

STUDIES

in the Spirituality

of Jesuits



With Him, In Him:
The Graces of the Spiritual Exercises
by
Brian O. McDermott, 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

THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

A group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States

The Seminar studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material which it publishes.

The Seminar focuses its direct attention on the life and work of the Jesuits of the United States. The issues treated may be common also to Jesuits of other regions, to other priests, religious, laity, men or women. Hence the *Studies*, 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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- Roger D. Haight, S.J., Regis College, 15 St. Mary Street, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2R5. 416-922-5474.
- Arthur F. McGovern, S.J., University of Detroit, 4001 West McNichols Rd., Detroit, MI. 48221. 313-927-1000.
- John J. Mueller, S.J., St. Louis University, 3634 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO. 63108. 314-658-2878.
- John W. Padberg, S.J., Chairman of the Assistancy Seminar and Editor of its *Studies*. The Institute of Jesuit Sources. 3700 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, MO. 63108. 314-652-5737.
- Paul A. Soukup, S.J., Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA. 95053. 408-554-4764.
- Robert J. Starratt, S.J., America House, 106 W. 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. 212-581-4640.
- G. John Renard, S.J., St. Louis University, 3634 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO. 63108. 314-658-2878.
- John M. Staudenmaier, S.J., University of Detroit, 4001 West McNichols Rd., Detroit, MI. 48221. 313-927-1000.
- L. John Topel, S.J., Office of the Academic Vice President, Seattle University, Seattle, WA. 98122. 206-626-6200.

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For Your Information . . .

Each year the membership of the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality changes in part. Several new members, chosen by the Jesuit Conference Board from a list recommended by the Seminar itself, replace those who have completed their usual three year term. This year we welcome to membership Arthur F. McGovern, Paul A. Soukup and Robert J. Starratt. They replace Charles J. Beirne of Georgetown University, Brian O. McDermott of Weston School of Theology (author of the present study) and Leo J. O'Donovan, formerly also of Weston and now of the Maryland Province Staff. We shall miss their theological, educational, administrative and spiritual insights (all four insights from each of them) and on behalf of the other members of the Seminar and of the readers of *Studies* I want to thank them for their generosity of time and talent to all of us.

The new members come with a great range of backgrounds. Art McGovern, from the University of Detroit, teaches philosophy and directs the honors program there and has written extensively and published most notably in the area of Marxist philosophy. Paul Soukup brings to the Seminar his interest and expertise in the field of communication, the subject which he teaches at Santa Clara University. Jerry Starratt is director of the Center for non-public education at Fordham University, a responsibility for which his varied experience in Jesuit high schools and his pioneering work for the Jesuit Secondary Education Association well equip him.

The issues of *Studies* witness to the diversity of topics with which the Seminar deals. Our next issue in November will continue that testimony. John Staudenmaier, drawing on his background in the history of technology, will present "American Technology and Adult Commitment." I think that you may find yourself saying more than once, "Why, I never thought of it that way."

Lastly, please note on the inside back cover and its facing page the information on new prices for subscriptions and back issues. For six years we have held to the former prices, but costs of everything from paper to printing to postage have risen precipitously and so our rates must change at last.

John W. Padberg, S.J.

Editor: *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*

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CHECKLISTS: Publications of the INSTITUTE OF JESUIT SOURCES
and of the AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR

WITH HIM, IN HIM; THE GRACES OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

by

Brian O. McDermott, S.J.
Weston Jesuit Community
20 Sumner Road
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Introduction

In the years during which I have studied and taught Christology, a conviction has grown in me that contemporary Christology and the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius have deep connections and can illuminate one another in remarkable ways. As part of the theological renewal which began before the Second Vatican Council and received an official voice in that Council, Christology has itself been renewed as a study of the person and mission of Jesus Christ in God's saving plan for our world. A creative and critical return to Scripture and to the fathers of the Church has allowed theologians to appreciate the multiplicity of legitimate views of Christ in the long tradition of the Church, as well as the unity of witness that runs through that multiplicity. A deepened appreciation of the historical and social nature of human experience and of human freedom has, as well, put new light on each of the facets of the full mystery of Christ: his incarnation, his earthly history and ministry, his death, his resurrection and his presence in the Church and the world through the gift of his Spirit.

The *Spiritual Exercises* are no less comprehensive than Christology in their scope. Their overall dynamic involves a retreatant in a journey of transformation which begins in the foundational experience of being loved unconditionally by God. The various meditations and contemplations aim at helping the exercitant grow in both self-identity and the experience of God,

through a gradual ordering and transforming of the energies, affections, thoughts and desires of the exercitant. It is an ordering and transforming in which by the work of the Spirit the exercitant becomes more thoroughly a participant in God's kingdom and its purposes. Touched by God's love the retreatant enters into the mystery of grace and sin and, having tasted freedom of forgiveness, contemplatively accompanies the Christ of the mystery in order to learn to choose as Christ chooses. The concrete election which emerges as fruit of the contemplation of Christ can then give rise to a twofold experience: participation in Christ's suffering and dying and his resurrection. Thus one becomes a co-laborer with God for the liberation of God's world.

In a 1980 issue of these *Studies*, Father Peter Schineller admirably showed many ways in which contemporary approaches to Christology link up with the dynamic of the *Exercises*.¹ He gave particular attention to Christology's emphasis on Jesus' humanity and to the way in which the disciples' understanding of Jesus developed over time. The framework he employed in his essay consisted of an eight-day retreat comprising thirty-two meditations. The hypothetical retreatant desires to grow in an interior knowledge and love of the Lord, so as the better to follow him in service to his kingdom. Over the course of the retreat, the individual becomes a companion of Jesus in his ministry, a participant in his experience of the Cross, a recipient of his revelation as the Risen One. Through this sequence of experiences, retreatants relive in their own lives the gradual discovery of the early Christians that the Jesus they knew as a human being was also

My interest runs a bit differently from Schineller's but compliments it. I want to focus in this essay on the specific grace of each Week of the *Exercises* and offer some Christological reflections on those graces. I profess limited intentions here. I am not offering a theological commentary on the whole of the *Exercises*, nor a complete treatment of all the riches contained in the grace specific to each Week. The grace each person receives through the *Exercises*, while reflecting the pattern suggested by St. Ignatius, will be shaped by the Holy Spirit to the history and the needs of that retreatant. I will be offering elements from various contemporary Christologies which

I find, express in theological language something of what people can experience in making the Exercises. I hope that this bridge-building between the Exercises and Christology will encourage us in two ways: to study contemporary Christology more eagerly as a source from which our spiritual lives can draw sustenance, and to see the Exercises as a source from which we can derive nourishment for the deepening of theology. Because both the Exercises and contemporary theology appreciate how profoundly historical our human freedom and God's involvement in that freedom are, there is well-founded hope that the bridging can succeed.

