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# STUDIES

IN  
THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

“I’m No Theologian, but . . . (or So . . . )?”

*The Role of Theology in the Life and Ministry of Jesuits*

CARL F. STARKLOFF, S.J.

## THE 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 that religious institutes recapture the original inspiration of their founders and adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material that it publishes.

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STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

30/2 · MARCH 1998

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1548—1998



The four-hundred-and-fiftieth  
anniversary of

- ▶ The official papal approval of  
the Spiritual Exercises
- ▶ The first printing of the  
Spiritual Exercises
- ▶ The opening at Messina in  
Sicily of the first Jesuit  
school founded specifically  
for lay students



*For your information . . .*

“Men in black, whence slither you? / We crawl up from underground. / Half-way foxes, half-way wolves, / Our way of life is mystery-bound.”

Such was the refrain of an anti-Jesuit song by the nineteenth-century popular French poet Pierre Béranger. I used it as an example of “the demonization of the Jesuits,” the subject of a paper that I presented last month at an international conference at Georgetown University whose theme was “The Dreyfus Case: Human Rights versus Prejudice, Intolerance, and Demonization.”

The occasion was the centenary of the famous letter of the French novelist Emile Zola, “J’accuse,” maintaining that the French military, with at least the tacit acquiescence of the French government, had convicted Alfred Dreyfus, a French army officer of Jewish descent, of treason and sent him to life imprisonment at Devil’s Island. Much of the conference was taken up with the antisemitism that accompanied the case and the parallel demonization of the Jews. To their disgrace, Catholics and the Catholic press were all too involved in those attacks, although they were by no means the only ones so involved. The Jesuit publications in France did not join in the public hue and cry, even if there were some members of the Society who were opposed to Dreyfus. But that did not keep the anticlericals from accusing the Society of being the masterminds behind the anti-Dreyfusards. So my talk at the conference was to describe how the Jesuits had long been demonized in the minds of many French citizens, how easy it was to be prejudiced against them, and how that prejudice erupted again at the time of the Dreyfus case. Ironically, in the affair often enough the same pejorative terms and baseless accusations were employed against the Jesuits as against the Jews. Prejudice used the same ugly and evil weapons. It always does.

On a very different note and a happy one, James Torrens of the California Province and a current member of the Seminar, has just published a book entitled *Reaching toward God* (Sheed & Ward, ISBN 1-55612-988-2). Many of the essays featured in this volume deal with the search for God in the midst of a full and busy life and originally appeared in *Human Development*. As the subtitle of the book says, they are “reflections and exercises for spiritual growth.” A poem accompanies each essay and contributes to making it a personal expression.

*A 12-Step Approach to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* by Jim Harbaugh, S.J., is another book from the same publisher (Sheed & Ward, ISBN 1-58051-008-6). It is an illuminating and thoughtful exposition of the similarities and differences in the twelve-step approach of Alcoholics Anonymous and the *Spiritual Exercises*, a helpful set of suggestions on ways to use both of those works together, and a set of fifty-two meditations, one for each week of the year. Every meditation begins with material from the Exercises and translates that little by little into the twelve-step language. As the author wisely remarks, “As with any translation, this can serve to jolt even

someone who knows the older version [of the *Exercises*] into a fresh appreciation of that text. And newcomers to recovery can come to see that very ancient wisdom is just as relevant to them and their struggles as it was when it was first discerned." Both works can be ordered from Sheed & Ward through a toll-free phone number, 1-800-333-7373.

Of note and importance: "Friends in the Lord" is the theme of the Fourth Conference on the History and Spirituality of the Society of Jesus to be held at Chantilly, France, from August 30 to September 4 of this year. Held every three years, these conferences have all proved to be eminently worthwhile. The previous conference's theme was "Service at the Frontiers" and dealt with the Society's "dispersion on mission." This conference will turn its attention to an equally important theme, the Society's "cohesion as a community." The main speakers will be Howard Gray of the Detroit Province, and presently at Boston College; Philippe Lecrivain, professor of Church history in Paris; Frans Jozef von Beeck a Dutch theologian and professor at Loyola University in Chicago; Franz Meures, director of novices in Germany; and Jacques Gellard, Jesuit general assistant in Rome. On the basis of my past experience of these conferences, I would surely urge attendance at this one. You can obtain enrollment applications from the Secrétariat des Sessions, Centre Cultural des Fontaines—CCHS / B.P. 10219 / F, 60631 Chantilly-Cedex, France. If you want to use the fax, the number is 011-3-44-67-12-91.

And an anniversary! In the context of several Jesuits recently being created cardinals by Pope John Paul II, we might recall that 1998 is the three-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the accession in 1648 to the Polish throne of King John Casimir, a Jesuit priest created a cardinal in 1647. Although he officially lost his membership in the Society after becoming a cardinal and then becoming king and then marrying his brother's widow, he remained very friendly to the Society and was called the "Jesuit King." His problems in diplomacy and war brought on his abdication in 1668 and thus ended the Vasa dynasty in Poland. I do not think any of the present Jesuit cardinals are in danger of being crowned kings.

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

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“I’M NO THEOLOGIAN, BUT . . . (OR SO . . . )?”

*The Role of Theology in the Life  
and Ministry of Jesuits*

**Introduction**

One evening a few years ago, I drowsily watched a late-night TV rerun of a movie, the title of which escapes me now. A mild curiosity held me there to follow the story (complete with crusty and insensitive monsignor) about a troubled and naive young priest who was both trying to solve a crime and deal with his attraction to a woman, with whom he eventually wanders off. It was a very forgettable film, except for one short exchange: at one point the woman queries the priest about a moral issue in the case, and he responds, “Don’t ask me. I’m not a theologian!” To this she retorts, “Well, what are you then?”

That exchange in this otherwise shallow tale has stayed with me, partly because of my own bias toward theology and partly because I do believe that it is essential that every priest or minister in the Church be a “theologian.” I have found support for this in a comment once made by the late, great Karl Barth, that every serious Christian has to be a theologian, since everyone must proclaim the Word. He once wrote, “The statement, I am a mere layman and not a theologian, is evidence, not of humility, but of

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indolence.”<sup>1</sup> Clearly, Barth was not calling everyone to be an academic theologian. But just what did he mean? What Barth intended to say to “lay persons,” who he well knew are called to ministry, I wish to say here to Jesuits in all their ministries in the Church.

Over the past sixteen years spent teaching in a school of theology, I have at times tried to shock ministerial students by starting a course with the assertion that they must all become “professional theologians.” I quickly add that being a “professional” in a field does not mean being an academic, but it does mean being a trained practitioner. Certainly this point applies to Jesuits, because all of us by profession of our vows dedicate ourselves, as the *Formula of the Institute* states it, to work for “the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine” both through education and social and pastoral service.<sup>2</sup>

Two great modern theologians have written compendiums of theology intended, not for academic theologians, but for serious Christians. In the introduction to his *Principles of Christian Theology*, the Anglican theologian John Macquarrie argues, “Theology is indispensable to the Church, and where theology fails, we must take this as a demand for better theology and certainly not as an excuse for turning away from it or imagining that the Church can get along without it.”<sup>3</sup> Karl Rahner, at the very outset of his *Foundations of Christian Faith*, also let readers know that his compendium was intended for use outside of academe: he emphasized that his work was designed to be used as an account of Christianity on “the first level of reflection”—that is, at a midpoint between “the simple faith of the catechism” and thoroughgoing competence in all the disciplines of theology.<sup>4</sup> Yet it seems to me, on the basis of my ordinary conversations with a good many Jesuits, that for so many of them theology does seem to be dispensable, and that any effort at a first level of reflection merely beguiles hard-working apostles into intellectual abstractions.

I realize how unrealistic all this may sound outside the “hallowed halls.” For one thing, the vast majority even of practicing Christians—perhaps Catholics more emphatically—have little concern about theology.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G. W. Bromiley et al. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1961), 4, pt. 2: 877.

<sup>2</sup> John W. Padberg, S.J., general editor, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 3f.

<sup>3</sup> John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, rev. ed. (London: SCM Press, 1977), v.

<sup>4</sup> Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1982), xii.

Few of the People of God (much influenced by the media!) seem able to perceive the importance of making distinctions between such issues as married/celibate priesthood, women's ordination, and liturgical questions on the one hand, and such deep moral problems as contraception, abortion, and euthanasia on the other. Or, to cite another example, attempts at a social theology are seen so often as mere meddling in politics. When theologians get "disciplined" and even excommunicated, the public outcry takes one of two extreme forms—either outrage at the authorities or absolute acquiescence in a he-had-it-coming attitude. Rarely is there any thought that the Church is also meant to be a community of civilized discourse and an environment of serious inquiry and healthy mutual criticism.

I have not been immune to the antitheology malaise, and have often wondered about the value of theology (beyond reading the Bible and commentaries for homilies) for our service to the Church. Even in trying to make my point in this article, I feel a bit hypocritical, because I have lived with my own demons about this ever since entering doctoral studies. But I console myself with the remark imputed to the poet Rilke, that he would not want to be rid of his demons, for fear that his angels might disappear as well. The demon of doubt, one may hope, will prod me to shed more light on what I am about.

