perfection,"<sup>18</sup> a desire he constantly urged Jesuits--particularly those experiencing tepidity<sup>19</sup>--to maintain in themselves by every means possible. In varying degrees Ignatius expected to find this desire for perfection in every good man or woman, or every good knight; it is the desire of persons "who go on earnestly striving to cleanse their souls from sin and who seek to rise in the service of God our Lord to greater perfection."<sup>20</sup> Today we might call this an experience of desiring to live more fully in God's grace, without any special thought to the particular means.

Many other desires from the early part of his life were but ways of putting the desire for perfection into action. Such, for example, were his desire to be a Carthusian and also his desire to perform great penances, which even in the maturity of his later years he still considered to be the natural response of a generous albeit imprudent soul.<sup>21</sup> Most important was his desire to go to Jerusalem, a desire only partially realized, which symbolized his deep affection for the person of Christ and which stamped him forever as "the pilgrim."

The second key desire in the life of Ignatius was his genuine wish to be able to share in the poverty, insults, and humiliations of Christ for "so Christ was treated before me."<sup>22</sup> In 1545 Ignatius wrote John III of Portugal about the skirmishes he had had with the Inquisition during his student years.

Proclaiming his innocence of those former charges, he nonetheless professed that nothing could ever make him regret the suffering he had endured then for the sake of Christ.<sup>23</sup> This long-standing desire, which he called the "third degree of humility," probably dates to a time very close to his conversion. It may well have been present in rudimentary form prior to his arrival at Manresa, but it certainly had matured into conscious reflection by the time he departed for Jerusalem.

Ignatius realized that not all good Christians shared this desire, and he made allowances for human weaknesses.<sup>24</sup> In his own life, however, this particular desire represented not only a very close assimilation to the life of Christ but also the source of his great freedom and courage. It was difficult to frighten a man who could so quickly turn his natural fears into sources of identification with the person he loved. Actions speak louder than words, but for a man who risked his life to see which way Christ's footprint was turned,<sup>25</sup> and who walked through war zones failing to pay proper respect to military captains,<sup>26</sup> we do well to believe him when he wrote: "It is my desire to have as much and ever more to suffer in the future for the greater glory of His Divine Majesty."<sup>27</sup>

Finally, Ignatius desired to help souls. Nadal places the birth of this desire at the time of Manresa, specifically when Ignatius was making the meditations we now associate with the Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises.<sup>28</sup> In any case, it took longer for this desire to mature. Perhaps only when Ignatius decided against entering a corrupt monastery and chose instead to go to Paris did it solidify into a complete orientation for his life. Whenever it matured, it became the dominant desire in Ignatius' life. In 1536 he wrote Teresa Rejadell, "It is many years now since His Divine Majesty . . . has given me the desire to give as much pleasure as I can to those men and women who walk in the way of His will."<sup>29</sup> A letter to his fellow Basques in Aspeitia tells how his desires to help souls had brought him from Paris to their own city some five years earlier. Now confined by his office to Rome, but still desirous of their good, he added, "The thought has occurred to me that I might accomplish my desires in some other way as my absence is now unavoidable."<sup>30</sup> We might recall here as well the letter to Jacqueline de Croy cited above: "[God] knows what desires of the salvation and progress of souls he has given to me."<sup>31</sup>

### C. Desire and Maturity

Near the end of his life and in poor health, Ignatius had been instructed by his doctor to avoid depressing thoughts. He replied that only if the pope were to abolish the Society would he be sad; but he quickly added that even if this should happen, "I think that if I recollected myself in prayer for a quarter of an hour, I would be happy, and even happier than before."<sup>32</sup>

Regardless of the fact that Ignatius may have required several minutes to compose himself after the news of the election of Gian Pietro Carafa as Pope Paul IV, this is still a remarkable claim. Everything in his life had led up to the foundation of the Society; how much energy and desire this man had poured into the promotion of the service of God and the help of souls through its instrumentality! Matured over the years through much prayer, experience, and self-discipline, Ignatius was no less the man of desires now than he had been at Loyola. His confidence before this hypothetical situation came from the conviction, based on experience, that whatever was authentic in his desires for the Society, whatever was from God, would never be lost, even though it might undergo radical purification. If God gave Ignatius the desire to found the Society of Jesus, Ignatius became the founder, heart and soul. If it should happen that the Society was no longer to be, then Ignatius could--with the help of a few minutes alone--reach deeply into himself to channel his desires and the energy they generated into other means for God's service. And he truly expected that such a turn of events would eventually make him even happier than before!

## II. SCHOOLING DESIRES

### A. Discovering the Thread of Desire

Ribadeneira tells a story to warm the heart of any novice director. In the time of Ignatius, there was a novice from Germany who was distressed and thinking about leaving. After trying everything else Ignatius "asked him to wait for three or four days, and during that time he was not obliged to keep the rules or to obey anyone." Ignatius told him that he should do whatever he pleased: he was to sleep as late as he liked and eat whenever he wanted. "The novice, with this freedom and gentle treatment, was so dumbfounded that he remained in the Society."<sup>33</sup>

Ignatius never tried to keep someone in the Society who really did not want to be there. If anything he was prejudiced in favor of sending people away and against manipulating them into staying. However, in this instance, the wise spiritual director sensed that the genuine desires of the novice were being temporarily obscured by the irritations of the daily order. "Let us not make these the issue," Ignatius seemed to be saying, "but for a time let the novice do exactly what he wants, and he will probably discover what he wants." It worked.

From his own experience Ignatius knew that authentic desires are avenues into our souls, and he knew, too, that the initial unlocking of such desires demanded extraordinary tact and patience. Often he used to sit quietly during a dinner conversation taking to heart all that was said, and when the moment was ripe he capitalized on what he had heard to turn the thoughts of his table companions to God's service.<sup>34</sup> Without some inviting spark of desire on the part of others Ignatius could do little to foster the greater spiritual progress which so interested him. In the case of the German novice, Ignatius circumspectly let him return to himself for a while, without the distracting interference of the daily order, so that he might rediscover his original desire. Then the primary work of the novitiate--the development of this desire into a strong permanent commitment--could continue.