I will be developing four points of connection between contemporary Christology and the Exercises. In each Week the retreatant can experience Christ as either the person contemplated ("with Christ") or as the person in whom one lives and experiences the world ("in Christ"). The Ignatian election marks the transition from experiencing Christ contemplated as other to experiencing him as one's deepest life. At the same time, in each Week the retreatant can experience himself or herself in a certain condition depending on the grace of that Week. I have chosen to reflect on the following pattern: a Beloved Crucifier with Christ (First Week); Chosen and Choosing with Christ (Second Week); Without Christ yet in Christ (Third Week); In Christ, at Work with God in the World (Fourth Week).

This pattern does not exhaust the ways people can experience the Exercises. It is one of a number of paths that retreatants can take. But, as one way, it offers an opportunity for some Christological reflections about the transforming path the Spirit wants to open up for all of us who enter into the Exercises.

At the beginning of each section I shall sketch one or two fictionalized accounts of retreatants' religious experience which exemplify the grace and dynamic I am exploring in that section of the essay.

First Week: A BELOVED CRUCIFIER WITH CHRIST

Paula, a religious, was furious with some people in her congregation. Her anger was bitter and violent. She imagined herself throttling one of them as she tried to pray. All her conscious energy was focused on doing harm to her. As she persisted in the throttling, occasionally crying out to the Lord

to be here somehow, she began to sense most vividly that the head she held in her hands was Jesus'. He was letting her do it to him. She quickly grew tired of what she was doing and noticed his face. He was looking directly at her, with a look of indescribable love. She cried and let go of her rage and began to hold Christ in her arms like a vulnerable child.

Jim, a staunch member of the local Democratic party, recently learned that the local party treasurer was using party funds to pay personal gambling debts. For months Jim had done nothing about this knowledge in order to protect his position as local ward leader. His fear was assuming an almost overwhelming role in his awareness and blocked his sense of Christ's presence in his prayer. Then, one day, as he struggled to stay with Christ through the fear, he became aware of Jesus wanting him to "give Jesus heart," as he put it. He sensed that he was depriving Jesus of heart by his collusion with his own fears. This startling sense of Jesus' dependency on him undermined his fear, or rather his attachment to his fear, and he began to imagine acting out of his own conviction.

The Christology of the text of the First Week is relatively implicit. The most explicit moment comes, of course, in the colloquy with Christ sent on the cross at the end of the first exercise. As the Week progresses and I more deeply experience myself as a sinner before God, Christ remains central to that experience. I recognize that I am still in existence, a part of creation, thanks to the mercy of Christ my creator.

A major part of the First Week experience consists in my becoming conscious simultaneously of being a sinner and being Christ-related. Redemption occurs as my deepening awareness of myself as a sinner flowers into a sense of self as belonging to the sinned-against Christ. I come to recognize the God who became flesh even unto the Cross in the graced experience of myself as a sinner, and that from a particular angle: as the victim of my actual sins and my tendency to sin, and as one enmeshed in a history of sin.

Some contemporary Christological reflections have focused on the experience of the crucified Jesus and its connection with the experience of personal sinfulness.² Influenced by these reflections I would like to explore the Ignatian experience of the growing awareness of one's sinfulness as it relates to imagining Christ on the cross.

I presuppose that the Christian making the Exercises seeks to grow in knowledge and love of the Lord and possesses a certain amount of spiritual maturity. God's love has already, before the retreat, touched the person experientially. It might have been a quiet kind of thing, or it might have been a dramatic breakthrough, with much feeling and insight. However it happened, the person who enters into the first exercise of the First Week has been touched by God in such a way that he or she desires to make as much progress as possible in the things of God (Annotation 20). In other words, that person has entered upon the *Exercises* with magnanimity and generosity toward the Creator and Lord (Annotation 5). That experience of being loved by God founds and facilitates a sequence of interior movements.³

First of all, the experience of being loved by God, together with the exercises of the First Week, intensifies the awareness of the exercitant in such a way that "evil" can become "sin" in him or her. What does this mean? Each one of us is a partially "absent" person. This absence cannot be reduced to simple immaturity or finitude, but involves, more profoundly, a not wanting to live more authentically and fully. This not-wanting affects us more as an interior atmosphere or climate than as a discrete act or set of acts. This absence is like a death wish, a peculiar kind of death wish, since it involves a need to justify itself by removing the very grounds that require us to live a more intensely personal life. "The most passionately protected thing in us is our mediocrity, our fundamental indecision in respect of life. Its protection will require, and will not stop at, murder."⁴

Many people, when affected deeply by the love of God, will, in time, experience a kind of congealing of evil, its taking shape in the form of a victimizing act. In other words, what hitherto was a vague and unconscious condition in me becomes, with the encouragement of God's Spirit and the fashioning of consciousness worked by the Exercises, an awareness of an act, an act of aggression or an act of flight. This movement from sin as unrecognized condition to sin as recognized act occurs in different exercitants in ways as varied as their histories, temperaments, imaginations and graces are different. But Ignatius and some contemporary Christologists agree in finding such a change in consciousness highly desirable. God's grace draws

out my destructive tendencies from darkness (where they are part of my "normal" situation) into the light (where their destructiveness can be experienced for what it is). My destructiveness may be highly personal or be a tangled allegiance to a group prejudice or ideology.

In a second movement the image of Christ crucified becomes a central part of my awareness, and I sense that I am participating in his crucifixion. The freedom so to imagine Christ as victim of my sins, to imagine his death as for me and to imagine myself as victimizer is the result of God's love "unearthing," turning out into the light, what up until now lay buried in my unconscious: my desire to eliminate, to render absent the fullness of life to which (to Whom) I am called, in order to protect that compromising posture of mediocrity, that resistance to more and more authentic personal life.

This second movement can occur after a destructive condition in me has become explicit, has been recognized as sin, has become deed of traitorous flight or murderous aggression. This imagining of Christ crucified occurs as a symbolic act in the etymological sense that two realities are composed (symbol-ized), namely, God's love incarnate in Christ and my sin become flesh in Christ. Two components that previously avoided meeting because I feared their meeting now join with each other: myself as sinner and God's love. When God's love and my sin really meet, really join, then the deadly power of sin evaporates, it becomes null, it becomes absolutely no match for God's love. After the crucifixion God still loves me and wants only my acceptance of that love. The Spirit who enables Jesus to remain present to me in the crucifixion helps me, as avowed crucifier, to encounter Jesus as God's word of acceptance of me even while I am doing my worst.⁵

The First Week of the Exercises intensifies the consciousness of sinning so that God's forgiveness may conquer.⁶ This intensification does not amount to actual sins culpably performed during the early stages of the long retreat! No, the intensification of sin is my consciousness of myself as grievously affected by my actual sins and by those profoundly destructive dispositions which, played out completely, would indeed crucify the Lord of glory and bring me to the definitive condition called hell. Affectively I can distinguish only with difficulty my potentiality to sin from my actual

sins. Final clarity is not the point here. Rather, the Lord invites me to keep my eyes not on myself but on him as the crucified lover. As with Peter walking on the water, the focus of one's attention at this point is everything!