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*The Church is also meant to be a community of civilized discourse and an environment of serious inquiry and healthy mutual criticism.*

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But this interior debate of mine is also an exterior one, since I so often encounter Jesuits (let's restrict the conversation to "Ours" for this article) who want as little as possible to do with theology. I think back, for example, to an excellent parish liturgy that I was attending, standing at the back of a jam-packed congregation, during a most impressive feast-day celebration. The music was superb, the lay participation was impressive in every respect, and most of the congregation were obviously involved in the celebration. The homily, however, left me alone with my demons once again, even though it was meant to be humorous. The priest praised his people for this magnificent turnout, and remarked how consoling it was for him to be here among the People of God, where the Church truly shows itself (emphatic agreement on my part thus far!). But then, rather curiously, he launched into an illustration of how abstract and unreal his study of theology had been in contrast to this experience, treating us to a burlesque of the kind of manual jargon that Jesuits of his generation and mine are familiar with, all the while conveying the general impression that theology is

boring and irrelevant. No doubt he was authentically recounting his theological experiences and I sympathized with his attitude, although I could not for the life of me see how this was supposed to build up the People of God at that moment. Still more was I troubled over the impression being given to these people of what theology is. I was thankful, about a half hour later, that the rest of the liturgy (theology in action!) and my reception of Holy Communion lifted the gloom that hung over me after that message.

My point here is not to complain about the quality of homilies. What troubles me so much about this and so many other antithetical reactions is that they do not take into account that every priest, certainly, and every Jesuit, as I have said, is in some way a "professional." In many cases he is a professional in a nontheological field, but, at least insofar as he is in ministry, he is a professional in theology as well. And what is even more ironic is that *only* persons like these, competent in their respective fields, scholarly, practical, or pastoral, are in a position actually to *articulate* the importance of these professions in the light of Scripture, tradition, and the vocation of the Society of Jesus. These men are administrators, economists, social workers, sociologists, physicists, mathematicians, artists, litterateurs, historians, mechanics, carpenters, landscapers, and on and on. In all of these pursuits, they are men of faith, exercising a ministry of faith, for which reason people must sometimes ask of them why they are doing this. Here the First Letter of Peter comes to mind: "Be always ready to give an explanation (the Greek word here is *ἀπολογία*, *apologia*) to anyone who asks for an account (*λόγος*, *logos*) of the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15). Who better than these men themselves can give a faith-filled interpretation of their labors?

We Jesuits enter our various ministries partly because we have a certain aptitude and, we hope, some desire for them, but ultimately as an exercise of our Christian and Jesuit vocation. How do we maintain a connection between these ministries and our faith except by prayer and, yes, theology? Obviously, busy professionals in other fields do not have time for extensive academic theology, but they must, in order to give an account, be able to "do" it in a manner befitting their contexts. How, then, do nonacademic theologians go about putting theology more immediately at the service of the Church and the world? Drawing on my own history, I suggest a four-part process that might stimulate readers to create their own approach. I turn first to Church history for an outstanding example of a practical theologian; next, I suggest a contemporary example of theology in pastoral life; third, I turn to a modern scholarly theologian for an example of methodology; and fourth, I suggest some possible contexts in which others might be called upon to do theology.



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## Las Casas: An Example of Practical Theology

It was midway in the 1980s that I encountered a fresh theological personality (from nearly five centuries ago!) who would greatly deepen my pastoral perspective as well as my academic theology. I had long known about that sixteenth-century giant, Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566), the Dominican bishop of Chiapas and defender of the rights of indigenous peoples.<sup>5</sup> But reading his brilliant polemic *In Defense of the Indians*, I underwent something akin to intellectual shock treatment. Since this deeper encounter, whenever I find myself struggling with the demon that hisses into my ear that theology is useless, I immediately retrieve the memory of Las Casas both as preacher and as theologian. True, this great theological dialectician flourished during a presecular age, when religion, and especially established "Christendom," was the context and norm for interpreting all social and cultural realities. A theologian in those times could speak with an authority that today resides in social scientists or legal experts. But rather than being an excuse for us to neglect theological reflection in our own time, does not this new reality present an even more dramatic challenge to our creative imaginations?

It is awe inspiring to read about the indefatigable energy of Las Casas in his profoundly theological campaigns—almost to the day of his death at what was then the extremely old age of eighty-two—to defend the rights of the natives of the New World. Las Casas was converted from his own youthful involvement in the vicious *encomienda* system (a quasi-feudal structure in which Indians were compelled to labor as indentured servants) by the fiery preaching of the Dominican Antonio de Montecinos. Already trained in the law, Las Casas himself eventually became a Dominican and for the most part mastered theology on his own. He is most famous for his efforts in the higher reaches of theological discourse, via tractates sent back to the courts and religious centers of Europe, and for the renowned Valladolid debates of 1553. Those seemingly very lofty debates between "intellectuals" had a deep relationship to attitudes on the pastoral and social level.

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*How do we maintain a connection between these ministries and our faith except by prayer and, yes, theology?*

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<sup>5</sup> Readers interested in pursuing the mission and career of Las Casas might best read Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1993).

One central feature of the debates focused on a very abstract problem—Aristotle’s speculations about human nature that had led him to the aristocratic theory typical of ancient Greece, according to which, to paraphrase Orwell, some humans are more human than others. In other words, those of a higher dignity have the right to enslave and make use of those

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*We desire that our ministry, our particular apostolate, might communicate the Gospel in its own way.*

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belonging to a lower state. For Aristotle these lesser beings were “barbarians” (foreigners) and, in another sense, women. Most colonials held the common popular version of this theory that “Indians” had no human souls at all and were thus valid material for the serfdom (slavery, really) of the *encomienda* system. The highly theoretical arguments of the Aristotelian humanist Juan de Sepúlveda (Las Casas’s opponent)

had been developed in ivory-tower isolation, but they quickly found popular acceptance. The “natural inferiority” of aboriginal peoples gave the superior Europeans every right to treat them as chattels on their estates. It was Las Casas’s accomplishment to carry the struggle against such ideologies from the frontier to the Spanish universities, and ultimately to the royal court and even to the papal court itself. The failure of so many clergy and religious to heed the impassioned arguments of Las Casas is evidence, not of the uselessness of theology, but of a lack of intellectual and moral conversion.

I realize that not many pastoral ministers, not even many scholars, ever have the opportunity to engage in such high-level debate today. Nor can argumentation of this kind be employed in any detail in preaching—especially in a Catholic church, where any homily longer than ten minutes produces either resentment or somnolence. And yet, what can be done to help Catholics deal with complex spiritual and moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and the continuing struggle for human rights at a level deeper than mere outrage and indignant sloganeering? Again, I suggest, there must be a grass-roots theology that is led by pastoral ministers with fundamental theological competence. For example, Ours might become better-equipped theologians by participating in guided study groups based on the documents of General Congregation 34 and the numerous theological issues stirred up by them. But such a process must be constantly referred back to our ministerial contexts, and for this purpose I suggest the following procedure.

## "Give Me Some Time and I'll Get Back to You"

If all of us, insofar as we are ministers of the Gospel, must be practicing theologians, we need a ready-to-hand method or set of mental tools with which to "do" this kind of theology. How this is done in our different areas of service is largely determined by the context, but I will venture to recommend a methodology that might serve the nonacademic practitioner even as it serves the academic. I will be writing here out of my own field experience—a very "missiological" one, to be sure. But we are all on mission and we all must work in dialogue with our contexts, so I hope that my example is not too far-fetched to stimulate analogous reflections on other ministries. Obviously, such local theologies must come from those who are competent in each particular area.

What methodological concern is common to all of us in our ministries? Whatever our divergences, we are all concerned with communication: one way or another, we desire that our ministry, our particular apostolate, might communicate the Gospel in its own way. I will ground my methodology here in the work of Bernard Lonergan. Communications is the last of the eight "functional specialties" that Lonergan developed for doing theology. Lest this jargon needlessly put readers off at the outset, I mention that Lonergan was simply talking about what happens as an individual and a community pass through a learning process. At the very outset of his *Method in Theology*, he wrote: "Method is not a set of rules to be followed meticulously by a dolt. It is a framework for collaborative creativity."<sup>6</sup>

Being preeminently and almost exclusively a scholar, Lonergan placed communications last in his list of specialties, not in the order of importance, but in the order of procedure. His was a controlled situation that began with research and continued in lectures to students and in his writings. In his scholarly realm Lonergan could begin with showing his students how to engage in the specialties immediately concerned with getting and setting up the data for doing theology: research, interpretation, history, and dialectics. After these steps, he went on to show how the theologian goes on to develop foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications.<sup>7</sup>

Now I do not intend to insert readers into the world of research scholarship in this article. Quite the contrary; I want to place them at the other end of the process. I hope to show how Lonergan's method might serve those attempting to do practical theology outside the academy and

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<sup>6</sup> Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), xi.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. 5–14.

under the pressure either of the active pastoral ministry or of other work that is not directly theological. But, be it in the academy or in the field, theological method must follow the human process of acquiring knowledge and wisdom.

One point often impressed on me by my Lonerganian colleagues is that one should always be aware of just what specialty he or she is engaged in. That is of great importance here because the nonscholar is so often at the opposite end of the process from the scholar; he is in “the real world,” to use a phrase often brutally hurled at us theologians. The practitioner experiences head-on the need to communicate directly with someone who requires an answer or to face a situation that requires a solution. Such questions or situations are often complex, and the minister will have to respond, “Give me some time, and I’ll get back to you.” What happens during that time of grace does in some sense take the practitioner back into the prior steps in Lonergan’s method. This was in fact the case with Las Casas, who, though not an academician, needed an arsenal of ammunition with which to make his case against colonial exploitation. In my own field ministry, although I did have training to be a scholar, I was always up against a similar demand—to communicate to native people a message of better news than they had already received, and to fellow missionaries a process of reorientation.