Even though Ignatius always exhibited the greatest respect for and sensitivity to the desires which God gave to others, he was also a master at suggesting means by which such desires could grow stronger and become more sharply defined.<sup>35</sup> Not everyone possessed his great natural courage and magnanimity, but even some very timid spirits--among them a number of effective Jesuits--were drawn under his tutelage to "conceive great resolves and elicit equally great desires."<sup>36</sup> The Spiritual Exercises offered the normal context, but the more specific instruments were imagination and mortification.

### B. Imagination

William Lynch calls imagination one of the three essential elements of hope.<sup>37</sup> We cannot hope if we cannot imagine possibilities. The seriously depressed often need another human being to supply to their deadened imaginations some images of what is possible; we call this person the therapist. Analogously, in the spiritual life Ignatius led men and women to greater spiritual progress by touching their imaginations. He stimulated their



desires by suggesting to them images of what they might hope for from God, even of the desires they might entertain.

In this age of personalism, one of the more startling aspects of the *Spiritual Exercises* is the final prelude to each meditation. Here Ignatius tells the retreatant the particular grace which should be asked for, "that which I want and desire."<sup>38</sup> How, one might well ask, can I ask for something that I may not really want? Should my desires not be more spontaneous and above all personal? Should I not be asking for what *I* want and desire instead of for what *Ignatius* tells me to want and desire?

One reply to this objection is that these preludes are so general that anyone making the Exercises would naturally want and desire what Ignatius suggests. This reply sounds plausible enough--until we note that Ignatius has already suggested a more or less generic desire in the preparatory prayer. Furthermore, arguing from experience I might add that many generous and well-meaning retreatants often find that their desires simply do not coincide with what Ignatius proposes at a particular moment in the retreat.

A more satisfying answer is that Ignatius is not mandating desires but eliciting them, and he does this by interesting the retreatant's imagination. Imagine yourself before Christ on the cross and ask yourself what you want to do for Christ. Imagine yourself before Christ the King and see if you do not desire to respond to his call. Imagine yourself with Christ in the Garden and see if you don't desire to experience sorrow with Christ? In effect, Ignatius is telling the retreatant, "Try this on for size. See if it fits you and make it your own."

We have all had the experience of suddenly discovering a new image or insight into ourselves. Some call these special moments "aha" experiences because the new images surprise us and yet we recognize them as coming from our own hearts. The Exercises promote "aha" experiences in our desires. In a climate of generosity we respond to the gospel passages by formulating new desires which are more and more authentic. And while we might find these desires challenging and even frightening, we recognize ourselves in them because they have been fashioned from the familiar, though inarticulate, longings of our own hearts. The Exercises tap our longings; they create something new by giving them concrete expression in the world we live in.

Ignatius believed that our more authentic desires would be Christocentric, and he hoped that we would deepen them to the fullest potential

given by grace, nature, and present maturity. There is no "finish line" in the Exercises where we can say we "have arrived." Day by day we are asked to consider possibilities which are more and more Christocentric. "You desire to know Christ and to follow Him? Good! Now imagine a desire to suffer with Christ in his passion." "You desire to live so completely in Christ that you would not commit a single sin? Good! Now imagine a desire to suffer poverty, humiliations, and insults because this was the way Christ was treated."

While desires are becoming more Christocentric, the structures of each day and each week of the *Exercises* proceed from more subject matter to less subject matter, from the more general to the more concrete. The desire to follow Christ becomes a desire to follow Christ in this particular place and at this particular time. The desire to suffer with Christ becomes the desire to accept and receive this particular cross in this particular place and time. In the Exercises Ignatius picks up our authentic desires, he encourages us to make them more Christocentric, and he prompts us to insert them, practically, in the world around us.

In this context we must mention the famous phrase "the desire to have the desire."<sup>39</sup> Some call this a "cop-out" for the timid, but in fact it represents Ignatius' practice in spiritual direction of doing everything possible to get people to put their best desires forward, even when the supportive feelings were missing. The desire to have the desire is a technique for imagining in ourselves attitudes or actions which we acknowledge to be good, but for which grace or courage have not yet been given. It directs our energies more to being receptive than to doing anything concrete, but the fact that they are directed is itself a first step. When it appeared that a Jesuit could not sincerely desire to suffer with Christ, Ignatius wanted him not to forget about it entirely but to keep the door open for the future. If he could at least desire to have the desire, he was making some investment of himself, and this investment already indicated spiritual progress.

The same technique can be applied to authentic desires which we once experienced but for which there remains nothing but dryness or a lack of enthusiasm. In this case Ignatius would direct us to remember the original desire in the hope that it would be rekindled, or at least that our efforts would reaffirm our original resolve. For example, we might have once desired a radical poverty but now find that the desire has gone. Desiring to desire

that poverty again will not automatically bring back the feelings, but it will renew our determination to do something about it. The ingenuity behind these "desires-once-removed" is that we can have them whenever we want; unlike ordinary desires they do not depend on our feeling but only on our generosity and goodwill.