What is going on here, theologically? We need to keep together several threads. First, I am a person who lives in Christ, whose deepest self belongs to Christ. I belong to God in Christ by the Spirit: "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me." This Christ-self in me has been touched and enlivened by God's love, a love which has lured me into making the Exercises. This Christ-self reveals itself as the victim of my destructive evasion of life. I have been suffocating or harming, in one degree or another, this Christ-life. My act of imagining Christ crucified, an act elicited by God's Spirit and by the fashioning power of the Exercises bonds together Jesus Christ and myself: Jesus Christ, the one who died and lives now as my deepest principle of identity, and myself, one loved by the Lord and yet engaged in crucifying him. I sense not an ounce of make-believe here. True, I did not physically stand on the hill when Jesus of Nazareth hung on the cross, nor do I have to believe that Jesus explicitly thought of me during his crucifixion, but, still, the Christ who died and rose lives now in me, by virtue of the Holy Spirit's outpouring, as the source of my deepest life.

Crucifixion as sin, as formal malice, does not go beyond the sinner, but in its darkest intention would reach into and undo the fullness of life itself--if it could. Once it tried to act out that full, darkest intention: on Calvary. When I imagine Jesus on the cross, I do not relate to an archetype or an empty picture of my fantasy. The act of imagining Christ on the cross which Ignatius encourages is the transformative, healing, symbolic act by which the Spirit binds me, as crucifying and crucified, to Christ as the victim of my sin so that the poison in my sinning may be emptied out and the energy in my sinning may be transformed into service ("What am I doing for Christ?").

What allows my act of aggression or flight to turn into shame and confusion and then sorrow and tears and detestation for sin? The motive of this turning lies in my experiencing the love of God for me. This brings

forth a graced self-love intertwined with a fresh, graced love of God, through Christ in the Spirit. The numbness and darkness of self-crucifixion turn into something else when the crucified one (my Christ-self, my self related to Christ) turns into the one I love. The difference between the soldiers on Calvary performing their banal job of killing off yet another Galilean upstart and my evoked imagining of Christ being crucified because of my sin does not consist in the fact that God's love lures my crucifixion out of its secret hiding place into the open. That was true on Calvary also. The difference lies rather in the fact that in my case I am engaged in an increasingly conscious redemptive process borne by the Spirit of the risen Christ, whereas the soldiers at Calvary were--as far as we know--opening their destructive compromise with death: "just doing their jobs."

Death as dead end, as the irretrievable waste of authentic life, is neutralized of its power when it is brought into contact with the only power stronger than it, God's self, God's love become incarnate. God's love turns death as waste (the death the ego fears) into death as passage to greater life. Death as the effect of sin gives way to death as the fruit of grace. Thus does God use sin for God's own purposes. But sin becomes usable when our consciousness of it stops hiding, begins to come out in the open, intensifies and meets Christ and, through Christ, meets the God who offers us new vine life to sinners.

In this process, Christ can reveal himself at various times as the one we most fear, the one we most long for, the one we most detest, the one we most desire. For Christ is the fullness of shared life which we both resist and crave. Christ lets himself become imaginable for us as God's love for us incarnate, our deepest aspiration incarnate, *and* the incarnation of the effects of our sin.

The resurrection makes all this possible. Christ's capacity to take into himself all our destructive aggressions and harmful evasions now knows no limits. Jesus Christ can adapt to the circumstances of our existences and yet remain himself, in order to meet and transform them. By virtue of his resurrection, Christ can become anything for me in order to win my heart. If, as Paul asserted, God could make Jesus be sin for us that we become righteousness, then, a fortiori, Jesus can identify with any aspect of our

life, even the crucifying aspect, with the intent to reach my heart and offer love and acceptance to *me*, the fragile creature who dwells *behind* the dark energy, behind the attacking or fleeing. If the sinning can move off target, if its harmful energy can be deflected from one's neighbor or one's own self and be aimed at the Risen One, it can do no ultimate harm, for Christ can die no more. This kind of closeness allows God in Christ to love me even while I am lashing out or running away, or simply resisting. The crucial next step consists in noticing how the Lord presents himself to me. Then, how do I react and respond now, when the Lord does show love even when I am at my worst? My response, of course, depends on the effective presence of the Spirit at work in me and my own graced freedom.

In summary, we can say that during the First Week of the Exercises the retreatant focuses on Christ as other than himself or herself ("with Christ"), the Christ crucified on Calvary and crucified in the retreatant's sin against self and neighbor. The focus bears, too, on the retreatant as the one sinning, the one doing the crucifying. The saving link between the retreatant as sinner and Christ crucified is the Holy Spirit, source of the retreatant's Christ life. His or her share in divine life, the "dearest freshness deep down things," is what sin damages and forgiveness liberates.

Both Paula and Jim, in the stories told earlier, tasted both the evil and the forgiveness. Paula received the grace to let her anger enter into full-bodied relationship with Christ, with the result that he became for her what he wanted to become, that she might let go of the hostility in her anger. It might have taken her many repetitions before the breakthrough could occur. The retreat director would have needed to encourage her to let her feelings surface in all their power and to keep focusing on the Lord with desire, so that the strong feelings would not swamp her. At the breakthrough she was graced with the experience of Christ being the object of her anger. By noticing that he looked on her with love despite what she was doing to him, her hostility was defused and she felt invited into a new relationship with him through the forgiven sin.

Jim discovered that Christ needed him and this revelation gave him courage, the sense that he could afford to let go of his preoccupation with his

fear. The retreat director helped him stay, though still fearful, with the Lord, and in time he noticed that the Lord wanted something of him. The Lord's desire dislodged Jim from his preoccupation with his fear. The director invited him to stay a long time with Christ's invitation to him to give Christ heart.⁷

Second Week: CHOSEN AND CHOOSING WITH CHRIST

Joe, a fifty-seven-year-old Jesuit, teaches philosophy at a large Midwestern Jesuit university. He has tenure, but over the past few years he has had a sense that his time is past in philosophy. His academic credentials are not as impressive as are those of newer members of the department, nor has he kept abreast of developments in his field or done much publishing in his time. His teaching no longer gives him the same kind of joy it had done in times past, and he isn't attracting many students. Yet he has not felt the courage to consider giving up his tenured position. He doesn't know what else he could do and sees tenure as an irreplaceable security in his life.

During his annual eight-day retreat Joe was praying with the passage in Mark about the rich young man. At first he intellectualized the whole thing. The director suggested to him that he try this time to notice Jesus in his prayer, either by becoming aware of the quality of silence confronting him or anything else more concrete that might be offered him. During a second repetition of his contemplation of the passage a surprising thing happened. First Jesus was looking upon him with love, an experience which made him rather uncomfortable. Then Jesus said, "Come over here." And he led Joe over to a busy street corner of the city where Joe lives. People were hurrying across the intersection in all directions. He had the sense that Jesus was directing his gaze away from both himself and Joe by pointing to these people with great affection. It seemed to Joe that Jesus was getting through to him that the needs of God's people could become his "riches."

As a fruit of this experience Joe decided to check out how he might use his talents at the university parish, especially in its outreach to and advocacy for the elderly. But he feels scared doing this, as well.