With apologies to my Lonerganian friends, I will suggest here a reformulation of the terminology he utilizes to define the functional specialties, one that I hope might avoid abstractions. To begin with, let’s describe the situation created by the plea of the Ethiopian court official to Philip in Acts 6:31. When Philip asked him if he understood the text of Isaiah that he

was reading, he pleaded, “How can I, unless someone explains it to me?” Philip, of course, could not hie himself off to a library to study the prophetic literature, so he had to do the best he could on the spur of the moment, and seems to have brought it off pretty well. But in our complex situations, what we are asked to interpret for

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*Let Christian theologians  
begin from where they  
already stand.*

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people leads us to reply, “Give me some time, and I’ll get back to you.” That is the response that takes one back into study, to what Lonergan called “indirect discourse.” To recall another situation in Acts, I have often wondered just how the apostles and elders went about formulating a reply to that momentous challenge posed to them in Acts 15: “You must be circumcised according to the Law of Moses.” Luke does not give us details of how they prepared their response, except that they discussed and prayed. Did

they study too? Did they do any research? One way or another, I believe, the answer is yes.

### "Rightly Handling the Word of Truth" (2 Tim. 2:15): Research

Jesuit alumni of old St. Stanislaus Seminary in Florissant will recall the words of the Second Letter to Timothy above one door to the juniorate building, calling the student to so study as to present himself to God as "a workman rightly handling the word of truth" (2:15). The author of that letter was urging Timothy to avoid needless disputes and learn how to communicate the true message of the Gospel. What we raw scholastics were being urged to do there was research, but the final purpose was communication, the situation in which one would be challenged to give some kind of accounting in order to establish or enhance what Lonergan calls "common meaning" with another. Lonergan was sufficiently aware that this situation of communication must guide our labors. What he wrote apropos of doing any theology has value for anyone "in the trenches," who seeks to find some theological value for his or her field of ministry: "My answer is to let Christian theologians begin from where they already stand. Each will consider one or more areas relevant to theological research. Let him work there. He will find that the method *is designed to take care of the matter.*"<sup>8</sup> That is, there are uses for the specialties within every ministerial context.

I will cite an example of what Lonergan's specialty of research has meant to me, not as a professor of theology so much as a worker in the field. My own field work has been as either a full- or part-time laborer among aboriginal peoples, mostly in the United States and Canada. It was among the Arapahos of Wyoming, and subsequently among other tribal groups, that I found myself seeking a method to "get a handle on" (a typical obsession for which my colleague Fr. Bill Stolzman often baited me!) the problems, issues, and opportunities offered me by the tribal context of the Christian and Catholic faith. Later on, when I began to study works by and about Las Casas, I realized that, in my own far less dramatic way, I was responding much as he had done. When Las Casas encountered and acknowledged his own complicity in the enslavement of indigenous peoples in the New World, and after he had undergone a deep spiritual conversion in this matter, he began to search for ways to communicate his insights to those responsible. This led the former lawyer into renewed study of Scripture, scholastic theology, canon law, and the teachings of the Church. It also led him more deeply into field investigation of how native peoples lived,

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<sup>8</sup> *Method*, 150 (emphasis added).

how they experienced the realm of the spirit, and especially how horribly they were suffering under European hegemony.

My own experience was not without parallel to this.<sup>9</sup> Having accepted the challenge to address the problem of Christian mission in its relationship to aboriginal spirituality, I came to realize how lacking I was in necessary tools. In fact, one of my finest teachers, the late Richard

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*One grasps the meaning of any text in bringing its implications to bear on daily living.*

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Smith, S.J., went so far as to suggest to me that I should pursue a doctorate in anthropology! Since I was not inspired to undertake another program of doctoral studies, I proceeded as one of Ignatius's Second Class of Persons and sought ways to supplement my knowledge. In the area of book learning, I turned to a massive amount of reading in cultural anthropology, comparative

religion, and religious sociology, as well as to historical narrative, especially by native persons. All of this I attempted to combine with field work and conversation with native leaders, and with "participant observation" wherever possible. This background led me to attempt several written accounts of my explorations, which in turn led to my receiving an invitation from two noted scholars in missiology, Harold W. Turner and Andrew F. Walls, to join them for an academic year in their program at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. This sojourn helped me immensely to acquire sophistication in my pursuits. Not to prolong this narrative, I simply note once again that, as Lonergan admonishes us, I began from where I stood and began to explore the research pertinent to it. "Research" need not mean going into as much "book learning" as I did, but I hope that others will find comparative challenges in their own contexts.

### **"What You Worship Unknowingly, I Proclaim to You" (Acts 17:23): Interpretation**

The famous incident of St. Paul's sermon on the Areopagus is familiar enough to all of us: it was in a sense a "marketplace" experience, because it occurred in that place where knowledge seekers shopped for ideas. But here I suggest it as an example of interpretation prompted by a pastoral challenge. By "interpretation" Lonergan means the attempt to "understand"

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<sup>9</sup> To spare readers a tedious repetition, I simply note that I have narrated some of this experience in my previous article, "As Different as Night and Day: Ignatius's Presupposition and How We Converse across Cultures," *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 28, no. 4 (September 1996).

(in his case, it is to understand "texts") and thus to engage in what scholars now call "hermeneutics," or the discovery of principles of interpretation. Again, how does one in the field go about this? Clearly, one must take the meaning of "text" in its wider sense—from the text of a life situation the minister finds a fresh way in which to interpret for others the written texts of one's tradition. We are talking here about what scholars today so often call "the hermeneutical circle"—explaining the Good News in the midst of involvement.<sup>10</sup> Since the practitioner here is in a life situation, it may be helpful to note that Lonergan strongly supports the conviction of H.-G. Gadamer that one grasps the meaning of any text in bringing its implications to bear on daily living, and of Reinhold Niebuhr, who, following Marx, said that history is understood in the effort to change it.<sup>11</sup> Again, Las Casas leaps to mind. His scholarship, whatever his own speculative views about learning, was not primarily for its own sake. Every effort of his was directed to the intellectual and moral conversion of the Church, of the imperial court, of European scholars, and of the colonists responsible for the hideous condition into which the *conquista* plunged indigenous peoples. One late-nineteenth-century historian rather condescendingly referred to Las Casas as "impetuous," but one might more accurately feel the deep passion in his work, as Niebuhr put it, to understand history and to change it. Without the same kind of dramatic outcome, I too experienced something like Las Casas's shock at what my own culture had been doing to aboriginal cultures, and saw the need for us to change the whole approach.

Upon returning from Aberdeen in 1975, I was reassigned to St. Stephen's Mission in Wyoming, a move that "inserted" me directly into the kinds of issues that I had been studying abroad. I greatly increased my field involvement both by necessity in the pastoral area and in the area of administration, along with some connections to tribal politics, but also by choice in the area of what one may call ethnology. But I also knew something of Lonergan by this time, and realized that I needed a methodology for interpretation. Thus, I turned to his "transcendental imperatives" (Be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, be in love unconditionally) and his functional specialities. That is, I became more intensely involved in research both in literature and "in the field." I began to seek methods for interpretation and constantly to test them against responses from tribal leaders and others. Thus, I began to seek to describe my experiences of tribal religious reality with categories carried over from scholars in the field of religious studies and anthropology.

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<sup>10</sup> *Method.*, 153 ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

I also sought more assiduously to learn the Arapaho language and to ask elders to feed back to me whether or not my categories in any way corresponded to concepts in their own experience. Again, not to enter into further detail here, the upshot, time and time again, was that I received startling “insights” and thus new gifts of “understanding” from these conversations. I was perforce not simply employing Lonergan’s methodology, but was frequently experiencing the process of the “hermeneutic circle” as understood by liberation theologians.<sup>12</sup> This means, above all, that I was working from a certain context and reading the “texts” both of my tradition and of another culture. I was learning to do my theology in the context of another cultural reality.

### “These Things Happened as an Example for Us” (1 Cor. 10:6): History

St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians was not a classroom history lesson. But it was certainly a powerful example of how something occurring in the past is intended for our instruction (in Paul’s discourse, the example of infidelity of the Chosen People in the desert). Lonergan reminds us of a distinction that will have some importance for our own context; that is, that history is of two main types—that which is *written* and that which is *written about*.<sup>13</sup> Why is this so significant? Because if the practitioner in a specific field or in a certain context is concerned about history, it is more likely to be not written history but history that is written about, that is, concrete developing history—what is actually *going on* in the world of ministry. But this concern for the here and now can be a danger.

I recall one distressing incident years ago when I was helping with an orientation workshop for new missionaries and had delivered a presentation on the history of missionary attitudes towards aboriginal peoples. Perhaps my presentation was not as clear as it might have been, but at its conclusion, I was shocked by one participant’s evaluation of the workshop. This person lamented the excessive emphasis I had given to history, because “I have just never found history interesting!” Needless to say, there came back to me the trenchant aphorism attributed to George Santayana, “Those who fail to remember the past are doomed to repeat it.” The practitioner concerned with concrete developing history may well need to find out more from written sources, as well as from whatever is in the “common memory”

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<sup>12</sup> For a “quick fix” on this concept, I refer readers to Juan Luis Segundo’s *The Liberation of Theology*, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Press, 1976), chap. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Method*, 175.



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of persons and communities. One may need to learn more about that creative question of Lonergan's, What was "going forward?" (178). That is, what events in the past are still living "events" of today and still influence the present?

The Christian is called to be prophetic, and history can serve as one of the most potent means of rendering our prophetic vocation more creative. Las Casas, truly one of the great prophets of modern times and, in my opinion, one of the great figures of the Catholic Reformation (though seldom acknowledged as such), certainly learned from history, even though it was not so "scientific" in his day. Not only did he probe into the local histories of the indigenous peoples in order to understand their strange customs, but he revisited the history of Christian thought, especially Scholasticism's roots in Aristotle. There he discovered that, for all the values to be found in his works, "The Philosopher" had also left Catholic tradition with some disvalues, such as a belief in the inferiority of "barbarians" and their inability to govern themselves. Las Casas's concern was the "written-about" history, but written history and appeals to oral memory in some cases served his prophetic vocation creatively.