### C. Mortification

We know that in the Spiritual Exercises Ignatius expected struggles between opposing desires to be the rule rather than the exception, and he was alarmed when they did not occur.<sup>40</sup> The more sensitive we become to authentic desires, the more we become aware of inauthentic ones, many of which may heretofore have appeared benevolent or at worst neutral. While lying in his recovery bed at Castle Loyola, Ignatius himself came to realize that he could not simultaneously win fame and imitate Francis and Dominic. One of those desires had to give way. In the *Exercises*, the Meditation on the Three Classes provokes a similar crisis of awareness by placing in sharp relief the inconsistency of desiring to hold on to an attachment and at the same time desiring to do God's will.<sup>41</sup> When the retreatants acknowledge the impossibility of such a situation, they are told to place all their energy into desiring God's will and acting against (*agere contra*) the attachment.<sup>42</sup>

Our willingness to engage in these struggles between opposing desires and fears makes up in large measure what Ignatius understood by mortification. This word has broad significance in the history of spirituality; and Ignatius certainly knew and approved of fasting, corporal penances, watches, and the ascetical aspects of the vows, but the mortification he valued above all others was the mortification of the will.<sup>43</sup> On the road to Rouen, Ignatius mortified his fears of traveling barefoot and without food in order to act on his original strong desire to travel in just that manner.<sup>44</sup> In Jerusalem he mortified his desire to stay in the holy city because he desired to do God's will which he unhesitatingly recognized in the decision of the Franciscan Guardian.<sup>45</sup> Mortification seeks to diminish certain desires or fears, but only in order to free our energies to act on the desires of our choice. In Ignatius' mind a mortified Jesuit was happy and integrated: happy because he was acting on his authentic desires and integrated because he was able to give his energy in an undivided way.

The unmortified Jesuit has fears and desires which are in such turmoil that he cannot put his energies anywhere. He desires to give himself in apostolic service, but he fears the cost; he desires to live the vows, but he desires family and independence as well; he desires happiness, but he refuses to surrender the hurts which he has accumulated along the way. Ignatius called this paralyzing condition "tepidity" and he regarded it as one of the worst diseases of the spiritual life, for it robbed Jesuits of the cheerful vitality which he expected them to bring to the apostolate.<sup>46</sup> The tepid or unmortified man has not disciplined his desires; he has been unwilling or unable to say "no" to some desires and fears in order to give a wholehearted "yes" to others.

It is no wonder that Ignatius insisted strongly on the necessity for mortification in the lives of Jesuits. He once said that a mortified Jesuit could accomplish more in fifteen minutes of prayer than an unmortified could in two hours, because the mortified man could put more of his energies, more of himself, into his prayer.<sup>47</sup> And not just prayer: "one energetic act is worth a thousand that are listless."<sup>48</sup> Ignatius wanted Jesuits to act enthusiastically on their authentic desires; he wanted them to trust that these desires came both from God and from their own hearts; and he wanted them to be confident that letting go of inauthentic desires and fears would lead to greater freedom and energy, and *not* to repression.

The ascetical aspects of Ignatian mortification cannot be denied. Ignatius did not encourage a "sackcloth and ashes" attitude, but he did ask for an interior toughness with respect to our fears and desires. Still, he knew from his own experience--especially from scruples--that nothing happens without grace. We must avoid two extremes. On the one hand, we need to be wary of the voluntarism which demands of us a hopeless and self-centered perfectionism; and, on the other hand, we need to resist the quietism which always presumes that hard choices can be delayed because we have not "experienced" the support of overwhelming grace. If our authentic desires glorify God, then we patiently and hopefully wait for his grace to bring them to fulfillment. In the meantime, we cooperate with grace by *desiring* to have the authentic desires and by *desiring* to let conflicting desires die or be transformed.

My favorite story about a Jesuit's journey from "unmortification" to happiness is Jerome Nadal's account of his conversion to Jesuit life. Nadal

had first encountered Ignatius in Paris in 1535, but he had wanted to have nothing to do with either the saint or his companions. He returned to his home in Majorca and later left us this astonishing portrait of himself during the seven years he then spent there (1538-1545).

. . . during the whole seven years I then spent at home I had not a single day, not a single hour--days? hours? what am I talking about?--not a single minute when I wasn't deeply anxious, fretful, and gloomy. I had perpetual headaches and stomach pains, and was in constant depression, to the point where all my friends were baffled and wondered if I hadn't turned misanthropic. I lived surrounded by doctors and medicines and was utterly unbearable to myself.<sup>49</sup>

Even if we allow for hyperbole, this remarkable statement ought to give heart to any well-meaning religious who still finds misery a frequent companion. The journal goes on for several more pages, all in the same tone or worse!

In 1545 Nadal finally went to Rome where he again came into contact with Ignatius and the Society. Admitting to himself that he had probably been fleeing a vocation, he made the Exercises. Seventeen days into the retreat, in despair over coming to a definite decision, he took pen and in the face of enormous repugnance he wrote out a promise to take vows in the Society of Jesus. "After this came not only an unbelievable spiritual consolation but also physical restoration."<sup>50</sup>

Nadal's story represents more than the ordinary amount of interior drama and turmoil, but it vividly portrays a man paralyzed for years by his own fears and conflicting desires, who finally, in one moment of real mortification, found a marvelous integration of energy and resolve, even to the disappearance of his physical difficulties.

### III. JESUIT DESIRES

It is clear from the *Constitutions* and from his letters that Ignatius wanted all Jesuits to regard "holy" desires as graces to be deeply appreciated and actively sought. Three in particular he considered normative for a Jesuit vocation: a deep desire to be a Jesuit and live the life of the vows, a desire to have the desire to suffer with Christ, and a desire to help souls.

### A. Desire to be a Jesuit

The *General Examen*--that first application form for admission to the Society--carefully scrutinized each candidate's desire to be a religious and a Jesuit. The young man was asked if he truly wanted to live a life of the counsels. If his answer was affirmative, he was pressed further: "How much time has elapsed since his desire to leave the world and follow the counsels . . . began to come?"<sup>51</sup> The interviewer then pursued the same questions with respect to the Society. Is the candidate determined to live and die a Jesuit? How long has he had this desire? Was he influenced by anyone in his decision? If so, he should wait for a while "so that he may be able to proceed with greater spiritual energies toward greater service and glory of the Divine Majesty."<sup>52</sup> This thorough probing of desires assured the early Society of candidates capable of giving themselves generously and energetically to the formation and to the years of service which lay ahead.