Father William Peters has examined the contemplations chosen by Ignatius for the Second Week and notes that the mysteries selected allow the retreatant to spend a day with Christ and his mother, with Christ and John the Baptist, with Christ and the Apostles, with Christ and the common people, with

Christ and his enemies, with Christ and the family at Bethany, and with Christ in solitude. The retreatant will spend time with Christ in the desert, on the lake, in the town, in the country, in the village, and in the Temple. Ignatius has the scene changing continually, with Christ always the focal figure whom the retreatant contemplates.⁸ Peters also points out that the focus is on Christ as one who labors and struggles as he lives out his Father's will. Not only struggle but light and joy come to the exercitant who remains open to the Holy Spirit and thus receives the consolation of "an intimate knowledge of Our Lord, who has become man for me, that I may love Him more and follow Him more closely" (*SpEx*, [104]).

We can consider Ignatius' selection of contemplations another way.⁹ The exercitant contemplates throughout the Second Week the Trinity choosing and enacting the salvation of humanity. Christ, living in relationship with the Father and with his world in the unity of the Holy Spirit, becomes more and more the focus of the exercitant's imagination and will. He does not, however, offer himself to the gaze of the exercitant simply in general. Rather, the exercitant is invited to meet Christ as chosen and choosing, Christ as central to the Father's grand strategy of salvation, Christ as constantly making choices which enable him to be faithful to God and to God's people, taking into full account the depth and extent of the power of the "enemy of human nature." The exercitant lets the Spirit conform him or her to this Christ whom, in the same Spirit, the Father chooses, and who himself chooses in response to the varied circumstances of his life and ministry. The choices he makes, Ignatius suggests, seek to counteract the evil one by being the living out of the loving condescension of the Father begun in the Incarnation and Nativity.

We see here the pre-Pauline hymn of Philippians 2 fleshed out by Ignatius in the very focused selection of mysteries of our Lord's life. Just as Paul employs the hymn to instruct his audience in the mind of Christ, Ignatius employs a series of contemplations and thematic meditations to lead the retreatant into Christ's fundamental dispositions. It strikes the reader of the Exercises that Ignatius does not select the gospel scenes that are often used in present-day retreats: Christ's preaching of the kingdom, his teaching

in parables, his healings and exorcisms, his identification with the marginalized. The Second Week shows a Christological concentration, but of a quite specific sort. It flows out of the grace of the First Week. The grace of the First Week frees the exercitant from egocentricity and the domination of sinful tendencies, with the result that the individual has been freed for friendship, for intimacy with the Christ who has saved him from the abyss. During the Second Week Christ attunes the exercitant to his own deepest positions regarding God and the world.

From the abundance of contemporary Christology I shall dwell on two insights, not to evaluate them theologically but to indicate their helpfulness for entering into the grace of the Second Week. The first insight concerns Christ's understanding of God and his own mission; the second concerns the structural aspects of his ministry.

Contemporary theologians believe that a Christology which looks clearely headedly at Christ's humanity must acknowledge something which some of the early fathers of the Church hesitated to do, namely, that his experience of God, of other people, of his religious and cultural context and, indeed, of his own internal human experience, was of intrinsic significance for Christ himself. He learned from these experiences, he changed through them, he received from his environment as well as contributing to it. This might seem obvious, but a tenacious view abroad among some Christians maintains even today that Christ's human life on earth simply provided an example for us to follow but did not involve a process by which he himself grew as a human being with other humans.¹⁰

We can go a step further. Christ not only grew in "wisdom, age and grace," but his understanding of himself, his God, and his mission underwent significant change during the course of his short life. Even though we cannot trace the development of his awareness, we can be confident that he did not simply minister to people out of a knowledge of God and the kingdom already given to him full-fledged before his involvement with people. Rather, his interaction with them, especially with the poor and oppressed of his time, contributed to his sense of what God's kingdom could be. Christ's sense of God grew through his very involvement in the furthering

of God's reign in the concrete circumstances of his life.¹¹

Christ's understanding of the reign of God did not stand still. At least two major dimensions mark Jesus' adult, public life. On the one hand, he saw his role as the preacher of the Kingdom, and he hoped that Kingdom would be inaugurated precisely through people's acceptance of his message. The reign of God would begin in a definitive way through his ministry, while stemming ultimately from God the Father, the divine "Other" in Jesus' life. Powerful deeds and teaching, enacted in compassionate and challenging love, mark this dimension of ministry.

On the other hand, he knew what the prophets had suffered at the hands of the enemies of God's reign, and that they had ostensibly been defeated. He realized that the Kingdom would come through suffering as well as through the direct positive influence of his preaching. The more frustrated his ministry to the Kingdom became, no doubt the more mysterious God grew for him. We do not know whether his faith and trust in God underwent a radical shift as some contemporary authors assert.¹² The New Testament seems much less interested in Jesus' internal development than we moderns are. It might seem shocking even to consider the possibility that the Christ of the earthly ministry changed in his understanding of the Father and the Kingdom as a result, at least in part, of the external circumstances in his life. But we need to stay open to this possibility as another way in which to appreciate the limitations within which Christ lived his life, limitations which did not prevent him from enacting his saving work, but were the medium through which he lived and suffered as the Father's eschatological prophet. An appreciation of Christ as one who must respond to God through changing circumstances and who himself is changed in significant ways in his ministry is simply another way of appreciating the Christ of the Second Week of the *Exercises*: a Christ who discerns and chooses, again and again, to preach and enact the kingdom of God, and who chooses others to become companions with him in that discernment and choosing. Christ shows himself as all the more our companion on the way if he does not have a clear-sighted sense of God's will as a blueprint held before his eyes, but rather lets himself be changed by his God through the shifting events of his history.

The second aspect of contemporary Christology that I wish to highlight is the great stress many authors put on the structural or social dimension of Christ's ministry.¹³ On the one hand, this stress comes from a twentieth century concern and a twentieth century kind of awareness. On the other hand, Ignatius' own concentration on Christ's way as the way of poverty, suffering and insults provides a linkage with this emphasis which is hardly artificial. We find in a contemporary reading a more explicitly social interpretation of data which Ignatius treats in more personal terms (although, their own way, the Two Standards, Three Classes of Men and Three Degrees of Humility do offer a cultural critique in the Second Week).

The poverty in which--for Ignatius--Christ was born and which characterized his life-style, both hiddenly and publicly, becomes, for some contemporary theologians, the characteristic of a Christ who chooses to ally himself with those who are religiously, culturally, politically and economically poor. In this chosen solidarity Christ lets their poverty get to become his cause, become part of his felt identity, as he struggles to bring them to the realization that God's reign is offered to them as a gracious empowerment of their lives. The suffering which he chose during the course of his life consisted in sharing the life of those suffering not only from physical and mental ailments, but also from the oppressive structures of their day: the elitism of urban (Jerusalem) religion, the destructive division of the country into religious and economic "haves" and "have nots."¹⁴

The insults which were part of Christ's life and which the retreatant ought to pray to be ready to experience are not simply humiliation to one's dignity but, as Father Michael Buckley expressed it, "objective situations of social emptiness."¹⁵ As the Spirit conforms the retreatant to Christ, that conformation can involve the retreatant in learning to share in his identification with those whose human dignity is being scourged by the powers-that-be. While making the Exercises of the Second Week, the retreatant may find the courage to enter, in order to challenge and protest, some of the violent places in our culture in loving union with those victimized by that violence. In this way Christ's personal experience, contemplated by the retreatant, can expand into a contemplation in which Christ is the focus of God's activity on behalf of the poor, the suffering, the

demeaned and the excluded.

