



STUDIES

IN
THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

Unfinished Business

*The Spiritual Coadjutor
in the Society of Jesus Today*

MARK LEWIS, S.J.

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

The Seminar is composed of a number 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 gathers current scholarly studies pertaining to the history and ministries of Jesuits throughout the world. It then disseminates the results through this journal.

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the first word . . .

During this past summer, I sometimes got the feeling that if I heard one more word about *To Kill a Mockingbird*, I'd be happy to oblige. With my own bare hands, if necessary. Although Nelle Harper Lee's beloved novel has been a favorite with readers from elementary school to senior-care facilities since the day it came out in 1960, it was the appearance of the prequel/sequel *Go Set a Watchman* in July that sent the critics and casual readers alike into a frenzy of enough curiosity to kill a thundering herd of cats. The new book stirred unprecedented interest from the moment the manuscript was "discovered" in a safety-deposit box last winter. Why was the author revealing it at this time? Had she somehow been manipulated by publishers who knew they would have another *Harry Potter* on their lists once it was released? And if *Watchman* could be expected to soar instantly to the top of the best-seller lists, could a re-issued *Mockingbird* flutter far behind? Win, win, and keep winning all the way to the bank. Would the author, now nearing her ninetieth birthday, derive any benefit from it? A champagne gala in the atrium of Trump Tower perhaps? It was morality play and soap opera in one, surely worthy of a mini-series on television.

Then as the publication date drew near, the focus of attention switched from the process to the content. Harper Lee actually wrote this "new" book first, and then at the urging of her editor, Tay Hohoff, extracted a flashback, set during the childhood of the central character, and worked it into the Pulitzer Prize winning and now classic novel of 1960. How much of the credit for this "new" book should go to Harper Lee and how much to her editors? If one attack weren't enough, the same crowd that eagerly waits for UFOs to return its kidnapped citizens to Roswell, New Mexico, actually dusted off the old story that her childhood friend Truman Capote actually ghostwrote the book for her. More grist for the literary tabloids.

While these stories came and went, the fall of Atticus Finch from his pedestal in the pantheon of American heroes has lingered for weeks. I'm sure I read the book shortly after its initial publication, but it is the image of Gregory Peck, dressed in the white linen suit of Southern gentleman in the Robert Mulligan film of 1962 that has been burned into my mind, as it certainly has for anyone else who has seen it. As a small-town lawyer defending a black man

accused of raping a white woman, he stands as a monument to all that is decent and just. He represents American values at their best, or what we would like to believe they are. Now in the new book, he turns out to harbor racist sympathies. He attends a Klan meeting and worries about carloads of “Negroes,” the respectful term at the time, invading American institutions. It was a shock to rival the lurid allegations about Bill Cosby.

But wait! Cosby is a living human being. Atticus Finch is a fictional character, not a real person. Harper Lee could do whatever she wanted with her creation. She wrote two separate books, spaced several years apart, both in narrative sequence and composition. They involve the same characters and settings, but the author puts them in different circumstances in different periods of American history. Why did Lee invent such different Atticuses? I have to think the discrepancy is deliberate. As many critics and reviewers have pointed out, the passage of years has refined the perceptions of the central character. As an innocent child, Scout idealized her father. She watched him undertake a heroic task by defending the man against a legal system that was all but destined to hang him. Many years later, the adult Scout, Jean Louise Finch, a lawyer working New York, returns to her childhood home and finds her father a far more complex, nuanced character than she could ever have imagined as a child. He’s not quite the same man Scout had adored unquestioningly. He is, after all, a Southern white man, now aging, a product of his time and class, who represented his client to the best of his ability because he believed in the justice system that he, as a lawyer, was duty bound to serve. His role did not necessarily dispose him to overcome his own cultural perspectives. The two books represent two portraits of the same man as perceived by the lovable tomboy and the sophisticated woman. It’s a brilliant artistic strategy.

The analysis provides a convincing argument, to be sure, but as one thinks about it, another, complementary explanation adds even more to the reader’s appreciation of the shift. Let’s assume that Scout’s perception of her father rings absolutely true. At the time of the trial, Atticus was totally magnanimous and saddened by the virulent racism around him. The years pass. Race riots have ravaged Detroit and other American cities. President Truman, from Missouri no less, has ordered the military to desegregate. The early rumblings of the civil-rights movement begin to reach the press: lunch-counter sit-ins, demonstrations, speeches; debates about making lynching a Federal crime will not die. In the new novel, the black man is actually acquitted, surely a sign of dramatic change in the once rigged legal system. Any perceptive person, like Atticus Finch, could see what was coming. This social upheaval threatened the established order and frightened him—as it did a good number of upright citizens in the real world—and led to a kind of psychological backlash. He’d be reluctant to endorse a doctrine of white supremacy—after all, we’d just fought a horrible war to erase the theory of Aryan supremacy—but

that's what the change challenged. Recall the images from the film: Tom Robinson (Brock Peters), the accused, knows his place. He wears his bib overalls to his trial, and respectfully yes-sirs and no-sirs his way through the proceedings, even though it's clear he will be convicted. Atticus, benevolent and a bit patronizing toward him, does his best with the defense. Finch gives; Robinson meekly and gratefully receives his benevolence.

During the war years, the equation changed dramatically and quickly. African-Americans were no longer content with their place as recipients of white largess. In the postwar world, they begin demanding their rights as equal citizens under the law, a struggle that goes on to this day. It's easy to imagine a white liberal like Atticus Finch being unnerved by the change and gradually becoming angry and resentful at the ingratitude of people he had tried to help through his law practice. For him, black people should be grateful for all they've received by living in the United States. He doesn't want them "taking over," whatever that means.

As I tried to get into Finch's head during this time of upheaval, the film historian in me asserted itself. My thoughts drifted back to the legendary filmmaker D. W. Griffith, a real-life Kentuckian, probably a bit older than the fictional Atticus Finch. In both his masterpiece, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), and especially and more markedly in an earlier and lesser effort, *His Trust: The Faithful Devotion and Self-Sacrifice of an Old Negro Servant* (1911), he shows an incredibly naïve and culturally conditioned understanding of slavery and emancipation. In both films the slaves of the prewar era are carefree, happy members of the white family. They are saddened when the patriarchs leave them to fight a war to defend their enslavement and, in their absence, they remain devoted to their owners' families on the plantation. Even after the war they regret and reject emancipation and cling to the old order of things. It's not hard to extrapolate on Griffith's story and imagine his adding a scene about a returning Confederate veteran being shocked and angry to discover that some of his former slaves have abandoned the homestead or, if they stayed, now demand cash wages for their labor. Where's their gratitude for the years we took care of them?