### B. Desire for the Cross

The *General Examen* also interrogated the candidate over the quality of his desire to identify with Christ, particularly Christ on the cross. Since it is characteristic of those progressing in the spiritual life "to wish to suffer injuries, false accusations, and affronts,"<sup>53</sup> candidates were asked if they had such desires. If a candidate did not have them, "he should be asked whether he has any desire to experience [these desires]."<sup>54</sup> It is significant--and challenging for us today--that Ignatius considered this second desire a minimum for acceptance into the Society, for only with a positive response could the interview continue. "If he answers affirmatively that he does wish to have holy desires of this kind, then he should be questioned further. . . ."<sup>55</sup> Ignatius does not tell us what to do if the candidate does not have such desires, but the implication is clear enough that such a man would not be suitable for the Society.

### C. Desire to Help Souls

The third desire which Ignatius expected to find in any Jesuit was the desire to help souls. "But more than anything else," he wrote to the community at Coimbra, "I should wish to awaken in you the pure love of Jesus Christ, the desire for His honor and for the salvation of souls whom He has redeemed."<sup>56</sup>

Later in the same letter Ignatius told the scholastics that one of the ways that they could be of service to their neighbors during their studies "consists in holy desires and prayers. The demands of your life of study do not permit you to devote much time to prayer, yet you can make up for this by desires."<sup>57</sup> The same thought appears in the *Constitutions* where Ignatius pointed out that "the neighbor is aided by desires in the presence of God our Lord."<sup>58</sup>

Even our prayer life is meant to be apostolic and ought to generate enthusiastic desires for the service of others. In a rather startling statement on Jesuit prayer, Nadal wrote that our "meditation and contemplation would seem to be wasted if they do not issue in petition and some devout desire."<sup>59</sup> Prayer gives no refuge from the world, no psychological respite carved out "for the sake of delights or elevations of the mind,"<sup>60</sup> he wrote, but "the goal of [Jesuit] prayer [is] charity towards God and zeal for all souls, with a burning desire for the salvation and perfection of one's own soul and all other souls."<sup>61</sup> Apostolic desires invigorate our service of others, and prayer generates desires.

Desires filled the prayer of Pierre Favre, and he prized them especially for the energy they gave him for the apostolate. Sometimes, he wrote, "God makes us desire . . . the highest things so that we may at least accomplish without laziness and diffidence the more ordinary ones."<sup>62</sup> Nadal hinted at this same potency in desires when he suggested that Jesuits ought to find in themselves the desire to do great penances such as Ignatius had performed, and even greater, in spite of the fact that it would be wrong for them to do so!<sup>63</sup> The energy of our desires, aroused by the highest and even unachievable goals, can nonetheless empower us to do the more ordinary things with greater alacrity.

A curious corollary to apostolic desires appears in the *Constitutions'* mandate to all rectors, to the general, and, by extension, to all who exercise authority in the Society. "The function of the rector," Ignatius wrote in the section dealing with the government of colleges, "will be first of all to sustain the whole college by his prayer and holy desires."<sup>64</sup> Likewise, the general of the Society will rule the Society most perfectly through his good example, through his love for the Society, and through "his prayer which is assiduous and full of desires."<sup>65</sup>

Ignatius called these "means which unite the human instrument with God and so dispose it that it may be wielded dexterously by His Divine hand."<sup>66</sup>

A rector can sustain the college through his holy desires because a holy desire is in some manner an experience of desiring to give glory to God. The rector tries to foster in himself a strong desire that the apostolate and the community of the college be for the greater honor and glory of God. Consequently, the rector must let the college and its spiritual and apostolic well-being precede private concerns in his own heart; and he must try to view the college from the perspective of its role in the history of salvation rather than as an investment for his own ego. Ignatius expected to find authentic *public* desires in the hearts of those who exercise authority in the Society.

#### D. Desire and Obedience

In his famous letter to the Jesuits in Portugal, Ignatius told the scholastics that although he certainly hoped for them an excellence in all virtues, "it is in obedience more than any other virtue that God our Lord gives me the desire to see you signalize yourselves."<sup>67</sup> Is there a link between desire and Ignatian obedience? Clearly, one can expect certain desires in people who wish to become Jesuits, but is it reasonable, even possible, to expect that a Jesuit could come to desire a command, or a mission, given by another?

Ignatius not only believed that this was possible, but he expected that as a matter of course Jesuits would place their full energies at the service of their missions, energies which could be fully activated only if the Jesuit himself could desire the mission or command which he had been given. He expressed this expectation on a number of occasions. In the *Constitutions*, speaking about the entire Society and its mission, he wrote that "the Society has placed its own judgment and desire under that of Christ our Lord, and his Vicar."<sup>68</sup> In the letter to the Jesuits of Portugal cited above, he pointed out that the perfection of obedience "consists in obeying with love and cheerfulness." However, he went on, "one cannot obey lovingly and cheerfully as long as [some] repugnance exists."<sup>69</sup> Ignatius asked that a Jesuit give himself so entirely to his mission that he could make a superior's command into the object of his own desires; only in this way could he obey lovingly and cheerfully.

The linkage of desire and obedience betrays the public nature of our more authentic desires. However personal and individualized our desires



may be--and they certainly are--they ultimately reach their full flower by reference to the corporate body of the People of God. If the discovery of desires is a discovery of self, it is also a discovery of community; for the deepest and most authentic desires not only lead out of the self but they bind us to others. While Ignatius had no elaborate theory of desires, he certainly understood that in the final analysis our desires and the energy they give are at the service of others. This was the case in his own life, and he expected it to be the case in the lives of all Jesuits.

Within the crucible of obedience, our desires undergo the same stretching and transformation on the corporate level that they do in the Exercises. Once again the particular instruments are imagination and mortification. The missions we are given often prove to be invitations to desire something which we might not previously have imagined ourselves desiring. They are images of new possibilities. And these very same missions can also be invitations to mortify other desires. Ordinarily our missions come through dialogue and discernment; we no longer live in the day when July 31 meant a gulp and quick packing! However, the very dialogue suggests a tentative offering of our private desires for public service, and it also suggests that those private desires might be changed or otherwise reshaped during the exchange. Through our vow of obedience we invite the community to engage with us in a selection of which desires we will enhance and which ones we will mortify, and in this selection we cede a certain primacy to the community and its superiors.