The retreatant who experiences Christ in this social context may well be someone who has already been converted by participation in social struggle for justice and peace, and who seeks to know, follow and love the Lord more deeply through contemplating him in his involvement with the oppressed. On the other hand, the retreatant may be one who begins to notice, right in his or her attentiveness to Christ, that the Trinity is engaged in the struggle for justice and liberation in Christ's involvement with the "losers" and marginalized of his day.

Joe provides an example of someone who has let his imagination and unconscious self be drawn into contemplation of the Christ of the Scriptures and finds a surprising orientation opening up to him, inviting his discernment and eventual choice. Rather than belittling his recent apostolic work, the Lord offers a shift of perspective which promises challenge and new life in companionship with Christ. The ability to let his imagination connect him with the Lord was an unusual experience for Joe. The director had to support him in staying with this experience. His tendency usually went in the direction of thinking about a gospel passage and drawing some conclusions for himself. This time Jesus seemed to take over and call the shots. What intrigued Joe was that the Lord did not command anything but rather invited him to stand somewhere else, with Jesus, and notice what he saw. In noticing the people and sensing Jesus' love for them, he began to experience city people's needs as a kind of resource or riches for himself. Everything began to shift for him. This was new for him: looking at the world with, next to, Jesus, as the latter gazed lovingly on the same world.¹⁶

Third Week: WITHOUT CHRIST YET IN CHRIST

Pat wanted to pack her bags and leave the retreat. After several weeks of companionship with Christ she now experienced nothing but boredom and aridity. She couldn't stay still for more than five minutes and even those minutes she felt like a waste. Everything had evaporated: Christ, her sense of mission, the feelings she had been guided by, the meaning of it all. Her director suggested she pray the rosary, naming the sorrowful mysteries at each decade. She hadn't prayed the rosary in years, but decided to give it a try.

Warren did not at all intend to get into it, but he found himself telling the director about the closing of the high school three years ago. He had taught there seventeen years--his best years--and they went and closed it on him. The bitterness and "closed down" feeling seemed like the sides of a bottomless pit. He began to tell the director something he had kept even from himself: "God shut down the day that school shut down." The director suggested he walk through the school in his imagination and grieve for it as though it were a beloved person who had been buried without the benefit of anointing.

As the fruit of the election made during the Second Week, the retreatant has put on Christ. The Holy Spirit has worked a choice in the retreatant which truly belongs to him or her but which belongs as well to Christ who has now become, in a new and deeper way, the retreatant's principle of life and action. The retreatant has moved now from contemplating Christ chosen and choosing to being part of the whole Christ, chosen and choosing. This means that the grace specific to the Third Week (and Fourth Week) will be colored by the change in the retreatant from being someone who accompanies Christ in his experience to someone experiencing the world as Christ does. Both the Third and Fourth Weeks involve the retreatant in experiencing the consequences of the decision to choose as Christ chooses, to choose under the persuasive influence of the Spirit.

As the Third Week unfolds, the retreatant finds out what it means to live out the election in a world broken by sin; in the Fourth Week, he or she will discover how the election appears as lived out in a broken world that is nonetheless suffused with Christ's presence. The grace of the Third Week leads the retreatant into a time of testing, of absence, of grief and of darkness. This time offers grace because the Spirit of God works through it all; this time acts as a test because Jesus Christ, the companion of the Second Week, disappears, that is, he seems to die and be buried in the experience of the retreatant.

An astute commentator on the *Exercises* has noted that the exercitant can experience the Third Week in two ways.¹⁷ The first way consists of great dryness in prayer and strongly discouraging thoughts about the election already made. The retreatant starts to hear "voices of moderation" suggesting that the election ambitions too much or sets up a far too

difficult path to tread. If the retreatant and retreat director have carefully discerned the election and found it authentic, then these voices are suspect. The kind of modesty and humility appropriate to the Second Week have now become the suggestion of the "enemy of human nature" in the Third Week.

A second, more terrible way of experiencing the Third Week leads the retreatant into an awareness of seeming abandonment by God with the accompanying anxiety of spirit and temptation to despair that such an experience entails. This experience can admit of varying degrees, but in any case it involves a participation in Jesus' experience of death. While still living in Christ (in Christ's Spirit) the retreatant experiences a loss of Christ, a loss of the source of his or her election and of the identity consequent upon the election. One might say that the retreatant experiences a kind of loss of self in the loss of Christ. The Christ who revealed himself as Friend, Leader and Savior and as the deeper identity of the retreatant seems to die now, and so the retreatant undergoes a kind of death as well. A grieving and sadness arise in reaction to this loss of Christ as both the companion in one's life and the deeper self in which the retreatant has been recently living.

The Holy Spirit continues to work throughout this week, of course, encouraging and fostering a bond between the retreatant and the Christ who suffers, dies and is buried. That work is invisible just as Christ, in his entombment, becomes invisible to the retreatant. Where do Christ and his Spirit reveal themselves visibly to the retreatant during this time? The answer lies close at hand: first, in the efforts of a sensitive retreat director to provide support, encouragement and challenge to the retreatant during the time of Christ's apparent absence; second, in the celebration of the Church's liturgy and in the witness of fellow retreatants at prayer.

Christologically, we can say that the Spirit of God inspires the Church to *represent* Christ while the retreatant suffers the seeming absence of Christ and his God.¹⁸ In other words, the retreat director does not replace Christ, nor make him superfluous, but rather holds a place open for him until that time when God chooses to reveal him to the retreatant. By suggesting vocal prayer to the retreatant to counteract a dreadful dryness

he or she may be experiencing, by gently reminding the retreatant of the tradition of faith in which the director and retreatant are rooted, the director witnesses to the presence of Christ; he or she represents Christ. At the same time the director encourages the retreatant to stay at prayer with the invisible God and to pass through the grief and sorrow and darkness waiting for gifts from the seemingly absent God in obedient humility.

If we compare the Christological dynamic of the Third Week with the First Week we can recognize that in each case a process of representation occurs. In the First Week Christ represents the retreatant as victim of sin, for as sinner the retreatant inflicts damage on Christ to the extent that he or she inflicts damage on the relationship to Christ alive in the self. By looking at the crucified, one can see what one's sin does to life. Christ represents sinners by letting himself be the one who remains faithful in them as they act in contradiction to their own selves in their sinning. Christ does not manipulate them or coerce them, but remains himself-for-them, sharing in his flesh the true dimensions of their sin. In the Third Week, on the other hand, Christ seems to suffer and die, and the retreatants can experience themselves not so much as crucifiers of Christ and themselves but as themselves suffering and "dying" in his suffering and dying. One focus is on Christ's experience which becomes coexperienced by the retreatant. This representation appears in an ecclesial form: The director represents the faithful Christ while the Christ hitherto known in prayer becomes distant or invisible.