Having been a history major prior to moving into theology, I have never found it hard to turn to written history. Before first going to the mission as a scholastic, I had already read some history of the American frontier, including early critics of American policy towards native peoples. However, after having listened extensively to the testimonies of native persons about how *they* saw political and ecclesiastical history, I saw the need to dig more deeply into history, both the history of missions in general and histories of the Church's dealings with various tribes. In these histories one could trace "what was going forward" (Lonergan's favorite words for historical knowledge), especially in the area of theological attitudes towards native traditions and spirituality. Perhaps the most enlightening result of such historical study for my own work was an understanding of reasons for the existence today of "new tribal religious movements," which are so often a syncretism of Christian and aboriginal elements. In this study, what is "going forward" is the powerful and passionate resistance that a people has to letting its culture be destroyed. One realizes that culture does indeed change, but that it changes slowly; and if outsiders, including missionaries, try to force the matter, numerous "revitalization movements" develop as resistance efforts. In sum, the practicing theologian in the field can benefit profoundly from probing the collective "memory" of the people in his or her care, and of one's own history.

## “He Laid the Case before Them” (Acts 28:23): Dialectic

Lest I seem here to be heading into a more abstruse philosophy, let us quickly try to grasp Lonergan’s basic meaning of dialectic: It is the process that deals with conflict, overt or latent (235). The idea behind such conflict is that we all have our own “horizons” that both establish and limit our vision of reality. In the text from Acts that I have just cited, we find an example of such a confrontation of views in the disputations between Paul, a prisoner in Rome, and his fellow Jews. Although dialectics often means a conflict in understandings (and Paul and his adversaries seem tragically to

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have remained stuck there), it is possible for us to move between horizons to understand where the other is “at,” to use the simplest current way to say it. For Lonergan it is again the presence or absence of intellectual, moral, religious, and affective conversions that gives rise to conflict and indicates the need for dialectics.<sup>14</sup> If conversation partners refuse to be open to conversion (which is not the same as relinquishing one’s principles!), there results a babel of ideas and a struggle simply to re-

pu diate the other’s position rather than carefully to explain one’s own. Thus, for Lonergan dialectics is the fourth element in the “indirect discourse” of theology, because it is intended to clarify what has emerged in the previous specialties. For the one in the field, of course, the dialectic also occurs within the direct effort to communicate.

Bartolomé de Las Casas became a master of dialectic, although one must admit that by the time he engaged Sepúlveda in the famous 1553 Valladolid debates, he was not dealing with dispassionate academic analysis. However, he spared no efforts to bring into play all the elements he could retrieve from doing research into, interpreting, and studying the history of his own theological tradition. What is probably the most dramatic contribution in dialectics is Las Casas’s act of bringing into the arena, perhaps for the very first time, the “horizons” of the indigenous peoples themselves, especially in his classic *In Defense of the Indians*. At a time when indigenous peoples were ill equipped to defend themselves in the courts of the mighty, this form of dialectics was the only hope that they might receive justice in the colonies.

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<sup>14</sup> Readers may wish to reexamine Donald L. Gelpi, “The Converting Jesuit,” *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 18, no. 1 (January 1986).

I have already described a case of spiritual and intellectual dialectic in my essay "As Different as Night and Day," cited above, which deals with efforts to apply Ignatius's Presupposition to intercultural dialogue. From a pastoral viewpoint, the most important element of dialectic for me was not (and is not today, twenty years later) an interplay of scholarly horizons (even though more and more native thinkers have gotten into the scholarly act). It is rather the effort to bring grass-roots thinkers into the dialogue about faith and culture. It was the privilege of pastoral workers in the 1970s still to enjoy the presence of elders who knew much of their old traditions and could recall a good deal of oral history dealing with the early years of missions on their reservations and reserves. This allowed us to include in the dialectic process horizons that are no longer available to us. Perhaps the best record of such an engagement in nonpolemical dialectics is that of William Stolzman in his accounts of the clergy-medicine men conversations that took place in South Dakota during the seventies and early eighties.<sup>15</sup> Critics have argued that this event, and especially the subsequent publication, reflects too much the author's Catholic viewpoint and not enough of the native horizon. They have a point there, but in response I can simply recall a remark of Fr. Robert Hilbert in a meeting of Jesuit missionaries during the late 1970s. Seeking to understand why so many "holy Jesuits" can be so resistant to changing their practices in mission work, Hilbert suggested that, with Lonergan, we have to understand that *religious* conversion is not sufficient. It must be accompanied by the dynamics of intellectual, moral, and affective conversion. Fr. Hilbert's plea for "conversion" on all levels was at least getting a hearing in Stolzman's conversations. My own experience of similar discussions in Wyoming, and in other places more recently, continues to verify this need for dialectics. There is no substitute for the process of setting a certain viewpoint, especially a theological one, before persons of other cultural horizons and waiting to see what it looks like when it comes back to you!

### **"The Wise Man Built His House on a Rock" (Matt. 7:24):**

#### **Foundations**

My reference here to Jesus' parable about the rock and the sand should not be misunderstood. The "rock" in this image is not a set of hard-and-fast rules or dogmas, but rather the word and person of Jesus, the foundation of all pastoral discourse. We are at the point where the "direct

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<sup>15</sup> William Stolzman, S.J., *The Pipe and Christ: A Christian-Sioux Dialogue* (Chamberlain, S.D.: St. Joseph's Indian School, 1986).

discourse” of theological work comes into play, where theology enters into the specialties leading up to communication. It has been, I believe, a failing of Roman Catholicism, noted also in its missionary work, to focus on apodictic and lapidary solutions to the detriment of indirect discourse, or a critical examination of *why* we communicate what we do. Nonetheless, we can now move to discuss how the scholarly practice of using foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications might be carried over into pastoral practice and into supporting the work of Jesuits and others in fields not directly theological. In the examination of the specialty of foundations, we are looking at the way in which Lonergan recommends that we support our use of doctrines, systematics, and communications.

Lonergan’s most dramatic contribution in his discussion of foundations is, I believe, his denial that this specialty consists of mere logical first premises from which conclusions easily flow. Rather, foundations is basically an action in which all of us in any form of ministry engage: deliberation, evaluation, and decision. “It is a fully conscious decision about one’s horizon, one’s outlook, one’s world-view” (270). The reality behind foundations is thus, once again, conversion—religious, moral, intellectual, and affective. Foundations is really about “the human reality that a theologian is” (268). Lonergan’s thought becomes increasingly technical and nuanced at this point, but for our purposes here the significance of foundations is that in our various ministries we are searching for processes that lead to more authentic communication of the Gospel. And such communication depends on the readiness of both communicator and hearer to be converted.

To employ once again the example of Las Casas, one finds in him a preeminent example of the conversion process, and thus a foundation in the very reality of who and what he was or became. It is easy to trace the process by which Las Casas first of all experienced a moral conversion and began to reach beyond his own subjective way of interpreting human values. But his conversion was simultaneously religious, because he was led immediately to identify the Indians with the “broken Christ of the Indies,” and this appeal to Jesus and what Jesus would have wanted permeates his writings and debates. As these spiritual horizons changed, Las Casas’s intellectual conversion developed through his field work, his powers of observation, and his efforts to bring scriptural exegesis, patristics, scholastic theology, and canon law into the struggles of his own age. The specialty of foundations does eventually move toward setting up categories for doctrines and systematics, and it is safe to say that Las Casas’s primary categories were related to the profound impact his traditional theology was having on the peoples of the New World. The search for relevant theology by those in ministry

today may, indeed must, influence the doctrines and systematics of the future.

If I were to try to single out any one statement that served as a personal foundational reality for me in my own pastoral theology, it would come from the testimony of native people, in the frequently reiterated question, "How can I be an Indian and a Catholic at the same time?" In turn, efforts to respond to this pleading question led us to probe not only our traditional sources in Scripture and tradition but our deepest motives as well. Thus, for me the foundational biblical category came to be Acts of the Apostles, chapters 10, 11, and 15. There, as is well known, the early Christians had first to ask whether or not their mes-

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*In our various ministries we are searching for processes that lead to more authentic communication of the Gospel. And such communication depends on the readiness of both communicator and hearer to be converted.*

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sage was meant for non-Jews, and then what it would mean for a non-Jew to be a Christian without having to convert to cultural Judaism. It is a paradigm of the question that any pastoral minister must ask in order to find out whether what he or she is calling for is truly of the Gospel or simply a cultural imposition. We are talking here about the transcultural basis of divine love, the love of God that has been poured into our hearts, through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom. 5:5).

## "Constantly Teach and Never Lose Patience" (2 Tim. 4:3):

### Doctrines

As to the importance of doctrine, the Pastoral Epistles are perhaps the strongest biblical witness. W. H. Auden once wrote vis-à-vis doctrine that "it is a tiresome subject, except to specialists, but like the rules of a grammar, it is a necessity."<sup>16</sup> Prior to Vatican II, the insistence on doctrine as the basis of our religious communications was probably the first resort of Catholics in ministry—at that time clergy for the most part. The use of doctrine was perhaps superseded by appeals to canon law. As priests, these practitioners often resorted to that part of their formation that they had hated the most! Today, however, if one understands it as Lonergan under-

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<sup>16</sup> See his introduction to Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings*, trans. W. H. Auden and Leif Sjöberg (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), 24.

stood it, we do not employ the doctrinal specialty enough. But this calls for an explanation.