Ignatian obedience demands great spiritual and psychological maturity because through this vow we allow the community to influence the ways in which we channel something so deeply personal as the energy and enthusiasm generated by our desires. Everything in our culture resists obedience, for we are made to fear that any loss of control over self-fulfillment is a loss of self. Obedience, on the other hand, testifies to our faith that God is not distant but actively present in human community. As Jesuits we believe that our most authentic desires will be discovered and fulfilled only through collaboration with others, whereas our culture professes that desires must be hidden and protected from others.

At a recent liturgy I heard the Jesuit celebrant announce to his community that he would soon be leaving to teach at a difficult post in a foreign country. In a delightful and edifying way he told how he had taken it upon himself to propose to the provincial that he step down from his present

work and perhaps take up a pastoral assignment. To his surprise the provincial came back with the suggestion that he think about responding to a great need somewhere else in the world. He did, and now he is destined for a different country and culture.

This man took the generosity of his desires to the provincial with particular images in mind. He came away with an image which could not have come entirely from himself, and he was able to desire this new thing. Obedience stimulated his imagination. Obviously, there must be some sadness at leaving old friends and familiar places; and there might even be some sadness at not being able to do what he originally had proposed to the provincial. That is mortification. One thing was clear, however, as we listened to this remarkable homily: in front of us was a happy, energetic man.

### Reflections

Western culture both applauds and scorns desires. On the one hand, the media feed us a constant diet of appealing stimuli: consumer items, status, and even a secure brand of happiness are all packaged, presented, and peddled as desirables. We are encouraged to have an impossible number of needs and to expect to satisfy them all: "At the very least you deserve the very best!" Desires are multiplied; they are seldom mortified. On the other hand, we live in an age which has been called the age of despair. Desires to feed the hungry, desires to find love and meaning in permanent commitment, and desires to work for a peace built on justice elicit the cynical labels of "soft-headed" or "unreal." How strange to think that infinite happiness can be promised in the purchase of a new car, yet a significant number of young people do not believe that a nuclear war can be avoided during their lifetime. It would appear that when it comes to the superficial we desire too much, but when it comes to those more profound desires of the human heart we have lost all hope. C. S. Lewis prophesied against this generation when he said that God finds our desires too weak!<sup>70</sup>

In this final section I will offer a few reflections about desire in our Jesuit lives today. None of them are original; they flow quite naturally from our Ignatian heritage, especially as described in the three previous sections. However, it is worth spotlighting some of the more life-giving aspects of our tradition against the enervating backdrop of this century's narcissism and despair.

*First Reflection:* We should not be afraid of our desires. This may sound strange, but we ought not be too hasty in assuming that the contrary is true. Our more authentic desires nearly always involve some risk, for they take us into places and situations where we would rather not go. Natural fears and cultural discouragement cause us to err on the side of prudence rather than zeal. In fact, not only can we be too quick to reject our more challenging desires, but we can learn in time to deaden that part of ourselves from which such desires flow. We do not want to "conceive great resolves and elicit equally great desires," and yet the paradox is that we do! A Jesuit friend told me that for several years he had been flirting, at the back of his consciousness, with the desire to live a more radical trust. Only in recent years, however, had he found the courage to entertain that desire seriously and concretely; and the relief and the newfound energy have transformed him. He sleeps better, he works harder, he worries less, and the most positive sign of all: he is much happier.

Not every desire is from God, nor can all seemingly "holy" desires be acted upon, but perhaps we too easily dismiss as unrealistic or inopportune those fleeting moments when we find ourselves yearning to make our commitment to Christ more concrete or profound. When fear rules our desires, we live in contradiction with ourselves because this existential timidity condemns us to that debilitating frustration of doing the things we do not want to do and not doing the things we want to do. This is an infallible recipe for a bitter man.

*Second Reflection:* We should actively and creatively seek to deepen our desires and to make them more concrete. Ignatius really did not expect that we would all want to imitate Christ in actual poverty, insults, and humility; but he did expect that we would actively seek to foster such desires in ourselves. In other words, we ought to pray frequently, and as sincerely as possible, that we might experience in ourselves a desire for the third degree of humility. The same applies for other "Jesuit" desires. Out of a sense of responsibility to ourselves and to those we serve, we ought to do everything in our power not only to keep alive but also to intensify our desire to help souls--a desire which today we would call a desire for the service of faith and the promotion of justice. It is totally inadequate to say, "I don't find that desire in myself, at least very strongly." Ignatius would respond, "By virtue of your vocation you must try to generate a desire for faith and justice in yourself by all means possible." We recall

here Nadal's comment on prayer. A Jesuit's experience of prayer ought to lead him to petition, so that we end prayer with desires: desires which reflect our mission as Jesuits and desires which are the fruit of the prayer itself.

*Third Reflection:* Mortification can make you happy. We need to hear again just how important Ignatius considered mortification. So much of our energy is bound up by conflicting desires which tend to cancel each other out. The mortified Jesuit honestly acknowledges such conflicts in himself, and he tries to let go of those desires which seem inauthentic in order that the more authentic ones may flourish. Certainly this is no easy task; it requires humble self-reflection and patient hope in God's grace, but without mortification we will never give ourselves energetically to a pursuit of our deepest desires. Really, the mortified Jesuit is a man who does what he *really* wants to do: he is happy.

*Fourth Reflection:* Courage will make you even happier. As we saw from the life of Ignatius, a Jesuit ought to be more prepared to act on his authentic desires than to suppress them. Ignatius warned that we lose the graces which God gives us if we do not respond, and courage empowers us to respond.<sup>71</sup> We need not all be bold personalities. Ignatius gathered men around him who did not appear to be especially lionhearted, and he turned them into great apostles and saints. Courage grows through use, and if we persist in taking our desires seriously we will inevitably find ourselves emboldened at some time to act. The timid soul who first breaks down the blockage of fear and puts authentic desires into action will find not only a deeper assimilation to Christ but also the exhilaration which active courage provides for ever new desires and deeds. This applies not simply to Jesuits as individuals but also to our communities, our provinces, and perhaps even the whole Society. Courage is contagious.