Admittedly, these observations have little to do with the current issue of STUDIES. Yes, it's one of the more flagrant examples of my using this space more for an independent essay than a pointed introduction to the main article. Guilty, as charged. At the same time the terrible events of the past several months have challenged us all to reflect deeply on issues of race in America. When the conversation profits from examples literature and film, two areas that have claimed a good deal of my time and energy over the years, the temptation to enter the conversation through this route became irresistible.

At this point, I am tempted to offer an apology to the author, Mark Lewis, who has provided us with a comprehensive report on the status of the consideration of vows in the Society of Jesus. This “introduction” is a distraction. On the other hand, it probably all works out for the best. My own knowledge of the Constitutions and the congregations is at best sketchy, to put it generously. What could my superficial remarks have possibly added to his careful research and thoughtful reflection? Any attempt of mine to summarize his findings by way of prelection would have run a risk of an embarrassing distortion of the facts and his analysis of them. Let’s let the author speak for himself, as he clearly and eloquently has in the pages that follow. The forthcoming Thirty-Sixth General Congregation may well take up the issue, but at this point the agenda has not been set. If it does, Mark’s essay should provide a helpful starting point for the deliberations. For us stay-at-homes, this study shows that the issue is not quite as simple as we might have believed at first. That is a great contribution as well.

a few second words . . .

Reading through Mark’s essay made me curious about Ignatius’s sense of class distinctions, surely a feature of the European society of his day. A vague recollection of his term “persons of quality” struck me as a hint to his thinking. Did he really think of social class as an inevitable part of the world as he knew it, as though he could divide people into persons of quality and persons of no quality. My search turned up little. A note to our colleague on the seminar, Bart Geger, who once studied Ignatian documents for a living, brought the response that the phrase occurs fifteen times in his letters of 1555, near the end of his life. It can mean either a member of the nobility or a candidate for the Society who possess the requisite talents and virtues to undertake the long period of formation. Nothing is simple.

“Persons of quality,” in both senses, is a term that admirably suits the Jesuits I am happy to welcome as new members of the Seminar. They were nominated by the Seminar, approved by the Jesuit Conference, and, after a phone call or exchange of e-mails, have generously agreed to accept a three-year term.

Scott Hendrickson studied theology at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas in Madrid and then completed his doctorate in Spanish literature at Oxford. (What a grand addition to our clan! Someone to check on translations of the original Ignatian documents should the need arise!) He currently teaches Spanish and is director of the Graduate Program in Modern Languages and

Literatures at Loyola University in Chicago. He recently published *Jesuit Poly-math of Madrid: The Literary Enterprise of Juan Eusebio Nieremberg (1595–1658)*.

Hung Pham was born in Vietnam but grew up in Denver. He attended JFK High School and Regis University, where he won a Goldwater scholarship before entering the Missouri Province. He earned a master's degree in philosophy at St. Louis University, a licentiate in theology at what was then the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass., and an STD in Ignatian Spirituality at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid. He currently teaches spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara. In addition to several contributions to periodicals in Vietnamese and English, his monograph *Composing a Sacred Space: a Lesson from the "Catechismus" of Alexandre de Rhodes* appeared in *STUDIES* 46/2 (Summer 2014).

Oliver Rafferty, a native of Belfast and a member of the British province, is, as far as I know, the first non-American Jesuit to join the Seminar. After completing his D. Phil at Oxford he served a term as president of the Irish Historical Society. A specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Irish history, he has published six books, and his *Violence, Politics and Catholicism in Ireland* is scheduled for publication in November of this year. He is currently a visiting professor of History and Irish Studies and directs the Center for Irish Programs at Boston College. *Céad míle fáilte!*

Speaking of "persons of quality," we will miss the contributions of Greg Kalscheur, who will continue his work as interim dean in the Morrissey College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Boston College. Bill O'Neill has also concluded his term with the Seminar. He will continue his teaching and research in social ethics at the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara, along with his several commitments to prison ministry. Many thanks for your friendship, incisive comments on submitted essays, and wise counsel during the past three years.

Persons of quality all!

Richard A. Blake, S.J.

Editor

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Mark Lewis served as the last provincial of the New Orleans Province and is currently teaching and directing the Catholic Studies Program at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri. After completing his doctoral studies at the University of Toronto, he taught at Regis College in Toronto, the Rome Center of Loyola University Chicago, the Gregorian University, and the Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi. For six years he served as director of the Jesuit Historical Institute in Rome. Despite a busy schedule of teaching and administration, he has published several articles on Jesuit history, and is currently preparing a study of the life of Nicolás Bobadilla, one of the first companions of Ignatius.

Unfinished Business

The Spiritual Coadjutor in the Society of Jesus Today

The process of final incorporation into the Society of Jesus has had a long and complicated history from the time of St. Ignatius, through the Restoration, to Vatican II and recent general congregations. The grade of Spiritual Coadjutor in particular has been a source of repeated discussions. If the next general congregation takes up the issue, it will do so in the light of this background.

I. Introduction

The Year for Consecrated Life called by Pope Francis for 2015 celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of *Perfectæ caritatis* (*The Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life*). Almost ten years after Vatican II promulgated it in 1965, as the Thirty-Second General Congregation (1974–75) began to address one of the key questions concerning that reform in the Society of Jesus, Pope Paul VI intervened in asking the assembled delegates to suspend the question of grades. While most Jesuits are aware of the controversy that surrounded this aspect of the congregation, some do not know of the historical context that gave rise to this question. Subsequent general congregations addressed the role of the Jesuit brother (formerly called the Temporal

Coadjutor), but the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor moved into a sort of limbo with relatively little attention paid to its role, distinctive characteristics, or its future. Many believed it would simply disappear from the practice of the Society. Yet not only did the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor remain in use, in fact, its numbers have begun to grow once again. But it remains without a clearly enunciated sense of its contemporary purpose, and without any real discussion about the desire of the Society about whether it should continue. It is an item of unfinished business in the *aggiornamento* sought by the Second Vatican Council for religious communities.

Because any decision regarding the change or elimination of this grade in the Society of Jesus touches the “Formula of the Institute,” final approval of any change would have to be approved by the Holy See. It might be argued that since Pope Paul VI suspended the discussion previously, permission should be sought even to reopen the discussion. Yet in an almost incredible turn of events, for the first time in history, the Chair of St. Peter is occupied by a Jesuit. But even more interesting for the potential discussion of this question of the Spiritual Coadjutor, Pope Francis actually attended General Congregation 32 as provincial of Argentina at that time, Fr. Jorge Bergoglio. For this reason a congregation might more confidently approach the Holy See for permission to freely discuss the question of grades. Whether or not that permission is given, Jesuits could be sure that the Holy Father is well aware of the issues underlying the question. Even without permission to change the substance of the Institute, the General Congregation could discuss the nature and identity of the Spiritual Coadjutor in order to provide a positive description of its particular charisms and role in the contemporary Society of Jesus.