For Lonergan a doctrine is the result of the threefold conversion—the readiness to rethink, to reshape values, to be more deeply devoted. If theologians and Church leaders authentically respond to revelation and engage seriously in the functional specialties, their findings will manifest genuine leadership. Lonergan, who referred to himself as basically a conservative Catholic, believed in the function of doctrine and even of defined dogma. But he also insisted that doctrinal statements must operate in recognition of “the quite open structure of the human spirit” (302). Although he was never a missionary in the ordinary sense of the term, Lonergan made some remarkable observations that presaged the inculturation era. As an example, I might be allowed a longer quotation here:

Anthropological and historical research has made us aware of the enormous variety of human social arrangements, cultures, mentalities. It follows that we, far more than many of our predecessors, are in a position to understand the variations that have taken place in the expression of Christian doctrines. For if the gospel is to be preached to all nations (Matt. 28, 19), still it is not to be preached in the same manner to all. (300)

Lonergan goes on to point out the imperative for theologians (again I extend this term to all ministers of the Gospel) to employ the resources of other cultural partners in a creative dialogical way. This process of forming doctrine is what Lonergan has called “the ongoing discovery of mind” (305).

I return to the labors of Las Casas as an illustration of how socio-pastoral struggles often have doctrinal roots and, more to the point, doctrinal *results*. Although the Catholic Church had never taught as doctrine, let alone dogma, that humans are basically unequal, it had regularly accepted and even legitimized slavery and discrimination. Much of this was rooted, as I have noted, in some of Aristotle’s teachings. It was the passionate campaign of the Dominicans in the colonies and, later, Las Casas’s campaign against such arguments that led Pope Paul III in 1537 to write his famous bull *Sublimis Deus*, which among other things condemned the theory of the right to enslave the Indians. Although this document has never been truly honored in Latin America, even to the present day, it became, one might say, the “first in an ordered set,” which is how Lonergan describes foundations (269). That is, it became a magisterial doctrine that expressed some elements of conversion and antedated subsequent statements on social and racial justice that would reach such a high point in our century.

The history of the concept of inculturation is the most significant example of pastorally influenced doctrine in my own experience. The term “inculturation” has come from its rather offhand usage in the early 1960s,

through an implied understanding of it in Vatican II, through an intensive discussion of terminology, to the point where it has gained some doctrinal standing in several papal documents, the best known being *Evangelii nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI. Even though some theologians, including some within the Vatican, dislike the concept, the reality implied in the term is a generally "received" teaching.

This development of doctrine had its reflective impetus from Pedro Arrupe, who, beginning around 1975, sent letters around the entire Society of Jesus, addressed to its members involved in mission and cultural work, calling for their observations on the idea of inculturation. (He had done the same thing with Marxism somewhat earlier.) After receiving numerous responses, Arrupe initiated several conferences that culminated in his "Letter to the Whole Society on Inculturation."<sup>17</sup> This letter was followed by numerous working papers, and the concept of inculturation was on its way to becoming not simply a fad but a powerful means of dialectic around issues of mission and ministry. It even became part of an ongoing doctrinal process that has extended itself into ecumenical conversations. My own history of mission involvement certainly attests to the prominence of this highly theological issue in the practical lives of many missionaries. I shall later make some suggestions how similar doctrinal activity might be intertwined with other forms of apostolic activity.

### "I Believe in Order to Understand": Systematics

The functional specialty of systematics is certainly best explained in brief by the famous phrase taken from the *Proslogion* of Anselm of Canterbury. "Faith seeking understanding" is both inspired by conversion and aids conversion. Lonergan has explained this best for the non-academic theologian in this way: "Conversion transforms the concrete individual to make him capable of grasping not merely conclusions but principles as well" (338). That is, if we are able not simply to mouth doctrines at people but rather to offer them some interpretation, we become instruments of God's purpose in bringing others to deeper understanding of mystery. But we ask once more:

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*For if the gospel is to be preached to  
all nations, still it is not to be  
preached in the same manner to all.*

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<sup>17</sup> See Pedro Arrupe, "Letter to the Whole Society," in *Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits* 8, no. 1 (June 1978): 1-9.



How does the nonacademic theologian engage in systematic theological activity without having to scurry off to library stacks? In asking this question, we presuppose that he is ready to do some serious reading now and then.

I believe that Las Casas again offers us a clue. We have already seen how the great Dominican's career actualized for him the previous functional specialties. He lived in an age when doctrine was tending to become ever more hardened—it was the age of the Counter-Reformation—and anathemas were being published almost as routinely as periodicals are today. It was never Las Casas's intention to write a book of systematics, let alone a manual of theology, but there is no question about his efforts to systematize elements of doctrine.

Gutiérrez notes many examples of this. Above all, perhaps, Las Casas developed the doctrine on God's universal salvific will, as opposed to theories of negative predestination, and applied this to his ongoing struggle to obtain equal recognition for indigenous peoples.<sup>18</sup> Las Casas further developed

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*While dogmas may be infallible, they are not composed in such a way that they are intelligible in every time and culture, or free of the limitations that make them less accessible to people of a different time and culture.*

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Catholic thought on international law, in his discussion of the rights of native peoples, even to the point of issuing a fiery demand for the restitution of all appropriated Indian land!<sup>19</sup> He further became involved in a debate with the followers of William of Ockham, who had denied to the Church (not without some justification, given the power of the medieval Church) the right to intervene in temporal matters.<sup>20</sup> Las Casas's position has been subsequently vindicated not only by the teachings of the Church on moral involve-

ment in the world, especially in the documents of Vatican II, but in the basic principle of liberation theology that the temporal and spiritual orders are not to be dichotomized.

These principles of liberation and inculturation are deeply intertwined with so many of the labors of the Society of Jesus today, and not simply with foreign missions. I personally have found it necessary, both

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<sup>18</sup> Gutiérrez, *Las Casas*, chap. 8.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 13.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 371 ff.



when serving as a pastor in the field and now as a "popular educator" among native peoples, to engage in a systematic grass-roots treatment of traditional doctrines. I will be exceeding my allotted space if I go too deeply into this, but some dramatic examples can be cited. Many people from aboriginal cultures, and not only Amerindians, have engaged me in discussion on the Trinity, largely because they seek earnestly to avoid the polytheism of which they have been so constantly accused. They seek to better understand both the preexistence and historical mission of Jesus Christ and to grasp what it means for him to save us from our sins. The doctrine of original sin has had to undergo severe examination, again, because it has been used so harshly against the "pagans." Furthermore, once we have explained the distinction between sacramental symbol and "fetish" to them, they challenge us to explain how the doctrine of the Real Presence is free of fetishism! One could go on and on here, but I simply leave the idea of systematics for now, to return to it in wrapping up my presentation.

### **"Rather Five Intelligible Words to Instruct Others Than Ten Thousand Words in a Tongue" (1 Cor. 14:19): Communications**

St. Paul was writing to the Corinthians about one kind of religious phenomenon, but the burden of his message rests heavily on all forms of pastoral discourse: The goal of theology is not esoteric self-satisfaction but communication in agape. Here, nearly at the end of my presentation, I propose the functional specialty with which I believe Jesuit nonacademic theologians (and, ultimately, all of us) are most concerned. Let me just interject a more technical note here and explain why I believe this. Francis Sullivan, S.J., has given us an excellent interpretation of the process of theological communication.<sup>21</sup> Sullivan is concerned in this book with how theologians might be both faithful to the Magisterium and nonetheless creative in interpreting its teachings to "the faithful." He points out that while dogmas may be infallible, they are not composed in such a way that they are intelligible in every time and culture, or free of the limitations that make them less accessible to people of a different time and culture. He writes, "An important part of the theologians' task is to make the church's dogmas meaningful to the faithful of their own time" (116). I believe that it is also a task of scholars in nontheological fields to develop and communicate theological rationales for their own works, which in themselves represent diverse aspects of modern culture.

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<sup>21</sup> Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., *Creative Fidelity: Weighing and Interpreting Documents of the Magisterium* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 116.

The basis of all community is “common meaning” within a common field of experience, and community is the basis of society. All humans, all Christians, and certainly all Jesuits are responsible for community and common meaning. Lonergan writes, “The moral principle is that men are individually responsible for what they make of themselves, but collectively they are responsible for the world in which they live. Such is the basis of universal dialogue” (360).

Lonergan goes on to appeal, in some very prophetic remarks (in 1972) to the process that we now call inculturation. Christians in all fields of endeavor are called upon to address the cultures within which they are working, to transcend the idea that their own cultures are normative for all others, and to transcend as well their own particular ideologies. In a sentence that is almost formulaic for the praxis of inculturation, Lonergan writes:

They must grasp the virtual resources of that culture and that language, and they must use those virtual resources creatively so that the Christian message becomes, not disruptive of the culture, not an alien patch superimposed upon it, but a line of development within the culture. (362)

I need not dwell here at length on my paradigm for inculturation, Las Casas, to illustrate how he applied the art(!) of communications. He made himself increasingly sensitive to the common meanings experienced by

the Indians both in their traditional cultures and in their state of oppression. He spared no energy to communicate this situation to the great ones of his own Iberian and European culture, pointing out to them how disastrously they had failed when they passed on a Christianity so corrupted with bias, self-interest, and ethnocentrism. He did not hesitate to use the fiery rhetoric of his time to foretell the damnation of all who persisted in this behavior, demonstrating that communication

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*“Theology of” can explain what our field is about, and “theology for” can help us develop our field in the faith context, can help us “do” theology.*

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may not always be done in sweet gentleness! For scholars he spoke in the language of Aristotle, but he rejected the prevailing preoccupation with canonizing the Philosopher.

In 1972, as I was flailing about for a theological method that would aid me to communicate with native people in the area of intercultural dialogue, I found myself touched with a feeling of excitement when I read Lonergan’s remarks on cultural communication. I was not at that moment concerned with academic communication, but rather with communicating within the “field” of pastoral theology and intercultural dialogue. These

words came back to me with special force in light of a conversation that I had about three years later, back in the mission context, with William Stolzman. Bill was arguing passionately then that, whatever elements of liberation theology may enter into our reservation work, the most serious one facing the Church was that of "religious oppression." This was among a number of "cumulative" insights that led me to the one insight that we must find ways to remove the "alien patch" and to find the "lines within the culture" for communicating the faith. By way of conclusion, I would like to argue that what happened to me over those years must happen analogously to all Jesuits in whatever fields we serve.