The death Christ died offered him passage from narrower life, bounded by limits of space, time and history, to fuller life with the Father and in the world. From another angle, sinful actions caused his death and to that extent it ostensibly amounted to waste, dead end, emptiness and futility. Christ died the death of a sinner without being subjectively a sinner. In the course of the whole *Exercises*, the retreatant shares in this double kind of death--death as passage and death as waste--but in the Third Week, despite the dryness and darkness, the experience consists in passage to deeper and wider life.

Various currents of contemporary Christology evaluate the death of Christ differently. Some theologians stress the oneness of his death and

resurrection, seeing each as a dimension of a single eschatological event. The danger lurks here that Christ's death can be understood simply as passage to the Father and greater presence to the world and not seen as an event which could happen as it did--as crucifixion--only because of sin. Others strive to keep the two events very distinct, not chronologically but as theological moments. Resurrection here becomes more the reversal of the death than the latter's deeper positive dimension.¹⁹

Serious issues are at stake here. The one reflection I have offered stresses the way that the Church, in the person of the director, witnesses to the presence of Christ during the experience of his absence in the Third Week. This witness, if offered prayerfully and skillfully, does not dull or detract from the retreatant's experience of the Third Week, but rather supports him or her in that experience. The corporate support offered the retreatant visibly embodies the presence of the risen Christ whose body is the Church. Thus the Third Week involves both the death *and* resurrection of Christ: the retreatant's dryness, grief and darkness and the director's witness to the "more" of Christ alive in the Church. (So too, both death and resurrection are involved in the Fourth Week in that the grace of the Fourth Week allows the retreatant to touch lovingly the wounds of Christ's body, the Church, and the wounds of the world the Church serves.)

In sum, we need to explore both the distinction of death and resurrection *and* their unity in the one saving event worked by the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

By letting herself rely on vocal prayer and by heeding the good advice of her director, Pat allows herself to be "carried" by the Church while she experiences the apparent absence of Christ and God. Warren experiences the loss of Christ in his experience of the loss of his beloved, the school where he gave the best years of his life. Learning to grieve gently for the loss will allow, one hopes, a new relationship to open up between himself and the Christ who has disappeared.²⁰

Fourth Week; AT WORK WITH GOD IN THE WORLD

When Irene finally got away for her retreat, it was none too soon. The legal-aid society where she worked as an attorney teetered on the brink of collapse because of the priorities of the government. The office was woefully understaffed and Irene seemed to be doing the work of two, if not three, as she tried to find adequate housing for the elderly poor. She went to retreat exhausted and welcomed the respite. After several days of rest, she began to pray with John 3 ("come and see") as a beginning scripture text. Soon, in her prayer, the "seeing" was taken from her and instead she was given a "sense" of Jesus alive, fully alive, and present. No pictures, no images. Just a compelling sense that nothing restricted Jesus' presence to the world, that all limitation was in the world, in its sinfulness and brokenness and fear and rage. Her focus stayed with his presence. This sense of Jesus strongly consoled her and over time she became aware that Jesus' resurrection meant an unrestricted presence to all the crucifixions in the world (with an ironic sense of her legal and social work being "done in"). Over time this gave her an awareness of strength in the face of the possible demise of the society. This didn't take away her anger at the prospect, but she experienced her involvement in the uncertainty of her future as borne in some way by the Risen One.

Towards the end of his thirty-day retreat, Phil, a thirty-five year old Jesuit doing his "Tertianship," spent several prayer periods with Thomas and the risen Christ in John's Gospel. During one of the times of prayer, his mind moved from watching Thomas and the other disciples as they waited for a "repeat performance" to a sense of connectedness with the people who were colleagues with him in the administration of the local Jesuit high school. During early portions of the retreat, Phil had wrestled with doubts about continuing to make administration his apostolate. During the Second Week he felt drawn to rechoose that apostolate. Now he spent an entire day experiencing the administrative team of which he was a part as an extension of Christ. During one particularly startling time of prayer, the image arose in him of the administrators offering the Eucharistic cup to one another, and as he sensed himself part of that drama he was suffused with a feeling of peace and confidence, a feeling which later thoughts of the limitations of the team could not dispel.

In the Fourth Week of the *Exercises* Christ shows himself as filled with the joy and glory of his Father, and the retreatant is invited to ask for the grace to rejoice intensely because of Christ's condition. The exercitant seeks to savor Christ's divinity and his role as consoler (*SpEx*, [2]

As one who has been empowered by the Holy Spirit to make an election as Christ would, the retreatant in this Week, as in the preceding, lives Christ's life now, consciously, lives as one who shares in Christ's relation to God and the world. "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me." The God and Christ who disappeared from view in the dryness, darkness and grief of the Third Week, and the Spirit which sin and the "enemy of human nature" seemed to quench, now emerge from the dead--that is, from the death-experience of the retreatant--and joyously, victoriously show themselves. The old has yielded up the new; the death of sin permits an awakening of the retreatant into a new sense of graced existence that spells salvation for both the retreatant and the larger world. The dimension of the Fourth Week's grace I want to dwell with here is this experience of savoring Christ's divinity and his role as consoler.

We know that our knowledge of Christ's divinity finds its roots in the first disciples' experience of his resurrection. Within the canon of the New Testament we read fragments of hymns which proclaim Christ as God, and by the year 325 at Nicaea the Church professes Christ as one in being with the Father. At the root of these hymns and the later conciliar statement lies the early Church's experience of salvation: God's exaltation of Christ in the power of the Spirit and the creation of a new people by that same Spirit.

What was that original experience of the risen Lord like and how does it relate to our experience of him in the Fourth Week of the *Exercises*?²¹ We know something about Christ's impact on people in his ministry, and we know something of the effect of his death on them. We know, as well, something about how God communicates with human beings, and how God has created us in such a way that we are able to receive that divine self-gift. Contemporary Christology can help us appreciate how the disciples' Easter experience dovetails with the experience of consolation without preceding cause as St. Ignatius portrays it. Karl Rahner will be our guide here.²²

Christ's earthly ministry was a "paradisaal" experience for the disciples. They experienced the nearness of God in Jesus' nearness to them. "Abba" came through to them with an unparalleled freshness, vitality and promise, thanks to Christ's extraordinary impact on their lives. At the same time,

they breathed in Christ's authentic humanity, humanity such as they most profoundly longed for and were afraid of. The Sinless One (as the early Church would name him) spoke to them of the essential longing of their hearts: to be one with God in the full flourishing of their shared humanity. Despite their false conceptions and misguided readings of him, they experienced through him their God as alive for them. Their faith, love, hope in new life, and their dream of God's reign quickened.

All this Christ meant for them. His execution was the evacuation of all this from the disciples' lives. Their faith and love lost all hope. God as newly alive died for them, their hope for a Messiah and dream of God's reign died. They had experienced in Christ not a God of guilt, of distance and threat to the rebellious ego, but the "new God" of loving nearness and a shocking kind of mercy. Christ's crucifixion cut off at the quick this unprecedented experience. *This* God dies in their eyes and shows up as powerless, completely powerless, because the death of Christ has the power to render this God dead for them.