But what is the reason for any concern about this relatively picaresque matter within the internal structure of the Society of Jesus? At the time of a Jesuit’s final, public incorporation into the Society of Jesus, a little-understood distinction is made among its priests. At the practical, day-to-day level, the distinction is meaningless, and few people either within or outside the Order are aware of it. But the distinction in final vows between the spiritual coadjutor and those with the fourth vow has been in place since 1546, almost from the beginning of the Society’s history. Despite changes in the theological formation of clergy,

canon law, and perhaps even the will of the Jesuits themselves, these two “grades” continue to be used in the present-day Society of Jesus.

While this distinction receives some attention in novitiate discussions on the Constitutions and nature of religious vows, and again during tertianship when the question is more pressing, few Jesuits are particularly concerned about it. In their first vows, Jesuits promise to enter the Society of Jesus at a later date and, by implication, promise to accept whatever “grade” Father General calls them to. But the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor remains surrounded by confusion as to its significance and purpose, and at times creates an unhealthy humiliation derived from the negative connotations that have adhered to this grade for centuries. This is largely because for most of its history it has been seen as a failure to attain the highest standards of excellence in learning and virtue required by the Society. Whether true or not, it has been perceived as a “lack” or “absence” of the qualities necessary to be a “true Jesuit,” and there is little in the early documents of the Society of Jesus to counter that perception.¹

Recent changes in the way the criteria for final vows are applied in the case of priests (which appears to be increasing the percentage of those called to be spiritual coadjutors) and the upcoming general congregation under the reign of a Jesuit pope, therefore, make this an opportune time to reflect on the distinction of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor, to review its historical contexts and introduce the questions that emerge from that in order to clarify what the Society desires to do with this grade.

II. The Context of the Question

Given the complexity of the issues and the subtle changes that have occurred in the Society of Jesus throughout its history, a review of the special terms used by the Society of Jesus and

¹Father General Adolfo Nicolás, in his letter of September 7, 2009, echoes the sentiments of the Thirty-Fourth General Congregation: “those who are admitted to final vows, no matter their grade . . . are completely embraced and esteemed by the Society of Jesus as dear brothers and companions” (*Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* 24 [2009]: 777). Hereafter this source will be abbreviated to *ARSI*.

their developing meaning in canon law might help the reader better understand the arguments that various historians have made.

The term “grade” (*gradus* in Latin, implying level) is used in the Society of Jesus to denote the specific vows that a Jesuit has taken. Those who have taken first vows have the “grade” of Scholastics or Brothers and are still in formation towards final incorporation into the Society as priests or brothers. At final vows a brother takes the three vows in the “grade” as a Brother. In historical documents the brother is often referred to as a “temporal coadjutor,” though the designation of this grade was changed to “brother” by the Thirty-First General Congregation. Jesuits ordained priests may take vows in the “grade” of Spiritual Coadjutor or of “Professed” of either Three or Four Vows.² Spiritual coadjutor suggests that, like the brother, their primary role is as a “helper” of those who would be “professed” (a term that indicates a more solemn and formal membership in the religious order). The grade of “Professed” can further be distinguished between the “Profession of Three Vows,” or “Profession of Four Vows,” with the additional vow of obedience to the pope with regard to mission. The Profession of Three Vows was included in the Constitutions and was common in the early Society, but has mostly died out. As we shall see, it was necessary during the reign of Pope St. Pius V, when the Society’s practice regarding final vows was modified. The Professed of Four Vows indicates the Jesuit on mission. In the Constitutions it would be the professed who would protect the nature of the religious institute through their poverty and attention to obedience. Not surprisingly, it would be this grade that would receive the most attention in the Constitutions and carry the heaviest responsibilities for mission and governance.

The term “final vows” must also be placed within its various contexts in our history. In the time of Saint Ignatius, members of religious communities made simple or temporary vows after their novitiate and, after further education and formation, made a solemn and perpetual profession of their final vows, which gave them definitive membership

²I use the term “Profession” in its historical sense as the taking of solemn perpetual vows. While, as we will see, the new Code of Canon Law no longer makes the distinction between simple and solemn vows, it allows the Society of Jesus to maintain this distinction (cf. can. 1192). The Society of Jesus still regularly uses the terms “Spiritual Coadjutor” and “Professed of Four Vows,” so I shall use the terms as well in this article.

in their order. For those religious who would be priests, these “final vows” had to be made before ordination. This helped to resolve a concern expressed even before the Council of Trent, that all priests have a clear *locus* of support, namely, that they belong to some ecclesial entity (for example, a diocese or religious community) who would exercise care for them, call them to obedience, and mission them. The first companions, then, were ordained in Venice in 1537 under the title of their “common table” (community companionship), even though they had not formed a canonical, religious community. Significantly, it was possible at that time to receive holy orders with a fairly weak connection to an ecclesial entity or means of support and care. Such was the culture of the sixteenth century.

At the time of the founding of the Society of Jesus and the writing of the Constitutions, Ignatius decided to modify the timing and nature of the religious vows for his Company. The vows after the novitiate were not to be temporary and so, strictly speaking, not simple vows. For this reason he extended the novitiate to two years and introduced a number of tests or probations to help confirm the novice in his vocation to the Society of Jesus. By doing this, Ignatius was able to move the final vows (solemn profession) to a time after ordination for priests. This allowed the Jesuit to receive further testing not only as a seminarian but also as a young priest. Some religious and canonists at the time objected to this because definitive incorporation into the religious body (in this case the Society of Jesus) did not take place until after ordination. They feared that someone might be dismissed from their simple vows in the Society of Jesus after ordination, and so would remain a priest but without an ecclesial entity to support and mission him (canonically speaking, making him a *vagus*). Today we speak of being “incardinated” into a diocese or into the Society of Jesus, a term which implies canonical responsibilities for the ecclesial body towards its members, and denotes membership in that body.

Pope St. Pius V, a Dominican who reigned from 1566 to 1572), focused on the implementation of the Council of Trent and accordingly insisted that the Jesuits make their final profession before ordination. St. Francis Borgia, who was general of the Society of Jesus at that time, obeyed, and Jesuit seminarians were professed of three vows before their ordination. Some would later make the fourth vow. After Pius’s death in 1572, this practice ended and Church law recognized that a Je-

suit's first vows, inasmuch as they represented a lifelong commitment, had the same force as solemn vows in other religious orders. Even so, the invitation by the Society of Jesus for a Jesuit to enter the Company continued to come only with the final vows made after ordination and tertianship. Since the critical time for canonists' fears of having a *vagus* was in the period between ordination and final vows, the length of that period was reduced; tertianship occurred during the year after ordination, with the invitation to final vows shortly after that.