### "I'm Not an Academic Theologian, So . . ."

In order to make my point with some brevity, I will simply point out some possible approaches that Jesuits (and, of course, others) in fields not involving academic theology might adopt while making use of Lonergan's functional specialties. I add that at this point I am proposing some very tentative ideas, because I am talking with others who have expertise in fields about which I know less, little, or virtually nothing. So, I hope readers will indulge me some superficiality here, since these are merely suggestions—in the words of the late William Wade, S.J., "a few fly balls to the outfield."

It is helpful, I think, to borrow, altering it somewhat, an important distinction made by the renowned anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who wrote about how members of his profession might study "models" within a culture. Geertz spoke of models "of" and models "for," models simply *describing* a culture, and models *proposing to change* a culture.<sup>22</sup> Here I suggest that we all need both a "theology of" and a "theology for" our fields; that is, "theology of" can explain what our field is about, and "theology for" can help us develop our field in the faith context, can help us "do" theology. In many cases, to be sure, "theology of" and "theology for" actually run together. For the sake of brevity, I will discuss here how three fields of Jesuit involvement might be touched by the functional specialties, chosen simply because I have engaged in one of them or because I have been in conversation with students involved in the others. Thus, I will be referring to parish ministry; to chaplaincies, such as military, hospital, and prison; and to educational administration, especially the financial dimension. I might add that I have been intrigued by this latter because I have gained deepening if belated respect for Ours who labor at this challenging field of ministry.

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<sup>22</sup> Clifford Geertz, "Religion As a Cultural System," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 87-125, esp. 93f.

Turning to the specialty of research from the field, how might Jesuits be enabled to make use of it, and what might be practical ways to do it, in light of limited time and energy? Let us take, for example, a theological rationale for **parish ministry**, a “theology of.” In recent years I have learned greater appreciation of the parish as the basic place of the diocesan “local church” in the great “communion” of the universal Church. But I have also had to examine the idea that “parishes” were not always with us, that there have been earlier forms of Christian community. From history we learn, for example, that the word “parish” comes from the Greek *παροικία*, *paroikia*, meaning a “house alongside” the city and cathedral. It was thus at one time a mission station to the countryside. I found that this insight deeply affected my “theology of” parish work, introducing me into the missionary nature of parish life—and not only of parishes on reservations such as mine. This quickly became a “theology for” parish work as well, and it has helped me to see the rationale for a widened sense of inclusiveness, flexibility, and mission in parishes (a policy admirably practiced by Jesuits and collaborators in Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Toronto).<sup>23</sup> Did this insight necessarily come from extensive research? No; it came to me from a few brief pages in the writings of Johannes Hoekendijk!<sup>24</sup> While I, as an academic, might have to pursue this insight further in a scholarly way, the busy pastor could read it here in compendious form. This book, by the way, would be a valuable addition to the parish-ministry section of a good rectory library.

Perhaps the most pressing need for an integration of all the Loneranian specialties in **parish work** or in **chaplaincies** shows itself in that branch of communications traditionally called preaching. An adequate homiletical theology calls for not only an investigation into *how* to preach but into *why* we preach at all. For example, in general, the experienced pastor is prudent enough to avoid the trap into which many academics fall when they preach. I mean the practice of burdening the people of God with the details of their “indirect discourse” (studies) rather than seeking to communicate the living Word that their specialties have helped them to understand better. When it comes to proclaiming the Word, indeed, we are certainly “doing theology,” but our hearers should not be distracted even by any direct discourse other than the gospel message we are communicating.

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<sup>23</sup> For a “theology for” and some very wise pastoral advice, see Peter Byrne’s recent article, “Jesuits and Parish Ministry,” *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 29, no. 3 (May 1997).

<sup>24</sup> J. C. Hoekendijk, *The Church Inside Out*, trans. Isaac A. Rottenberg (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), 42 and 74.

In preaching, a "theology of," an interpretation of, one's field should have great weight for us: for example, we should know theologically why Barth could so eloquently announce to other preachers that we *cannot* proclaim the Word of God and that we *must* proclaim the Word of God. God alone communicates himself through our struggling human discourse. The retreat director will readily recognize in this theology the same principles that moved Ignatius of Loyola to give us the Fifteenth Annotation to the *Spiritual Exercises*. Here too a "theology of" is also a "theology for," because it affects both the content and style of preaching as well as of retreat directing.

Similar instances of applied research would be important for various **chaplains**, although I have done very little to study them and have actually practiced only hospital ministry. Again, research soon draws the practitioner into a conjoint "theology of" and "theology for" the ministries and issues associated with them. For example, the military chaplain certainly must engage in a study of the just-war theory and be prepared to engage in dialectics with those holding pacifist positions. Such a ministry would also call for some examination of theories of patriotism and service to the common good.

The hospital chaplain will require research into not only a philosophical but a theological ethic of such painful issues as euthanasia, preparation for death, healing, suffering, and the like. One need not, of course, look beyond the example of Jesus himself to find a basic "theology of" the healing ministry, but Jesus has not given us a developed "theology for." This would require more extensive reading in the issues related to the practice of hospital ministry. Prison chaplains can likewise look to Scripture for much "theology of" the spiritual or physical liberation of captives, but must probe ever more deeply into researching the arguments related to "cruel and unusual punishment," rehabilitation-versus-punishment theories, and the like—all "theologies for" such controverted issues as the capital condemnation of Timothy McVeigh.

As one examines the crucial issue of **educational administration**, one is challenged to enter more deeply into research around a philosophy and theology of the human person, and to ponder what it means for that person to develop himself or herself in secular disciplines. (The recent work of those involved in the publication of *Conversations* comes to mind.) What would be the legitimate "theological anthropologies" at the service of Jesuits responsible for curriculum development? What principles might be drawn from culture and society, and what should be drawn from Christian revelation? What is our theology of "nature and grace" to be today?

In the increasingly urgent ministry of economic development of their ministries, educators need a “theology of” and a “theology for” fund raising. The “of” element is developed from, for example, St. Paul’s appeal for the *διακονίαι*, *diakoníai*, or “collections” for the many churches (2 Cor. 9:1), over which he felt so much “anxious concern.” It was for me a moving theological insight when I first realized that the word Paul uses here is also the word for ministry. In reflecting further on a theology to both support and guide fund raisers, I found myself carried back many years to my graduate studies in history, when my thesis work called on me to study approaches to such issues as “the gospel of wealth,” stewardship, economic liberalism, and the so-called “Protestant ethic.” All of these dimensions have something to say to persons seeking both justification of and attitudes towards the raising of money, relationships with the wealthy, and dealing with secular governments.

## Conclusion

It has been my purpose here, in the final analysis, to stimulate thinking and discussion about Jesuit “professionalism.” For seventeen years now I have witnessed the intensive labors of administrators, faculty, and students in theological institutions, observing how they struggle to acquire expertise in the fields that will make them proficient either in direct pastoral

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*In the increasingly urgent ministry of economic development of their ministries, educators need a “theology of” and a “theology for” fund raising.*

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ministry or in educating younger theologians. By the end of the academic year, the pervasive exhaustion testifies to the arduous character of this “project.” But when I am tempted either to pity myself or to be overly concerned about working students too hard, I simply cross the campus in my imagination and tour the schools of medicine, law, engineering, and the other sciences, indeed, all the professional schools. I quickly appreciate the struggles these persons undergo to acquire expertise in their

fields, and the continuing study in which they engage to maintain that expertise. The fundamental nature of our preparation as ministers of the Gospel is theological, and we can ill afford to be any less zealous about preparing ourselves and continuing our education.

I am aware that, and in fact I am content that, I have touched only tangentially on the ways in which theology might be made a true handmaid of the various ministries of Christians and, in this case, of Jesuits. It has, after all, been my intention simply to argue how important it is for Jesuits

to understand that as ministers of the Gospel they are indeed theologians—"praxis" theologians. Lest the points up to this point be simply more abstractions, I am tempted, and yield to the temptation, to suggest a quite practical endeavor. Perhaps what the Society of Jesus needs is some kind of ongoing "process" or vehicle for the theological examination of our many ministries. It might not be too bold to suggest that assistancies, perhaps provinces, perhaps even those in particular ministries, organize theological workshops. In such workshops, persons in the various fields might engage in conversations with academic theologians with a view toward developing "theologies of" and "theologies for" all our ministries. Indeed, might it be too much to expect that Jesuits in the various fields even write some articles on their fields for *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS*? All of this, we may hope, will be part of the collaborative project of presenting "the reason for the hope that is in us."



## Appendix 1

One of those who reviewed this article in an earlier draft, Fr. Michael Caruso, S.J., proposed a valuable suggestion for concretizing the ideas expressed above. He recommended that I include a possible model for a year's theological discussion for Ours in various ministries, along with user-friendly journals or books that might afford either stimuli for conversation or references for inquiries. For stimulus to discussion, let me first list the following popular but thoughtful journals, well aware that I have omitted some that others might find helpful. For references I simply offer four books to which practical theologians might resort for information. I will include some others in the list of possible discussion topics.

Magazines or journals of opinion that I have found helpful over the years fall into several categories:

1. Four journals that bear a similar format are the Protestant *Christian Century*, along with *America*, *Commonweal*, and *The Tablet*. All can provoke discussion on contemporary issues.
2. For discussion of issues touching on parish life especially and for sounding out opinions of Catholics, the Claretians' *U.S. Catholic* has been valuable for many years.
3. For scholarly topics presented in a generally simple form, *Worship*, *Pastoral Life*, and *Bible Today*.
4. On issues relating to theology and spirituality, *Review for Religious*, *The Way*, and *Spirituality Today*.