*Fifth Reflection:* We will be unhappy men unless we make the life and the mission of the Society our own. I believe that most Jesuits really do desire the life and the mission of the Society, at least in their heart of hearts. I realize, too, that this life and mission are often fraught with real difficulties and ambiguities, and I admit that there is plenty of room even in a saintly Jesuit's life for an abundance of "legitimate misery." Yet we have a lot of misery which is not so legitimate, misery which comes from always fighting against being who and what we are.

When a man is thinking about a vocation to the Society, and while he is

a novice, we want him to consider very carefully what he is doing. However, there comes a time when it is necessary to put aside the paralysis of looking over our shoulders, and this step requires a certain mature courage and mortification. The man who continually laments the fact that he never got married, who can never give himself without complaining to the apostolate to which the province has assigned him, or who always despises the community for falling short of his expectations is a man in conflict with himself. He has been unable or unwilling to choose one desire over another and to stick with that choice. He has never chosen to make the life and mission of the Society his own.

*Sixth Reflection:* We need to take the regular examen and the annual manifestation seriously. These are the most valuable Ignatian techniques for unleashing the energy latent in our desires. Two questions always worth asking ourselves in the examen are: (1) What am I desiring? and (2) What do I desire to desire? The first helps us to know the directions which our affectivity has taken that day. We will know what desires we are presently experiencing, and we will know the conflicts which those desires present. We will also begin to distinguish between desires which appear to glorify God and those which tend to alienate us from ourselves. Sometimes just trying to answer that simple question demands the most painful honesty. The second question puts the desires of the day into the context of our broader histories, both past and future. With respect to the past, asking what we desire to desire keeps alive in our hearts those good desires which we may have experienced once but which have grown cold. By recalling them and wishing their return we continue to build on the graces of our pasts and we strengthen whatever resolve or determination they may have given us. Looking to the future, the desire to have a desire gives us a chance to break out of spiritual stagnation by trying out desires we may once have thought to be the exclusive property of saints. It gives us the chance to dream, and we need to dream if we are to stay spiritually and apostolically alive.

The manifestation provides the public context for our desires. Just to speak my desires to another human being means that I am taking them seriously, and if human respect means anything, it is also the beginning of a commitment to act on them. When that other human being happens to be the provincial, it means that I am offering my desires for the corporate mission

of the Society. Too often we are overly cautious in manifesting our desires to the provincial because we fear that he might take them more seriously than we do. I doubt that this is the kind of attitude that Ignatius had in mind, and it will only result in division within ourselves.

The spiritual and religious life of the Society of Jesus is not well-defined by rule and cloister. We need men who have internalized our spirit and who have the inner resources, including courage, to put that spirit into action. Ignatius considered it of the utmost importance that Jesuits be men of great desires and that they should continually foster these desires in prayer. He wanted us to have a strong desire to live this life; he wanted us to desire to be identified with Christ as closely as possible even to the point of desiring to experience the poverty, insults, and humiliations that Christ experienced; and he wanted us to have a strong desire to work for the salvation and progress of souls. He wanted us to be mature enough to place our desires and the energies they give us at the service of the corporate body, and he wanted us to have the courage and the self-discipline to mortify desires which dissipate our own or the Society's energies. He looked for signs of these attitudes in the men who came to him for entrance into the Society, and he expected that the formed Jesuit would actively seek to maintain and deepen them.

Perhaps no more eloquent testimony to the place of desire in our spirituality can be found than Ignatius' inclusion of the word in our formula for first vows. "Moved with a desire of serving You," the Jesuit begins his profession; and asking God to receive his vows he concludes, "just as You gave me the grace to desire and offer this, so You will bestow abundant grace to fulfill it."<sup>72</sup>

FOOTNOTES

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

- Autobiog*      *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*  
Citations are from the translation by Joseph F. O'Callaghan, S.J., edited by John C. Olin
- Cons*            St. Ignatius of Loyola. *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*. Translated, with an Introduction and a Commentary, by George E. Ganss, S.J.
- EppIgn*        *Sti. Ignatii Epistolae et Instructiones*. 12 volumes in MHSJ
- FN*             *Fontes narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola*. 4 volumes in MHSJ
- LettersIgn*    *Letters of St. Ignatius*. Translated by William J. Young, S.J.
- LettersWom*   Saint Ignatius Loyola. *Letters to Women*, by Hugo Rahner, S.J. Translated from German by Kathleen Pond and S.A.H. Weetman
- MonNad*       *Epistolae et Monumenta P. Hieronymi Nadal*. 6 volumes in MHSJ
- SpEx*          *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*  
Citations are from the translation by Louis J. Puhl, S.J.
- Note: In all references to the *Autobiography* and to Ignatius' letters I have given the location both in the Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu and in the English translation.

- 1 Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogues*. Translation and Introduction by Suzanne Noffke, O.P. (New York, 1980), p. 25.
- 2 Ibid., p. 270.
- 3 "A conscious impulse or movement toward an object or experience which promises enjoyment or satisfaction in its attainment" (*Webster's New International Dictionary*, 2nd edition, unabridged [Springfield, 1959]).
- 4 The differentiation between the "true self" (the self known and loved by God) and the "false self" (the protective, self-centered shell which we build around ourselves) is the central image in the writings of Thomas Merton, and because of his popularity they have become common in the vocabulary of contemporary spirituality. For Merton's explanation of these terms, see Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York, 1962), pp. 29-36.
- 5 *SpEx*, the rules for the discernment of spirits, especially [315, 316, 329, 330, 331, and 336]. Just as discernment is often a groping and fallible process, we similarly find it difficult to know clearly our deeper desires and to distinguish them from those which are less authentic.
- 6 The danger for self-deception is great, and we need to test our desires, and our interpretation of them, in the more objective forum of the community.
- 7 Jerônimo Nadal, *Pláticas Espirituales del P. Jerônimo Nadal, S.I. en Coimbra (1561)*, edited, with an introduction and notes, by Miguel