The region in the disciples which Christ's death emptied out and evacuated of all hope was their very creatureliness, the region in them which opened to, was oriented toward, God. In contemporary theological language this common place in our human hearts is their transcendence toward the Mystery of God. As Ignatius expresses it, it is the place where God alone can come and go, where God can offer consolation without previous cause: (*SpEx*, [147]).

Let us stay with this a moment. In the various appearance narratives in the Synoptics, in John, and in Paul, we find a bewildering array of details about the disciples' experience of Christ after his death. No longer do scholars try to harmonize these accounts. Rather, they accept the fact that there are various narratives and they use methods of literary and historical analysis to discover the traditions behind the stories as we find them in the Gospels. They also examine how the theology of the evangelists influences the telling of the story.

The encounter of the Risen One and the first disciples cannot be reduced to a series of sensory experiences (hearing, seeing, touching). Any materialistic interpretation of the narrative fails to explain how the

disciples came to proclaim Jesus the Christ, Lord, Savior, Son of God, exalted Son of Man. Even if there were sensory elements in their experiences (and there probably were), Christ encountered the disciples on a most profound level where their deepest identity was at stake, the level in them where their trust or mistrust about life *as a whole* was played out. This level is the place where we are utterly empty if deprived of the experience of God and the place filled with life when God is near.²³

Ignatius believes that the one self-authenticating experience of God takes the form of consolation without preceding cause, the experience of being drawn into the love of God. This experience, which has no particular object in it, authenticates itself because it is the experience most consonant with our core identity. Because it involves our core identity as creatures drawn to God, it is utterly trustworthy. This experience does not always show itself to our "daylight" consciousness. God constantly draws us into the divine love, but we are not always explicitly aware of this attraction. The more we grow attuned to this fundamental consolation, the more it can function as our experiential norm. With its help we can discern, as faithful members of the body of Christ, which particular good or value that attracts us contributes more to the service and praise of God.

Now the experience of consolation without preceding cause has been variously explained. Some view it as a consolation without any accompanying particular object of awareness eliciting or incarnating the consolation. Others understand it to be a consolation which is offered to a person beyond, in excess of, what he or she had been begging for in the *id quod volo* of the *Exercises*.²⁴ In either case the experience is one of graced transcendence, in which we experience the living God in and through our experience of our graced transcendence as such.²⁵ Thus it is an experience of God that has an aspect of immediacy and an aspect of mediation. It is not mediated by a particular object of consciousness (for example, a sunrise, a sacramental celebration, the presence of a good friend), yet it is mediated by one's own core identity, one's own self as living word, a graced body-person whose very being longs for God with a longing reflecting God's desire for the person.

I am going into such technical detail about this because we might find help in appreciating the disciples' Easter experience if we view it as an experience of consolation without preceding cause. In the Easter appearances this man Christ stood, as it were, in that "place" in the disciple where God alone can come and go. This particular person, totally human, totally God, gives himself to be experienced in that place of ultimate emptiness and longing which is our transcendence, our creatureliness, where only God (or sin, as the power which tries to undo God's presence) can be present.

According to the New Testament, salvation consists ultimately in two divine gifts, two graces which God alone can offer: participation in divine life and the forgiveness of sin. Only God can bring creatures into the divine life and only God can transform sin, the willful breaking of the covenant with God. In the Easter appearance, Christ is experienced as giving these two gifts to the disciples. This man Jesus meets the disciples *principally* on the level of their person, of their transcendence, where faith, love, hope spring forth.

The state of soul of the disciples after Christ's death makes their Easter experience of him radically different from any other experience of consolation without preceding cause, yet united with all other such experiences as well. Sin's work on the cross emptied the disciples' transcendence of the experience of God. God's presence did not cease even when sin was doing its worst. But at that unique time when sin was trying to kill off God in trying to "waste" Christ, the authentically human one, the eclipse of God for those sinfully yet affectively connected with Jesus reached its culmination. Neither John of the Cross's dark night nor any sinner's dejection came over them, but an experience of emptiness whose depth can be measured only by what Jesus had given to them in his earthly ministry. When sin ruled with (ostensible) absoluteness, as it did on Holy Saturday *only* God, no other reality but God, could enter to undo the work of sin. Yet it is this man Jesus who enters them; it is Christ who gives himself to be seen. Christ makes himself known as thoroughly alive, thoroughly

human and thoroughly able and willing to offer, as his own gifts, what God alone can offer: the forgiveness of sin and the divine life. The Church will profess at Nicaea in the year 325 the full divinity of this man Jesus. But the experience of Christ's divinity and transformed humanity began fully at Easter and remains the foundational experience of the Church.

At this point we might reflect for a moment on another similarity between the experience of the first disciples and a retreatant's experience of the risen Christ. The experience of the risen Lord at Easter included for the disciples an experience of themselves as witnesses to the Lord. Their own living faith, love and hope, the fruit of the Spirit's work in them, were part and parcel of the Easter experience. Another way of putting it: Their own public community of faith provided the visible, historical dimension of the bodily resurrection of Christ; it was the earthly, not yet perfected aspect of that bodily resurrection.

The grace of the Fourth Week comes to those whom the forgiveness of sin has liberated into a contemplative relationship to Christ chosen and choosing and who, in the Election, have chosen profoundly in Christ's Spirit and then suffered the consequences of that choosing. Favored by the gracious God, the retreatant in the Fourth Week can experience the grace specific to that Week, either by being given an experience of Jesus as abundantly alive and involved in the world or by being given a new and invigorating experience of the Church as indeed the living body of Christ in history. A "remembering" experience might be the form the experience takes: The retreatant experiences himself or herself as organically one with the least of Christ's brothers and sisters, or experiences the People of God as charged with God's presence even though wounded by sin and mediocrity.

The Holy Spirit acts in this Week as the Spirit of the Church, animating it as the sign of salvation. The Spirit makes the many into one body as the earthly sign of the victorious presence of the Risen One. This divine action stands in deep continuity with the Spirit's work in the preceding Weeks. In the Third Week the Spirit inspires the Church to be a sign of encouragement to the retreatant as Jesus dies, is buried and "disappears"

from view. In the Second Week the Spirit bonds the converted retreatant to the Jesus who is chosen and choosing for God's reign. In a related yet different way, the Spirit in the First Week exposes the retreatant's own brokenness to the love of the Father so that conversion may take place.

In the first example given at the beginning of this section, Irene receives the grace of the Fourth Week in the experience of Christ alive in the possible dying of the legal-aid society. One of the ways the Fourth Week can be experienced is in the God-given sense of Christ's unimpeded presence to and in the world. That sense washed over Irene as an unexpected gift. A sign of its authenticity, for the director, resided in the fact that this consoling sense of Christ did not lead her away from the tough area of her life, but rather allowed her to remain present to it with a mysterious but vivifying awareness of new hope.