While articles in *Theological Studies* tend to be heavier going, written as they are by scholars largely for other scholars, its "Moral Notes" are not only serviceable for all, but, I think, of urgent importance. *Theology Digest*, while presenting rather heavy content, reduces it to essentials and covers a wide spectrum of thought.

Reference books of value are

1. Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, even despite the author's intimidating style
2. John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*
3. Richard McBrien, *Catholicism*
4. Thomas Bokenkotter, *Essential Catholicism*



## Appendix 2

### A Proposed Agenda for Theological Conversation among Jesuits Living in One Urban Area

**January:** Homiletics (in which most of us engage at one point or another). Questions such as, What is my "theology of" and "theology for" preaching? That is, why do I preach, and how do I propose to do it better? Here an experienced preacher might give a keynote presentation. I would recommend two old but famous addresses by Karl Barth, "The Need of Christian Preaching" and "The Task of the Ministry," both found in *The Word of God and the Word of Man*. While this collection is now more than seventy years old, its shock value for Catholics could be salutary.

**February:** A theology of and for parish life. Again, Jesuits could be benefited by the thought of the late Protestant missiologist Johannes Hoekendijk as set forth in *The Church Inside Out*, even if they would not entirely agree with him. The recent article by Peter Byrne, S.J., "Jesuits in Parish Ministry," STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS 29, no. 3, could spur fruitful discussion.

**March:** A pastoral theology of the Eucharist. An introduction presented by some competent liturgist, followed by discussion of Ansgar Chupungco's *Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy*, should promote lively conversation.

**April:** Ecclesiology and sources of tension. A keynote address by a visiting scholar, followed by discussion of T. Howland Sanks's excellent *Salt, Leaven, and Light: The Community Called Church*, could bring an excellent historical theology to bear on current issues.

**May:** A theology of and for the Catholic university. Here a keynote panel consisting of a theologian, a university administrator, a professor in an area other than theology, and an alumnus could discuss issues in *Conversations*, pertinent documents from G.C. 34, or the document "Ex corde Ecclesiae."

**June:** A theology of and for secondary education. Again, a panel of a theologian or religious educator (William O'Malley comes to mind), an alumnus, an administrator, and a teacher might review our Constitutions and the pertinent documents from G.C. 34.

**July:** A "contextual theology" for all ministries in North America. Someone versed in the work of Robert Bellah and his associates (*Habits of the Heart, The Good Society*) might offer a keynote presentation, followed by a panel discussion from various ministries dealing with the challenge of liberal individualism.

**August:** A theology of and for fund raising. The article by Thomas Clancy, "St. Ignatius as Fund-Raiser," STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF

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JESUITS 25, no. 1, could stimulate discussion. But a keynote panel made up of a historian, a sociologist, and an ethicist might deal with the still unresolved "gospel of wealth" or "stewardship" problem. Or a comparison of treatments of poverty and wealth could be offered based on (1) Segundo Galilea's *The Beatitudes* and Gustavo Gutiérrez's *The Power of the Poor in History*, and (2) Peter Berger's edited collection *The Capitalist Spirit*, especially the articles by Michael Novak, Richard John Neuhaus and George Weigel. Certainly, the encyclicals *Laborem exercens* and *Sollicitudo rei socialis* could cast light on this theme.

**September:** A theology of and for hospital chaplaincy. A panel comprising a chaplain, an administrator, health-care persons, and perhaps a disabled person might discuss books such as *Suffering* by Dorothee Soelle.

**October:** A theology of and for prison ministry. A panel made up of a chaplain, a person experienced in penal-reform issues, a warden, an inmate, or a former inmate could initiate a discussion of *Dead Man Walking* or some of George Anderson's *America* articles. A video of the Arts and Entertainment Channel's presentation on capital punishment should prove provocative.

**November:** A theology of and for youth ministry in general. If youth is a subculture in itself, a panel of such ministers, a social worker, and a sociologist might discuss how to apply J. Peter Schineller's *A Handbook on Inculturation* to youth ministry, even if this is not a foreign mission.

**December:** A theology of prayer for all in ministry. Perhaps a spiritual theologian as keynote speaker could set the stage for a panel selected from various ministries to discuss prayer for the "active life." The works of Henri Nouwen could be a starting point, or even the perennially valuable writings of C. S. Lewis.

## SOURCES

### Nadal's Summary of Instructions for Superiors on the Manner of Dealing with the Fathers and Brothers

*In the latter years of his life, Jerónimo Nadal (1507-80), at the request of the Society, worked at collecting, revising, and putting in order the various instructions (originally called "admonitions") that in his capacity as Visitor he had over the years given to a great number of Jesuit communities and the superiors thereof. The text reproduced here, in this instance meant for superiors alone, is an example of such a document.*

*These instructions are only one of the many types of writing that Nadal did. Such writings include, for example, autobiography, letters, writings on prayer, spiritual conferences, commentaries on the Constitutions, dialogues on the religious state, and notes and meditations on the Gospels. A posthumous edition of those gospel meditations, arranged according to the order in which they are read at Mass throughout the year, was published in 1593 with 153 magnificent engravings. It was probably the first Jesuit book to use visual aids to prayer. (Father Joseph McDonnell at Fairfield University has made available a computer-produced edition of the whole set of engravings.) The Institute of Jesuit Sources hopes in the future to publish a volume of selections from Nadal's writings.*

*Almost every commentator on Nadal has remarked on the great difference, on the one hand, between his biblically and theologically solid and learned spiritual teachings, which as a whole are quite balanced, and, on the other hand, his penchant for excessive details in his instructions. The present source document exhibits such details, some of them very wise and perennial, others quite time- and place-bound, such as when Jesuit superiors and members of their community should remove their hats in each other's presence. The translation is by the late Martin E. Palmer, S.J., once a member of the Institute of Jesuit Sources. It is taken from Epistolæ P. Hieronymi Nadal (Madrid, 1905), vol. 4 of *Selecta Natalis monumenta*, vol. 47 of *Monumenta historica Societatis Iesu*, 435-41.*

JWP, S.J.

The superior acts in the person of Christ, and is his vicar.

It is Christ whom the fathers and brothers obey in him.

They are Christ's servants, not his.

He should bear the infirmities of his men, not seek his own convenience.

He should fulfill his office with fear and trembling.

In a spirit of humility he should esteem all his men as more capable than himself in everything.

In his governance he ought to imitate the charity, gentleness, and kindness of Jesus Christ and of the apostles Peter and Paul.

In his governance he should be firm yet gentle.

He should do these things with outward joy, self-control, and composure in all his actions.

If his nature inclines to be severe, he should soften it; if to be easy-going, he should temper it with gravity.

These general points, as well as the particular ones that follow, God will teach us if we are willing to cooperate with his grace.

The superior's speech should be mild and pleasant.

His expression should be calm and cheerful.

He should manifest charity.

He should not show that he remembers the fathers' and brothers' failings when he deals with them; where possible he should instead excuse and minimize them.

He should show that he does remember their praiseworthy points.

He should not give commands imperiously, but kindly and calmly, yet also clearly and openly. He should say, for instance: "Would you do such-and-such?" "Brother (or Father), would you do such-and-such?" "It would be good of you to do this." "Out of love of God, please do this." Sometimes too, "May I ask you to do this." He should not say, "I command (or order) you"; much less, "I command (or order) you in virtue of holy obedience (or in the name of the Lord)." He may, in fact, employ these words in giving a command, but only if there is no other way of averting some exceptional danger or harm.

When any of his subjects removes his hat, he should do so also, replacing it at once.

He should not let the fathers and brothers stand before him bareheaded, but ask them to put their hats back on, more or less quickly depending on person and situation.

Although subjects should remove their hats again on taking leave of the superior, he need not reciprocate.

Priests should not uncover their heads to the subminister, but rather the reverse; when he does this, priests should reciprocate.

The superior should not be hasty or frivolous in speech, but moderately serious.

His manner should be easy, forthright, pleasant, plain, and friendly.

He should listen mildly and attentively.

He should make sure he understands correctly what is said.

He should not give his answer rashly or overhastily, yet in simple matters he ought to give a prompt reply.

In difficult matters, if he is not confident about his reply at the moment, he should indicate something of his reasons for this and ask the man to come back.

When he has gotten to know a man's attitude or character, he should receive and treat him accordingly, accommodating himself to the man's temper.

He should show his appreciation of some good point in the man he is dealing with—there will always be one—and let this appreciation give the tone to his conversation.

He should not show he has poor expectations of anyone; but by indicating something he finds to approve of, let him try to encourage everyone, cure everyone's ills.

His manner of acting in all things should be spiritual.

In spiritual matters he should speak out with the greatest clarity and simplicity, adapting himself to the individual's level of comprehension.

In dealing with other matters, he should speak in a way that is spiritual,

acting with a view to edification, instruction, and spiritual progress.

Whatever he does or urges others to do should be based on the Society's grace and Institute, and on considerations drawn from the Society's grace and Institute—from the Constitutions, rules, customs, traditions, and ordinances of superiors; the example of the fathers and brothers; the history of the Society; and the current opinions of his consultors.

He may also have recourse to common Church law, to the extent that it is not superseded by some privilege we have received from God and the Apostolic See.

Sometimes he will have to display severity.

But the severity must proceed—and be seen to proceed—from desire for perfection and zeal for God, who is obeyed in the superior.

However, his severity should always be less than the case warrants.

Some more particular points:

Towards those he is satisfied with the superior should act with ease and trust, even familiarity—taking care to avoid any appearance of partiality. He should make rather frequent use of their services, both in helping the brethren and in other matters.