Today (since the last revision of the Code of Canon Law in 1983) the Church does not distinguish between simple and solemn vows in the norms dealing with religious life (canons 654–58), only between temporary and perpetual profession. The vows of religious are made publicly, and may be for a determined period or in perpetuity. But, by way of exception, the Society of Jesus retains the right to distinguish between the solemn profession of those with the fourth vow, and the simple though perpetual profession of the spiritual coadjutors (canon 1192).

While most of these distinctions make no difference to the ordinary life of the Jesuit with final vows, one's grade in the Society makes one more or less available for governance in it. Only someone professed of four vows can be elected general or vicar general, provincial, vice provincial, or regional superior. Since a Jesuit rarely aspires to these offices, this too matters very little. In fact, there have been times when someone has been invited to profess the fourth vow so that he might assume one of these offices. So the distinction, while real and at times painful to the individual Jesuit, has relatively little impact on his life or ministry.

III. After Vatican II

The historical introduction to the Thirty-First General Congregation (1965–66) notes that a great number of *postulata* were submitted both by provinces and individuals calling for an examination of the different grades within the Society. Previous congregations had addressed this topic, clarifying the intellectual criteria for profession and establishing rules for the *examen ad gradum*.³ GC 31 moved

³This examination, which covered all of a Jesuit's studies in Philosophy and Theology, was established in the early Society to determine whether someone had the

quickly during its first session to establish a new set of criteria for final vows and articulated other qualities that might make a candidate eligible for the Profession of Four Vows rather than relying almost exclusively on the results of the *examen ad gradum*. “Provided always that the requirements contained in no. 2 [sound judgment and prudence] are kept, those men can be admitted to the solemn profession of four vows without an examination *ad gradum* who have a doctorate or licentiate or some other equivalent degree in the sacred sciences, or who have engaged in these sciences with success in either teaching or writing.”⁴

The congregation, however, failed to find enough votes to consider abolishing the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor altogether. Father General Pedro Arrupe (1965–83) subsequently implemented this decree, and established the protocols for considering the status of Jesuits who, while currently spiritual coadjutors, might now be considered for the Profession of Four vows. While the question of grades in the Society of Jesus was not pursued by subsequent congregations, significant research had nevertheless been done in preparation for such a discussion following GC 31. These studies, intended for the use of GC 32, provide important information regarding the nature, mission, and identity given to these distinct grades, both in the developing thought of St. Ignatius of Loyola as well as in the lived tradition of the Society of Jesus. Reviewing these historical data gives us a better understanding of these distinctions, and might suggest a better articulation of the distinction of grades, and particularly of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor.

At the time of the Vatican council’s promulgation of *Perfectæ caritatis* in 1965, GC 31 was between sessions. For this reason, when the delegates returned to Rome to conclude their deliberations, they decided to suspend work on the question of the various grades in the Society of Jesus. Again, while there was significant interest in considering the abolition of grades in the Society, there was not enough of a consensus to go forward at that time. Following the issuance of *Ecclesiae Sanctæ*, the *motu proprio* of Pope Paul VI (also during the general congregation’s hiatus), the delegates of the congregation now thought it wise to fol-

requisite learning to be called to the Profession of Four Vows.

⁴ GC 31, d. 11, /197/, §1, in *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees of the 3st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 91. Future references to GCs 31–35 will be taken from this source.

low its norms regarding due study and consultation for implementing the renewal called for by *Perfectæ caritatis*. They therefore decreed that a commission be established to study the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor with the intention of “suppressing the grade of spiritual coadjutor, either in law or in practice.”⁵ (Another commission was to be established to investigate whether or not it would be good to extend Solemn Profession and the fourth vow to temporal coadjutors, meaning the brothers. It would be this question that would especially draw the attention of the Holy See.⁶

While some have lamented that these commissions never materialized, they were in fact constituted and provided pertinent material for the general congregation.⁷ In a letter dated January 5, 1967, Father General Pedro Arrupe named various commissions in remote preparation for GC 32 (and in conformity with the decrees of GC 31).⁸ Among them was the commission to study the question of the Spiritual Coadjutor. Of the five members named to the commission, there were two historians: Fr. Antonio Aldama of the Jesuit province of Baetica in Spain who had served as Secretary of the Society of Jesus from 1945 to 1950 and currently worked at the Jesuit Historical Institute; and Father Láslo Lukács of the Hungarian Province, who also worked at the Historical Institute, having done extensive research on the work of Father James Laínez and on the development of the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum*.⁹

Almost two years later (November 12, 1969), this commission submitted a report outlining their meetings and consultations and suggesting a way forward.¹⁰ In this report they mentioned the work of Fathers Aldama and Lukács from a historical perspective, and also the

⁵GC 31, d. 5, /61/ no. 1 (p. 62).

⁶Ibid., no. 2.

⁷Thomas Stahel, “Toward General Congregation 34: A History ‘from Below’ of GC 31, GC 32, and GC 33,” *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS*, 25, no. 4 (Sept. 1993): 10. Father John Edwards, who attended GC 31 as provincial of the New Orleans Province, was not aware of their existence. But since their results were not discussed, this is not too surprising.

⁸ARSI, 15 (Rome: Jesuit General Curia, 1968): 32–33.

⁹Ibid. The other members of the commission were Frs. John Beyer (North Belgium), John Huschmann (Lower Germany), John Reed (Buffalo), and Julien Harvey (Quebec). Father Beyer was replaced by Fr. Gervais Dumeige.

¹⁰Ibid., 472–73.

invitation to Fr. Gervais Dumeige, a French Jesuit whose dissertation in canon law addressed this topic, to provide the results of his own research. While the report suggested that there were diverging opinions on this question, they suggested possible directions and submitted their findings (at the request of Father General) to the congregation of procurators who met in October of 1970.¹¹ Of these documents prepared for the congregations, three were more widely circulated. Fathers Aldama and Lukács published their historical research in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, the journal of the Jesuit Historical Institute, and Father Dumeige's research was published in English by the Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits, the predecessor of the Jesuit Conference of the U.S. and Canada.

Given the importance of these data to the debate on the question of the types of vows for Jesuit priests, a review of these articles would allow an extension of their data to the present day in order to update the state of the question. Their historical research intended to implement the decree whose anniversary we celebrate this year, and this material might also be useful in helping to resolve some of the questions that have remained since GC 32.