Phil received the Fourth Week's grace as a deeply touching experience of being part of a Eucharistic body of Christ, an experience which did not exclude a realistic sense of the limitations of the apostolate in which he was engaged. In Phil's case the consolation given him took the form of a social consolation, a sense of being members of a "we-reality" that was God's creative handiwork. He experienced the Spirit as the divine power who can unite believers in and through their differences, not simply despite those differences. In a small way (but significant for him), Phil received a "Church-founding" experience as a grace, and thus lived out in his life a profound dimension of the original Easter event.²⁶

Conclusion

In this essay I have offered some Christological reflections on dimensions of the graces of the Four Weeks of the *Exercises*. I have drawn heavily on the contributions of a number of contemporary authors whose methodologies are different but who have in common a respect for human experience as a resource for theology. A fundamental hope lurking behind the

writing of this essay has been that its readers might find encouragement to read one of these contemporary authors (such as Kasper, Schillebeeckx, Rahner, van Beeck, or Moore) as a way of nourishing their own spiritual lives. The gap which in some quarters used to yawn between spirituality and dogmatic theology is beginning to shrink with the increasing publication of theology which takes our shared stories seriously both as historical and religious experience. Therefore we can look forward to the day when systematic theology will help many more reflective Christians to enter into their faith more deeply, both intellectually and affectively, learning to give even better "account for the hope that is in them" (1 Peter 3:15).

Endnotes

- 1 "The New Approaches to Christology and their Use in the Spiritual Exercises," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, XII, 4 and 5 (September-November, 1980).
- 2 See Sebastian Moore, *The Crucified Jesus Is No Stranger* (New York: Seabury, 1977) and Edouard Pousset, *Life in Faith and Freedom: An Essay Presenting Gaston Fessard's Analysis of the Dialectic of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. and ed. by Eugene L. Donahue (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980). I am greatly indebted to Sebastian Moore's reflections for what follows. It is important to note that Moore's treatment of the First Week draws on the experience of retreatants who relate to Christ very explicitly in the First Week of the Exercises. Many retreatants experience God's love and their own sinfulness in the First Week much less christologically than Moore suggests.
- 3 Moore, p. 4.
- 4 Ibid., p. 13.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 18ff., 62.
- 6 Fr. Edouard Pousset expresses this similarly: "For the retreatant the First Week means 'growth' of sin. It is not a quantitative growth--sin does not abound on the edge of my reflection as it did in the period when I was not reflecting--but a growth in intensity: intensity of experienced feeling and progressive interiorization.... The principle of this growth--growth of an increasingly keen sense of sin--is not the reflection of consciousness, it is Christ." *Life in Faith and Freedom*, p. 546.
- 7 In addition to the books by Moore and Pousset I would suggest R. H. Fuller, "Jesus Christ as Savior in the New Testament," *Interpretation* 35 (1981), 145-156, and Dermot Lane, *The Reality of Jesus* (New York: Paulist, 1975), for material relevant to the First Week.
- 8 *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Exposition and Interpretation* Fourth Edition (Rome: Centrum Ignatium Spiritualitatis, 1980), p. 1.
- 9 Ibid., p. 83.
- 10 See, for example, Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, trans. by V. Gre (New York: Paulist, 1976), pp. 197-229.
- 11 See Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach*, trans. by John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1978), Chapter 4, "The Faith of Jesus: Its Relevance for Christology and Following Jesus," pp. 79-145.

- 12 Sobrinho believes there was a Galilean crisis which marks a shift in Jesus understanding about the way in which God's kingdom would be inaugurated. Ibid., pp. 92f. The increasing opposition to his message led Jesus, according to Sobrinho, to recognize that suffering love, rather than the mighty deeds of his preaching and healing, would be the vehicle of the Kingdom's arrival.
- 13 Sobrinho's work is representative of liberation theology's development of this theme as a pervasive dimension of theology. See also Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, trans. by Hubert Hoskins (New York: Crossroads, 1979), Part Two, pp. 105-271.
- 14 See Albert Nolan, *Jesus Before Christianity* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1976).
- 15 "Freedom, Election and Self-Transcendence: Some Reflections upon the Ignatian Development of a Life of Ministry" in *Ignatian Spirituality in a Secular Age*, ed. by George P. Schnier (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1948), p. 82.
- 16 In addition to the treatments of Christ's earthly ministry in Kasper, Sobrinho and Nolan, I would recommend in a special way Schillebeeckx's *Jesus* for its careful attention to exegetical data.
- 17 Alex Frank, *Freedom For Service: How to Use the Individually Guided Spiritual Exercises* (Rome: Progressio, Supplement 3, April 1974), pp. 104ff.
- 18 Walter Kasper considers representation a central category of Christian theology. See *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 216-225. For a brilliant analysis of representation as a relational dynamic, see Frans Jozef van Beeck, *Christ Proclaimed: Christology as Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist, 1978), pp. 412ff.
- 19 An example of the first view is that of Karl Rahner. See, for example, his *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. by William Dych (New York: Crossroads, 1978), pp. 228-285. For an example of the second position, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*, trans. by R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (New York: Harper, 1974).
- 20 Additional reading that sheds light on the Christology involved in the Third Week: Gerald O'Collins, *The Calvary Christ* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), and his *Interpreting Jesus* (New York: Paulist, 1983).
- 21 See Sebastian Moore, *The Fire and the Rose are One* (New York: Seabury, 1980). I am drawing extensively on Moore's development of the Easter experience of the disciples. Edward Schillebeeckx argues that after the crucifixion the disciples underwent a conversion experience which

involved a divine act of grace and forgiveness and deeper reflection upon the life and death of Christ (see *Jesus*, pp. 380-385).

- 22 See Harvey D. Egan, *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976), ch. 2.
- 23 "The divinity of Jesus originally meant heaven on earth as an experience. It meant Jesus calling out into total freedom that feeling for God which is not otherwise free. Jesus drew into himself the soul's secret sense of who God is, which guilt will not let it utter. He was the focus of that sense. That is the meaning of 'Jesus is Lord.' It was the cry of a free people, that is, of a people who had found themselves in God from whom human life is alienated. The humanity of God was the filling of a vacuum whose enormousness could only be understood after it was filled: the amazing capacity of the human creature to be empty of God. That emptiness, man's extraordinary capacity to be somehow apart from God, was brought to its critical point during those hours when 'God was dear.' What filled it could only be God. Jesus filled it. Jesus is God. All the experience of the Jesus mission and its traumatic end was involved and invoked by the first people to cry out 'Jesus is Lord.'" Moore, *The Fire and the Rose are One*, p. 94.
- 24 See Egan, pp. 34ff.
- 25 Karl Rahner, "The Logic of Concrete Individual Knowledge in Ignatius Loyola," in *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, trans. by W. J. O'Hare (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964), p. 148: "[Consolation without a preceding cause] is an emergence into awareness--we cannot, of course, say 'becoming directly the object of the mind,' because that would make it the beatific vision--of transcendence as such, and as supernatural, and in it [Rahner's emphasis] of God as the term of this anticipating reaching out in aspiration."
- 26 Additional light on the Easter event as it affected both Jesus and the first disciples can be found in Pheme Perkins, *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984) and Gerald O'Collins, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973).

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Father David M. Stanley, S.J., is professor of New Testament Studies at Regis College, Toronto School of Theology. He has published seven books and numerous articles on Scriptural topics, including A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises, published in 1967 and still in demand in 1986.

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