On the other hand, these men should sometimes be treated with a little severity, giving them penances even for no particular hurt, as a help towards their own solid progress and as an incentive and example to the others.

With those, however, with whom the superior is not satisfied, he will have

to take more trouble in proportion to their shortcomings.

First, he should very carefully examine and weigh whether the man needs to be dismissed from the Society.

In this regard, he must carefully examine whether the community is suffering harm because of the overly indulgent retention of the man.

It will be useful each year to deliberate, in consultation with the provincial, whether the college should be purged of such trouble-making brethren, as the body is purged of noxious humors.

Still, one should not easily give up even on an apparently hopeless case.

If a person is to be dismissed without publicity, he could be publicly sent on a mission and instructed not to return.

Meanwhile, however, so long as there is hope that the troubled man can be helped, every effort and care should be employed to that end.

First, as far as possible the superior should know as soon as the man starts to be in trouble and immediately begin to do something about it; then, he should summon the man and give him careful guidance and help.

In addition, he should enlist the aid of others: the man's confessor, other fathers, and brothers who would be suitable for this.

The rector and confessor should forbid him to have dealings with those who are not helpful to him; the others should try to obtain this as well.

Suitable observers should keep the superior informed in detail about what the man is doing, what he says, whom he is talking with.

The superior should bend his mind and effort to helping the man, leaving nothing undone.

He should take extreme measures only after the most careful deliberation.

He should see to it that there is no opportunity for the man to leave unbidden.

He should quietly let the porter and sacristan know of the danger of the man's getting out through their negligence, so that they will keep closer watch on their doors, not permitting him to leave even if he says he has permission.

The rector should have compassion for the man, and let him see this.

The superior should offer on his own part and on that of others to forget everything if the man reforms.

He should try not to upset the man by his words; but if on occasion he cannot avoid this, he should try hard to mollify him by the end of the conversation, or immediately get a suitable person to do this.

He should give no indication to the man that he has given up hope for him; rather he should show hopefulness.

He should make it clear that he is giving credence not to second-hand reports but to proven facts.

He should urge the man himself to choose some helpful course of action; if he comes up with anything useful, the superior should give his approval.

Step-by-step the rector should add other measures he thinks will be helpful.

In public the rector should make no distinction between the man and the others.

In reprimanding the man, one should use no insulting or demeaning words.

One should merely point out his fault and its hurtful consequences.

It is more useful for the minister or some other suitable person to convey more serious reprimands, so that the man may always be able to appeal to the superior.

Every measure should be tried that seems likely to help, depending upon the person.

One could explore whether making the Exercises would be of any help, or whether he would be willing to perform some humble tasks.

He should be given more time for prayer.

He should be urged to make extra confessions and go to Communion once or twice a week if it seems this might be effective.

The confessor should, as occasion offers, make use of the measures indicated in the instruction for confessors.

The man should be commanded pleasant tasks of obedience.

Then he could be exempted from part of the discipline of the house.

If nothing else works, he could be permitted to drop all his studies and duties and spend some days in the house or a room somewhere without doing anything.

When such exemptions are given, suitable persons should let the brethren know why.

He could even be shut in a room against his will and fed there for several days, both for discipline's sake and to remind him of his duty. This should not

be considered imprisonment, but a temporarily stricter cloister because of special need.

In cases where men are in conflict with the superior because of some conviction or opinion, particular measures over and above those already mentioned should be looked for in the declarations to the *Examen* and in the instruction for the provincial.

In cases where a man has to be dismissed secretly, there should be no interruption of the measures mentioned above which might be of help to him secretly.

Finally, if nothing else works, the man should be sent to the provincial, with previous notification unless delay would be dangerous. A very solid companion should be sent along with him, particularly if the man might be suitable to the Society in another place. Otherwise, he can be sent alone, but in secular clothes and without traveling money, as a pilgrim, unless the rector judges otherwise at the time.

If the man reforms, he should be welcomed with the greatest kindness and delight.

The superior should dismiss the affair from his mind and give no indication of remembering by-gones. He should also make great efforts to ensure that others do the same

Still, he might appropriately have the man undertake some public penance for the edification and strengthening of the brethren, especially if the problem had become public.

In helping persons who are neither completely satisfactory nor completely unsatisfactory, the superior can make partial use of the above measures. But what is solely effective in these matters is the power of God's grace, which the superior will have if he does his part.

He will also be helped by the prayers and sacrifices of the rector and the entire college.

With Christ's help, he will be aided by these instructions and by other measures which the immediate situation will indicate to the rector, with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The above instruction, even though specifically pertinent to rectors and local superiors, can easily be adapted to provincials.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I am delighted that Thomas H. Stahel chose to write to the editor about my essay, "Are *Informationes* Ethical?" (STUDIES 29, no. 5 [Nov. 1997]). I have received dozens of private letters, but Tom's published letter at least occasions a discussion. If I understand him correctly, he has an important disagreement with me: He maintains that for "approved" scholastics a spiritual director should be distinct from the superior, but denies that this should be the case for novices. He writes, "If a novice master is not both a spiritual director and an evaluator, what is he?" I would like to respond.

First, I am not certain that I understand his reasons. In closing he suggests, with what was perhaps meant to be irony, that I could be the novitiate superior and he could do the "essential" directing. There he implies that his complaint is based on a shortage of manpower. If that's the case, then we have no disagreement. If there are not two men to distinguish the tasks, then so be it.

In the second place, however, if his opinion is based on the identity of the novice master, then we disagree. I learned from my own novitiate days (1970-72), and specifically from my own novitiate spiritual director, that what the spiritual director learned from my disclosures ought to be protected by the spiritual director. That man later became novice director. As novice director, he told me often that in his evaluation of a novice, he could not disclose what he had learned in spiritual direction. Of course, I was very young then and I may not have heard him exactly; but I

have since asked others, and they affirm my understanding of the way he proceeded. My intention in the essay, then, was to bring into open discussion what I had learned, that contrary to Tom's suggestion the role of novice director as evaluator and as spiritual director is filled with compromise and needs to be examined.

Third, as a Jesuit ethicist, I was particularly surprised by Tom's assertion that as an experienced novice master, he "would not want to undertake an evaluation for admission to first vows without any of the access to a man's prayer that spiritual direction gives." Besides the unique relationship that each man has with his superior to whom he gives an annual account of conscience, the other privileged relationship that each Jesuit is encouraged to develop is with the spiritual director. Accessing the information of a spiritual director goes against every insight that I have known in the Society's long history of defending the sanctuary of the conscience. I cannot recall any instance in our history where we advocated that a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, a superior, or any other official had the right to access the information disclosed in spiritual direction. On the contrary, we have consistently argued against any attempt to intrude into this privileged relationship. But now Tom says that a Jesuit novice master has that right. Are we to defend everyone's conscience *except* the Jesuit novice's?

What one discloses in spiritual direction is one's prayer life, but that prayer life, we hope, expresses all the intimacies by which a man knows himself as known and loved by God. Our



spirituality developed a wonderful insight in providing for each person a wise and prudent companion who would faithfully and confidentially assist the person in self-understanding. I am deeply concerned that any novice's first experience in the Society is that of a compan-

ion who divulges. I am happy that that was not my experience.

Sincerely,

James F. Keenan, S.J.

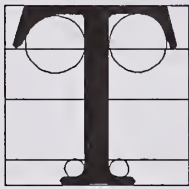
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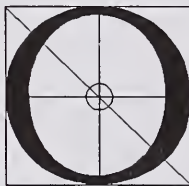
**To Share in the Life of Christ: Experiencing God in Everyday Life**, by Laurence L. Gooley, S.J., treats extensively of the experience of prayer, covering such topics as the examen of consciousness, Ignatian contemplation, images of God, review and repetition of prayer, silence, stages of growth in prayer, etc. Additionally, Fr. Gooley speaks of the following of Christ, and under this rubric treats such items as the preferential option for the poor, the experience of God's unconditional love, spiritual freedom, and passionate union with Christ. While retaining its original value as a manual for National Christian Life Communities, the book will be of interest and assistance to others as well in their pursuit of spiritual growth and effective development in the service of God.

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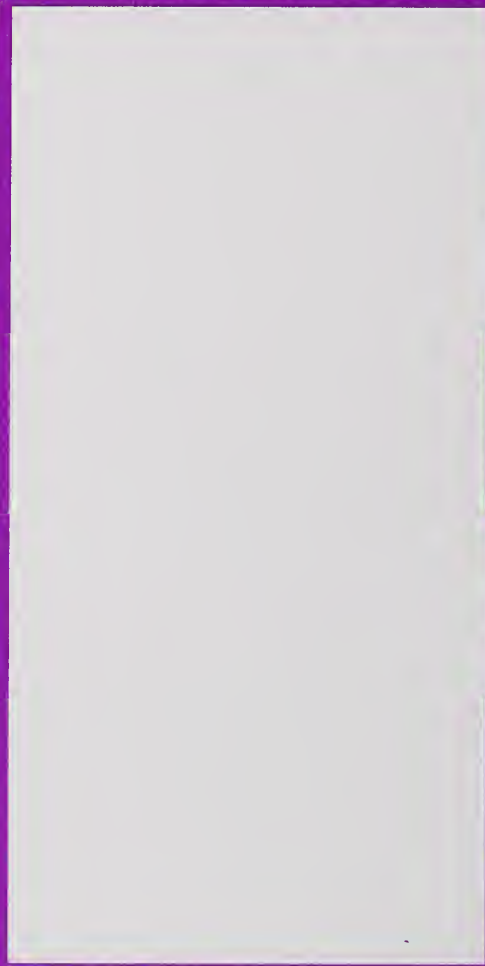
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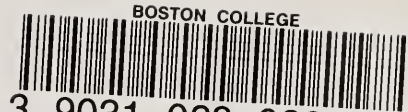








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