IV. Reports from a Commission on Grades

In 1968 Father Lukács published "De gradum diversitate in Societate Iesu" in the periodical of the Jesuit Historical Institute.¹² His article provided many data to support the impetus for a shift away from a higher percentage of spiritual coadjutors and in favor of a greater number of those professed of four vows. A year later Father Aldama published another article on the same theme. His "De coadiutoribus Societatis Iesu in mente et in praxi Sancti Ignatii" emphasized the auxiliary nature of the spiritual coadjutor, though it also introduced the

¹¹ *Ibid.* Their submissions included, in addition to the historical and canonical opinions already developed, commentaries from Scripture scholars, the opinion of psychologists, a study of the nature of the vows and the grades, along with the institutional value of the latter. Finally, they recommended that universal approval would be necessary in order to change the institution of grades, and that the mind and prescription of Vatican II should be respected.

¹² *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 37, no. 74 (Rome: IHSI, 1968): 237–316. Hereafter this source will be abbreviated to *AHSL*.

idea of a particular charism for them.¹³ Father Dumeige approached the question from the point of view of canon law in his article “De mente sancti Ignatii et posteriore evolutione historica in quaestione de gradibus in Societate Iesu.”¹⁴ Because these questions were not taken up by GC 32, they have remained relatively unknown since their publication.

Láslo Lukács

Father Lukács’s thesis argues that, at the beginning of the Society of Jesus, Saint Ignatius sought only companions of outstanding virtue and doctrine who possessed as well a solid preparation in philosophy and theology. Nevertheless, some who were already ordained priests, who certainly had the requisite virtues and doctrine but lacked a strong formation in the sacred sciences, desired to join his Company. The ecclesial situation at the time made it common enough for someone to be ordained without the requisite education. They might also have been only loosely tied to a diocese or other ecclesial entity. Ignatius saw that these good, well-intentioned men could assist the Society in her spiritual ministries, and so he created the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor. As a result, those who, because of age or lack of talent, could not pursue further studies, could be admitted to the Society of Jesus, provided they had the requisite virtue and doctrine, as well as a basic knowledge of Latin and sufficient moral theology to hear confessions. The establishment of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor took place in 1546 at the same time as the admission of brothers into the Society. Lukács further suggests that because this historical situation would change with the advent of Jesuit schools (as well as with the seminary legislation of the Council of Trent), the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor would naturally diminish and gradually disappear. Although the number of Jesuits admitted to final vows while Ignatius was general was rather small, Lukács notes that his practice was to admit to the Profession of Four Vows those who had passed (*sufficienter*) the course in philosophy and theology. If the course had not been completed before ordination and subsequent assignment to ministry, the Jesuit was professed of three

¹³Ibid. 38, no. 76: 389–430.

¹⁴This was a dissertation presented at the Gregorian University and published in Rome in 1969. An English translation of this article was made by the Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits in 1970.

vows. Only those who had had little or no study of the sacred sciences received the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor.¹⁵

One would expect, then, that the number of spiritual coadjutors would diminish after the death of Saint Ignatius and the development of a stronger system of formation in the Society of Jesus. Instead, the opposite occurred. Under the next two generals (James Laínez and Francis Borgia), the percentage of spiritual coadjutors grew much more rapidly. Lukács attributes this to the more stringent interpretation of knowledge of theology as proposed by one of the earliest commentators on the Jesuit Constitutions, Fr. Jerome Nadal. The *sufficienter* of Saint Ignatius in the Constitutions and in his limited practice, came to be replaced by Nadal with the term *conspicuus* (outstanding) learning, based on his reading and translation of the “Formula of the Institute.”

We have judged it opportune to decree that no one should be permitted to pronounce his profession in this Society unless his life and doctrine have been probed by long and exacting tests. . . . For in all truth this Institute requires men who are thoroughly humble and prudent in Christ as well as *conspicuous* [italics mine] in the integrity of Christian life and learning.¹⁶

While Fathers General Laínez and Borgia continued to apply the standards outlined by Ignatius, what constituted successful completion of the required course of studies began to change to a higher standard. As we have seen, Father General Borgia was required to profess all scholastics of three vows before ordination. Many would subsequently be given the fourth vow after tertianship. The Second General Congregation (1565) decreed that Nadal’s “*scholia*” (his commentaries and notes on the Constitutions) should have a pride of place in guiding the understanding of them, though they did not make their interpretations obligatory.¹⁷

¹⁵Father Lukács illustrated his article with several graphics and tables supporting this thesis. See Appendix.

¹⁶*The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 13, col. 2 (emphasis added). Hereafter this source will be abbreviated to *ConsCN*. This quotation is from the “Formula of the Institute” as approved by Pope Julius III in 1550.

¹⁷GC 2, subsequent dd. 42 and 57, translated by Martin D. O’Keefe, S.J., in *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty General Congregations* (St. Louis: Institute of

The growth of the schools and lack of professed houses introduced the question of whether the professed could be assigned for long periods to houses that benefited from endowments. The lack of houses to which the professed could be assigned may also have figured in this lower percentage of professed in the Society of Jesus.¹⁸ While the Sixth General Congregation (1608) finally resolved this issue by allowing the professed to live in the colleges, it also suggested that if the number of professed grew too large in them, “let them . . . advise Father General, so that he might relocate them either in residences, or in other provinces, or perhaps by sending to the Indies those he judges ought to be sent.”¹⁹

Father General Claudio Acquaviva, general from 1581 to 1615, introduced the practice of determining the course of studies for scholastics based on an examination after the Philosophy course. If a scholastic showed “average” progress, he would be allowed to study only moral theology before ordination and assignment. Another examination would be given at the end of Theology which would cover all the normal course of studies. This examination *ad gradum* would determine the grade to which the young priest would be called. Since only those who completed the entire course could possibly pass it, the examination *ad gradum* became the effective determination of who would be professed. Someone in the shorter course could not possibly pass. He therefore would not be professed of four vows. This policy inevitably determined the grade of the scholastic early in his formation, basing it primarily on the results of one or possibly two examinations. General congregations would deliberate over the details of this policy for many years to come, but it would remain the normative practice until 1968. While Lukács emphasized the legislation of subsequent con-

Jesuit Sources, 1994), 122 and 125. Future references to General Congregations 1 to 30 will be taken from this translation, which hereafter will be abbreviated to *MGM*. See also GC 6, d. 15 (in ms. d. 29), pp. 122, 124.

¹⁸The statistics for 1600 were as follows: 23 provinces, 16 professed houses, 245 colleges, 25 novitiates (endowed colleges for aspirants to the Society), and 67 other residences—probably in mission regions. The total number of Jesuits worldwide was 8,519. For a more complete discussion of the preference of schools to professed houses, see Mark A. Lewis, S.J., “Evaluating the *Ratio Studiorum*: Some Suggestions from Naples,” in *Jezuicka Ars Historica*, S. Obirek, S.J., and M. Inglot, S.J., eds. (Cracow: WAM, 2001), 323–31.