- Nicolau, S.J. (Granada, 1945), p. 63. Translation mine.
- 8 *Autobiog*, no. 1, in *FN* 1, 364; p. 21 in O'Callaghan's translation.
- 9 *Ibid.*, nos. 6-9, in *FN*, I, 370-374; and in O'Callaghan (hereafter abbreviated O'Call), pp. 23-24.
- 10 *EppIgn*, III, p. 543; translation from *LettersIgn*, p. 245.
- 11 *Autobiog*, no. 1, in *FN* I, 364; also in nos. 9, 10, 12 (twice), 14, 15 (twice), 27, 35, 46, 47 (twice), 55, 71 (twice), and 79 (twice). An additional text which does not use *deseo* but which has the same sense is from no. 11: ". . . un muy grande esfuerço para servir a nuestro Señor . . ."; translation by O'Call, p. 25: ". . . a very great desire to serve our Lord. . ."
- 12 *Autobiog*, no. 79 in *FN*, I, 470; O'Call, p. 25.
- 13 *Ibid.*, nos. 9, 47 (twice), 55, 71, 79 (twice); respectively in O'Call, pp. 24, 50, 51, 60, 71 (twice), and 76 (twice).
- 14 *EppIgn*, I, 102; *LettersIgn*, p. 20.
- 15 *EppIgn*, II, 303; *LettersWom*, p. 160.
- 16 *EppIgn*, II, 236; *LettersIgn*, p. 181.
- 17 *Autobiog*, no. 9, in *FN*, I, 374, O'Call, p. 24; no. 11, O'Call, p. 25; no. 14, in *FN*, I, 382--the text here reads "con grandes deseos de servirle en todo lo que conociese," which I have chosen to translate: "with great desires to serve [Christ] in every way he knew." This differs slightly from translation in O'Call, p. 30: "greatly desirous of serving Him in every way he knew."
- 18 This was Ignatius' way of wishing someone well in the spiritual life. He meant it seriously, but it was still a general wish or desire. For example, in the opening paragraph of his letter on obedience: "It gives me great consolation, my dear brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ, when I learn of the lively and earnest desires for perfection in His divine service and glory which He gives you, who by His mercy has called you to this Society and preserves you in it . . ." (*EppIgn*, IV, p. 670; *LettersIgn*, p. 287).
- 19 As he did to Bartholomew Romano: "This disquiet comes from within and not from without. I mean your lack of humility, obedience, and prayer, your slight mortification, in a word your little fervor in advancing in the way of perfection. . . . Every month write me a few lines on how you are getting on with your humility, obedience, prayer, and the desire for perfection" (*EppIgn*, VIII, pp. 328-329; *LettersIgn*, p. 363).
- 20 *SpEx*, [315]. This desire is also expressed in the prayer which Ignatius assumed that any retreatant would readily assent to at the beginning of each meditation in the *Exercises*, [46]: "that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be directed purely to the praise and service of His Divine Majesty."
- 21 *Autobiog*, no. 9, in *FN*, I, 374; O'Call, p. 24.
- 22 *SpEx*, [167].
- 23 "The fact is--and God our Lord, who is my Creator and judge, will be



- my witness--that not for all the power and wealth under heaven could I wish not to have gone through this experience. It is my desire to have as much and ever more to suffer in the future for the greater glory of His Divine Majesty" (*EppIgn*, I, 297; *LettersIgn*, p. 81).
- 24 *Cons*, [102].
- 25 *Autobiog*, no. 47; O'Call, p. 50.
- 26 *Ibid.*, no. 42; O'Call, p. 55.
- 27 *EppIgn*, I, p. 297; *LettersIgn*, p. 81. See also footnote 23 above.
- 28 "After he [Ignatius] had labored for some time with the matter we consider proper to the First Week, the Lord moved him ahead and he began to meditate over the life of Christ our Lord, finding devotion in these meditations and a desire to imitate our Lord. At this same time he experienced a desire to help his neighbor and so he conversed and talked to those with whom he was able" (*FN*, II, 190. Translation mine).
- 29 *EppIgn*, I, 100; *LettersIgn*, p. 19.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 162; *LettersIgn*, p. 160.
- 31 *Ibid.*, II, 303; *LettersWom*, p. 160. See footnote 15 above.
- 32 *Câmara, Memoriale*, no. 182, in *FN*, I, 638. Translation mine.
- 33 "A German novice was sorely tempted and about to leave. After our Father had exhausted other approaches, he asked the novice to wait for three or four days, and during that time he was not obliged to keep the rules or to obey anyone. He was to do whatever he wanted, getting up when he wanted and eating at whatever time he desired; and our Father gave instructions to this effect to the Minister. The novice, with this freedom and gentle treatment, was so dumbfounded that he remained in the Society" (*FN*, II, 482-483. Translation mine).
- 34 *Autobiog*, no. 42, in *FN*, I, 418; O'Call, pp. 47-48.
- 35 While many saints spoke eloquently about desires in the spiritual life, Ignatius' uniqueness was to provide a "schooling" for desires.
- 36 *EppIgn*, III, 543; *LettersIgn*, p. 245.
- 37 William F. Lynch, S.J., *Images of Hope* (Notre Dame, 1974), p. 23.
- 38 *SpEx*, [48]. In the Spanish, "lo que quiero y deseo." *Obras Completas de S. Ignacio de Loyola*, with introductions and notes by Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J. (Madrid, 1963), p. 210.
- 39 *Cons*, [102].
- 40 *SpEx*, [6].
- 41 *Ibid.*, [149-155].
- 42 *Ibid.*, [157]; see also [16].
- 43 "If you have a great desire of mortification, use it rather in breaking your wills and bringing your judgments under the yoke of obedience rather than in weakening your bodies and afflicting them beyond due measure" (*EppIgn*, I, 507; *LettersIgn*, p. 128).
- 44 *Autobiog*, no. 79; O'Call, p. 76.