¹⁹GC 6, d. 18 (d. 35 in ms.), *MGM*, 223–24.

gregations to enshrine Nadal's use of "conspicuous" from the Institute, he also mentions the extension of that criteria by GC 6 to allow fathers general to promote those who "had achieved an average level of theological matters sufficient for the conversion of infidels and heretics, but who have become outstanding in the humane letters" to profession of four vows.²⁰ This also clearly acknowledges the growth and presence of the professed in the emerging Jesuit schools. Despite the official acceptance of the Nadal interpretation and the general congregations' regular insistence on a faithful adherence to the results of testing, the percentage of professed continued to grow from the generalate of Father Acquaviva until the universal suppression of the Society in 1773.

In addition to his examination of the various documents treating of the basis for determining one's grade in the Society of Jesus, Lukács also crunched the numbers regarding percentages of those professed to those becoming spiritual coadjutors. He further studied the division based on assistancy as well as the extent of education a scholastic had received. All of the published material, however, focused only on the pre-suppression "Old" Society.

Antonio Aldama

Father Aldama's article focuses on the *raison d'être* of the coadjutors (both spiritual and temporal, the latter of whom are the brothers). He evokes the New Testament idea of the diaconate. These men would be helpers (coadjutors) to free the professed from necessary occupations that would restrict their availability to other ministry. While Father Aldama argues that this distinction is not so much based on qualitative considerations as it is on a diversity of personal gifts, he nevertheless retains the notion that in the strictest sense, only the professed define the Society of Jesus. In this he recalls the response of Ignatius to Fr. Juan de Polanco seeking clarification as to the extent "Society of Jesus" refers to its members. In 1547 Ignatius replied that, in the strictest sense, it includes only the solemnly professed, though all who live under obedience of the General are more broadly the Society of Jesus.²¹

²⁰GC 6, d. 15 (in ms. d. 29), *MGM* 222.

²¹*Constitutiones*, I (Madrid: IHSI, 1933), vol. 63 of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, pp. 307–8. Hereafter the *Monumenta* series will be abbreviated to *MHSI*.

In the matter of qualification, Father Aldama sides with the interpretation of Father Nadal in arguing for an increasing selectivity from novitiate to profession. Father Aldama concludes by intimating that the number of spiritual coadjutors had already begun to grow towards the end of Ignatius's life and, furthermore, that admission of already ordained candidates decreasingly predetermined the grade. Rather, it was increasingly determined by one's ability (or opportunity) to complete the Jesuit course of studies.

Gervais Dumeige

Father Dumeige continues to follow Father Aldama's line of argument, offering a few more indications of why a stricter interpretation of the quality of studies might be indicated. Early in his work he suggests that the meaning of *sufficiencia* might not best be expressed from the modern English word "sufficient." He suggests the word "aptitude" or "capacity," which might more correctly indicate diverse requisites for the two grades rather than higher or lower levels of study.

In the "Formula of the Institute" of 1550, approved by Pope Julius III, coadjutors are specifically mentioned. In presenting this important change in the Institute, Dumeige notes the possible interpretation of *suficiens* as capacity, and echoes Father Aldama's theory that the two grades represent two different sets of talents. He cites the analogy given by Father General Laínez, who suggests that different talents or gifts are required for the distinct grades just as those who will exercise episcopal ministry will have different gifts from those who will minister as parish priests.²²

Dumeige concludes the first part of his study by asking, "If the Society of Jesus is selective in its recruitment (and rigorous in its formation), would it be necessary for there to be a subsequent selection to be made at the time of final vows?"²³ He answers this question, as does Aldama, in the affirmative, because there are two distinct sets of gifts that describe the two grades.

This strict interpretation of Ignatius has been deemphasized by the Thirty-Fourth General Congregation (d. 7, /202/).

²² J. Laínez, *Lectio* 2, "Le Esortazione del P. Laínez sull'Examen Constitutum," *AHSI* 35 (Rome: IHSI, 1966): 142–43.

²³ G. Dumeige, "De mente Sancti Ignatii et posteriore evolutione historica in quaestione de gradibus in Societate Iesu" (Rome, 1969), 6.

In the second part of his article, Dumeige reviews the history of clarifications and modifications made to the question of grades from the commentary of Laínez, focusing on his analogy of different gifts and its treatment by all the general congregations, including the decree of GC 31. He concludes that through all of the modifications made to the norms for determining one's grade in the Society of Jesus, the need for proven virtue and solid doctrine for final vows of any grade has remained firm and unchanged. How success in theological preparation is measured, however, has changed significantly in the history of the Society. While intellectual capabilities and knowledge of theology remains a factor in determining one's grade in the Society, the most recent general congregations have focused more on the qualities necessary for our ministries. If this is the direction in which the Society of Jesus wishes to take the question of grades, Dumeige concludes, then Profession of Four Vows would need to be more explicitly tied to the customary ministries outlined in the "Formula of the Institute."²⁴ Superiors should furthermore recognize that there might be a distinction of gifts, rather than a qualitative difference in abilities, that would define the distinction of grades.

V. Reformulating the Question

The first and most pressing question that arises from the content of *Perfectæ caritatis* concerns the intention of the founder, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, concerning grades, especially that of Spiritual Coadjutor. If, as Father Lukács suggests, Ignatius simply intended it as a place for those who lacked the necessary theology for profession, then it would have gradually disappeared as the means for adequate formation developed within the Society of Jesus. From the data presented, this seems to have been the direction taken from Fathers General Acquaviva to Lorenzo Ricci (1758–73). Yet the grade never completely disappeared, as the examination *De universa philosophia* determined that many scholastics would not be allowed to take the full "scholastic" course of theology, and some of those would fail the examination *ad gradum*, which provided the external verification of their conspicuous talent in Christian learning. Nadal's interpretation, echoed by Father General Laínez,

²⁴Ibid., 39–40.

provided for a smaller number of professed and more spiritual coadjutors. This view described a smaller, well-educated, and elite cadre of professed available to take on the ministries outlined in the “Formula of the Institute” or given by the Holy Father. This restricted group of those professed of four vows would also be those who would safeguard the stricter poverty of the Society of Jesus by maintaining control of the government of the order.²⁵ In the end, the practice of Saint Ignatius remains inconclusive for

Almost immediately, during the generalate of Ignatius’s successor, another interpretation of the Constitutions was put forth by Fr. Jerome Nadal. This raised the criteria for profession significantly with the goal of creating a smaller and more elite cadre of professed. By emphasizing a higher standard of theology, this interpretation suggested that the role of the professed was more closely tied to the missions traditionally undertaken by the Society.

two reasons: he simply did not call that many Jesuit priests to final vows, and the reality of those with insufficient theology perdured throughout his term. Father Lukács’s research shows that the criteria for grades at final vows rested almost exclusively on the extent of theology that the candidate had obtained. While the majority of Jesuits who took final vows under Ignatius were professed of four vows, Father Aldama asserts that the majority of the spiritual coadjutors came at the end of Ignatius’s life and may mark the founder’s

increasing sense of the qualities needed for profession. Father Dumeige follows Father Aldama’s reliance on Nadal’s interpretation of the Constitutions, with priority given to the “*conspicuus*” in the “Formula of the Institute,” though he further questions the actual meaning of “*sufficiens*” in them. Both of them, therefore, argue for a larger number of spiritual coadjutors to engage in the day-to-day labors of the Society of Jesus, leaving the smaller number of professed of four vows to take on papal missions and govern the order.

²⁵ The Fourth General Congregation also insisted that those professed of three vows take the promises to safeguard poverty and to avoid ambition to offices either within or outside the Society.

If the answer to the question of Ignatius's intention for these two grades remains elusive, the practice of the early Society proves similarly problematic. The percentage of spiritual coadjutors declined in the early Society, in part because their ordinary ministries, especially teaching in the schools, became available to the professed by the seventeenth century. While the first two successors appeared to follow Ignatius's guidelines regarding criteria for grades, they also accepted Nadal's interpretation of the professed as a smaller cadre of the Society. This interpretation may also have been aided by scruples concerning the professed living in colleges with endowments (which were burgeoning) and the difficulty of establishing professed houses that relied exclusively on begging for alms. With Father General Mercurian the theological requirements became stricter and, despite the concerns from some provinces, began a trend decreasing the number of professed. Both Fathers Dumeige and Lukács discuss the strong reaction to the grade, and even the term, Spiritual Coadjutor by this point in the history of the Society of Jesus. Letters to Father Mercurian in 1573 and 1574 speak of the "odious" nature of the term and even suggest that all spiritual coadjutors should be professed of either three or four vows.²⁶ Mercurian rejected this as too substantial a change in the Institute. One letter from the province of Castille even went as far as to say that this grade was similar to the *sanbenito*, a cloak worn by repentant heretics in Spain as a sign of shame. The Fifth and Seventh General Congregations needed to require that Jesuits, due to the promise made in their first vows "to enter the Society," not avoid making final profession (because of the grade to which they were called) for their entire life. Apparently some refused to make final vows unless they were allowed to be examined a second time in the hope of receiving the Profession.²⁷ But this sense of the spiritual coadjutor as a "second class citizen" would also remain. Lukács's small chart translated below indicates this early trend among the first Generals, along with the complete number of priests given final vows.²⁸

²⁶Dumeige, *De mente*, 12; Lukács, "De gradum diversitate," 273 ff.

²⁷GC 7, d. 32 (pp. 261–62). The current legislation requires a Jesuit to take his final vows within one year of his being called to them by Father General.

²⁸Lukács, "De gradum diversitate," 262.

GENERAL	PROFESSED OF 4 VOWS	SPIRITUAL COADJUTORS	RATIO (%)
Ignatius of Loyola	46	4	92:8
James Laínez	84	11	81:12
Francis Borgia	211	70	75:25
Everard Mercurian	100	88	53:47
Claudio Acquaviva	2,139	1,1556	58:42
Muzio Vitteleschi	5,021	2,807	64:36

A qualifier might well be added to the data regarding the generalate of Fr. Francis Borgia (1565–72), since it coincided with the papacy of the Dominican pope, St. Pius V (1566–72). Because he followed the traditional scholastic notion of final vows as incardinating into his community a candidate for holy orders, he required that all Jesuits profess final vows before ordination. So the practice during Father Borgia's generalate was to profess all candidates for ordination with three solemn vows (poverty, chastity, and obedience). After further testing and tertianship, some would be called to the Profession of the Fourth Vow, which the others, though professed, would effectively remain spiritual coadjutors. This practice ended with the death of Pope Pius, but the option to allow the spiritual coadjutors to be professed of three vows remains ensconced in the Constitutions.

During the long generalate of Father Acquaviva, many practices in the Society of Jesus were institutionalized. The *Ratio studiorum* of 1586 created the examination during philosophy studies that would determine whether a Jesuit would be allowed to follow the full course of studies in theology (and have the opportunity for the Profession of Four

Vows). Thus the criteria regarding length and depth of studies articulated by Saint Ignatius remained, but was institutionalized by means of a test that determined who might have the opportunity to complete those studies.²⁹ Reactions to this early edition of the *Ratio* concluded that this method made the selection of one's grade in the Society of Jesus too early and too definitively.³⁰ It was nevertheless retained.

What appears to occur, then, in the formative years of the Society of Jesus is the creation of a grade of membership (the Spiritual Coadjutor) which does not have a precedent in other religious orders of priests.³¹ If Ignatius saw this as a temporary situation, he never stated it explicitly. Instead, it seems that the distinction in grades arose out of the extent of studies made by those young priests, either before or after entering the Society of Jesus. Ironically, it would appear that, according to his own criteria Saint Ignatius himself would not have qualified for Profession of Four Vows!³² Almost immediately, during the generalate of Ignatius's successor, another interpretation of the Constitutions was put forth by Fr. Jerome Nadal. This raised the criteria for profession significantly with the goal of creating a smaller and more elite cadre of professed. By emphasizing a higher standard of theology, this interpretation suggested that the role of the professed was more closely tied to the missions traditionally undertaken by the Society at the behest of the hierarchy of the Church.³³ In spite of the acceptance of this interpretation by the general congregations, both Father General Laínez and his successor, Father Borgia, called more men to the Profession of Four Vows than to that of the Spiritual Coadjutor. Only with Father General Mercurian does the ratio approach 50–50. But tying the solemn profession to the successful completion of theology became the principal criterion for the next four centuries.

²⁹Dumeige, *De mente*, 2.

³⁰Lukács, "De gradum diversitate," 286–87.

³¹Dumeige, *De mente*, 3–4.

³²Ignatius completed the Arts course at Paris and obtained the Master's degree. But he did not complete theology studies, reading the last year of theology privately during his sojourn in Venice.

³³Dumeige, *De mente*, 9.