- 45 Ibid., nos. 46-47; O'Call, p. 76.
- 46 "Experience proves that in this life peace and satisfaction are had, not by the listless, but by those who are fervent in God's service. And rightly so. For in the effort they make to overcome themselves and to rid themselves of self-love, they rid themselves of the roots of all passion and unrest. And with the acquirement of habits of virtue they naturally succeed in acting easily and cheerfully in accordance with these virtues. . . . On the other hand, tepidity is the cause of a life-time of uneasiness, for we never get rid of its cause, which is self-love" (*EppIgn*, I, 500; *LettersIgn*, pp. 124-125).
- 47 "On the 22nd of November, when Father Nadal told our Father about the hour and a half of prayer which he had allowed in Spain, Father Ignatius replied that never would he change his opinion that one hour was enough for scholastics, presupposing, of course, abnegation and mortification, which makes it easier for a mortified man to accomplish more in fifteen minutes of prayer than an unmortified man in two hours" (*Cámara, Memoriale*, no. 256, in *FN*, I, 676-677; translation from Joseph Conwell, *Contemplation in Action* [Spokane, 1957], p. 6).
- 48 *EppIgn*, I, 499; *LettersIgn*, p. 123.
- 49 *MonNad*, I, 5-6. Translation mine. I am grateful to Martin Palmer, S.J., for unpublished translations which he has made of some of Nadal's works. These have been very helpful to me in translating the texts of Nadal for this study. I will continue to indicate Palmer's contributions regarding translations wherever appropriate, although I must own any inaccuracies that may appear.
- 50 Ibid., 18. Translation mine with help from Palmer.
- 51 *Cons*, [50].
- 52 Ibid., [51].
- 53 Ibid., [101].
- 54 Ibid., [102].
- 55 Ibid., [102].
- 56 *EppIgn*, I, 501; *LettersIgn*, p. 124.
- 57 Ibid., 509; *LettersIgn*, p. 129.
- 58 *Cons*, [638].
- 59 *MonNad*, V, 29. Translation mine with help from Palmer.
- 60 Ibid., IV, 674. Translation mine with help from Palmer.
- 61 Ibid., 673. Translation mine with help from Palmer.
- 62 Pierre Favre, *Memorial*, no. 155. Cited from Brian O'Leary, S.J., "The Discernment of Spirits in the Memorial of Blessed Peter Favre," (*The Way Supplement*, no. 35, 1979, p. 58).
- 63 "At that time Ignatius was excessive in his penances which we should not imitate. Our Lord permitted this in order that Ignatius might learn from his experience and so that we might have some guidelines. However, all

in the Society should desire to do as much as Ignatius did, and even more, as long as we let ourselves be governed in this regard by the judgment of the superior" (Nadal, *Adhortationes Complutenses*, no. 7, in *FN*, II, 191. Translation mine).

- 64 *Cons*, [424].
- 65 *Ibid.*, [790].
- 66 *Ibid.*, [813].
- 67 *EppIgn*, IV, 670-671; *LettersIgn*, pp. 287-288.
- 68 *Cons*, [606].
- 69 *EppIgn*, IV, 676; *LettersIgn*, p. 292.
- 70 "Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling around with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased" (C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory," from *Screwtape Proposes a Toast and Other Pieces* [London, 1965], pp. 94-95).
- 71 "Not only does man set up these obstacles before receiving these graces, gifts, and consolations of the Holy Spirit, but even after he has received them; graces of consolation in which all darkness and restless worry are removed from the soul, and the soul itself is adorned with the spiritual blessings that bring it contentment and cause it to fall in love with the things that continue in endless glory. Even then we allow ourselves to be distracted with thoughts about trifles, without knowing how to keep so heavenly a blessing. In fact, we set up obstacles before our Lord lavished His graces upon us and after He has done so, with the result that we fail to retain them" (*EppIgn*, I, 340. *LettersIgn*, p. 84).
- 72 *Cons*, [540].

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Especially when viewed against that historical background, the Texts in this book reveal many interesting aspects of Fr. Arrupe's attitude on this devotion, such as these:

1. Through his **contagious enthusiasm** and his **warm personal sharing** of so much of his interior life, he reveals how intensely **devoted**

**he himself has always been** to the Heart of Christ (see, e.g., Texts 2, 8, 10, 11, 17).

2. He also continually **encouraged Jesuits and others** to practice and promote this devotion of response of love to Christ (see Texts 1, 3, 11, 17).

3. Yet his experience taught him that the devotion was in his day declining and even meeting with antipathy, **which he regarded as "scarcely rational"** (*poco racional*) and sure to fade with time. He thought that **to wait** for a better climate might be **strategy more effective** than head-on confrontation. (see Text 10).

4. He was aware that a devotion **cannot be imposed by decree**, but **can be encouraged to spring** spontaneously from perceptive hearts tactfully approached (see, e.g., Texts 1, 3, 15).

5. He searched constantly for strategies which would be **effective in the long run** (*ibid.*).

6. He thought that **theological exploration** would discover **new facets** of this truly unfathomable devotion, and would be a **chief means to make it cherished again** (Texts 1, 3, 15). He himself **gave an example** of such updating theological investigation (Text 9).

7. These aims and endeavors were more and more on his mind **during the last years of his generalate** (Texts 10, 17).

8. Hence this collection of texts can itself rightly be called "**a legacy from Fr. Arrupe's own heart**" (see Introduction to 17, La Storta).

9. Finally, a reader sees **why Fr. Karl Rahner appraises this book so highly** in his Foreword: "Handing down this legacy [i.e., the Society's traditional mission to foster this devotion] demands a creative fidelity that may **revitalize it**. This demands **re-thinking it theologically and pastorally**. Fr. Arrupe has taken up this task."

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