Despite the higher standards of success in theology, the number of professed in relationship to spiritual coadjutors continued to grow from Father Acquaviva through Fr. Lorenzo Ricci. By the time of the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, 95 percent of the priests receiving final vows were professed of four vows. If Nadal's interpretation of the "Formula of the Institute" and the Constitutions remained operative in providing the criteria for profession, what else could explain the steady decline in the number of spiritual coadjutors? Perhaps Father Lukács's thesis that theological education within the Society continued to improve consistently during this period explains the steady change.³⁴

But the clarifications made by the early general congregations regarding where the professed could live while following the stricter vow of poverty may also have had an impact on the numbers. GC 6 began this process by allowing the professed to live in colleges. Given the rapid expansion of schools alongside the very slow growth of professed houses, this concession opened the possibility of a larger number of professed. By including those "outstanding in the humane letters" for profession, GC 6 also legitimated the ministry of the professed as teachers in Jesuit schools. The Ninth General Congregation (1649) also clarified the criteria for profession, including those who excelled in Greek and Hebrew.³⁵ Aptitude for governance (that is, someone who might well be called to be a provincial) also became an alternative criterion for profession. While the professed were still encouraged to desire and actually given missions to the Indies and elsewhere, their assignment to the schools became the norm. The Eighth General Congregation (1645–46), however, decreed that the professed should not be "procurators" (a term that applied to an office similar to treasurer and/or fund raiser, it designated someone who attended to the financial and legal business

³⁴We might presume that the "conspicuous learning" as interpreted by Nadal was relative to the education of all clerics rather than just those in the Society. Otherwise the percentage of those professed of four vows would have settled to around 20 percent, since one was expected to pass the examination *ad gradum* in at least the top twentieth percentile (8/10). But the criterion of comparison was never articulated by a general congregation.

³⁵GC 9, d. 32 (p. 309).

of the Society and her works). This also provides a significant first, a distinctive position reserved to the spiritual coadjutor.³⁶

By the early-seventeenth century, Nadal's interpretation of the professed as an elite cadre within the larger body of the Society of Jesus had effectively ceased in practice. With the exception of procurator or treasurer, the professed Jesuit could be found in most of the ministries of the Society, and the spiritual coadjutor also found himself being sent on mission in many of the same ways as the professed and the brothers (though they were excluded from government of a province or higher office in the Society).³⁷ While testing led to the option for a shorter or longer course in theology, with the former reserved for those destined to be spiritual coadjutors, the data seems to indicate that in practice a steadily increasing number of candidates qualified for the Profession of Four Vows. Yet, as we shall see, after the period of the suppression, this lived experience appears to have been forgotten in favor of the interpretation given by Father Nadal.

VI. The Restored Society

Following the over forty years of the suppression of the Society of Jesus (1773–1814), the primary goal of the new government of the Society of Jesus was to return as faithfully as possible to the identity and practice of the early Society. Not surprisingly, one of the key instruments for accomplishing this goal was Nadal's *Commentary on the Constitutions*. Attention was also paid to the decrees of the early

³⁶In research for another article, I came across a misfiled *informatio* for a young Jesuit in seventeenth-century Naples. Although he had all the qualifications to be professed of four vows, because he had experience working with his merchant father before entering the Society, it was recommended that he be given the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor, so that he could serve as a procurator. Unfortunately, he died of the plague before being advanced to final vows.

³⁷The travel of Brother Benito de Goes, S.J., from the Moghul Court in India to China between October 1602 and Christmas 1605 is an interesting example of a papally inspired mission undertaken by a brother. His journey was taken at the command of his superiors as a means of finding a land passage to that mission, something of interest to the papacy. Spiritual coadjutors were also often sent on missions to the Indies by Father General. They, too, would respond to the Society's obedience to the Holy See with regard to mission as a corporate body.

general congregations, which, as we have seen, institutionalized Nadal's interpretation as definitive, but also conceded profession to those Jesuits outstanding in fields other than theology. The distinction in the theology curriculum based on early examinations enshrined in the *Ratio studiorum* also returned to the practice of the Restored Society.

The Restored Society also had to address those who spoke ill (*ab-ecte*) of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor. The Twenty-First General Congregation (1829) decreed that "[t]he distinction of grades and indifference of soul towards these grades is a substantial characteristic of the Society."³⁸ Yet the sense that this grade was inferior remained among many in the Society of Jesus, and oral history to our own days underlines that, despite decrees and requests to the contrary, this attitude has not disappeared.

Of the many charts Father Lukács prepared for his article, one was prepared but not published. In his published article, Father Lukács presented the proportions of professed and spiritual coadjutors in the whole Society from Fathers General Ignatius to Ricci. But he had also prepared a table covering the whole history of the Society at the time (from 1541–1965).³⁹ What the data clearly show is that the Restored Society clearly took Nadal's interpretation as definitive and adjusted the ratio of professed to spiritual coadjutors accordingly. Yet even following this interpretation, the highest percentage of those given the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor was 65.3 percent under Father General Włodimir Ledóchowski (1915–42). This additional information would clearly support the interpretation given by Father Lukács that it was Nadal's influence in his commentaries rather than the mind of Ignatius that influenced practice in the Restored Society, at least until the mid-twentieth century.

The fact that GC 31 had received so many *postulata* concerning the distinction of grades revealed a growing sense that such a distinction was no longer consonant with the reality of the Church in the mod-

³⁸GC 21, d. 22 (p. 442).

³⁹The copy that I publish here was taken from Father Lukács's personal papers after his death in 1998 and was given to me by Fr. Laszlo Szilas, at that time the director of the Jesuit Historical Institute. I am extremely grateful for having had the privilege of living and working with both of these men as well as Father Aldama. This article reflects my esteem and gratitude for them and their work.

ern world. One delegate to the congregation from India compared the distinction to the caste system in his country and vehemently called for its abolition.⁴⁰ But because such a change touched a substantial part of the Institute, a two-thirds majority of the delegates would have to vote to propose the change, and approval would have to be obtained from the Holy See.⁴¹ After briefly returning to the question in the second session of the congregation, the delegates decided that too much time would be needed to adequately study and discuss the question in the light of the recent decrees from the Vatican Council. They therefore decreed that a commission be named to carry on that study and discussion, in order that the next congregation could decide whether to abolish the distinction “in law or practice.”

Since GC 32 was unable to discuss the question from the canonical perspective, the option to end the distinction of grades could only be accomplished through the practice of the general. It would remain, then, in the hands of subsequent generals to apply the criteria established by GC 31 according to their own lights. Based on data made available by the current Secretary of the Society and current as of February 3, 2015, Father Lukács’s chart may be extended to the present as follows.

Ratio of Professed of 4 Vows and Spiritual Coadjutors in Contemporary S.J. (1965–2014)				
	Arrupe 1965–1981	Dezza 1981–1983	Kolvenbach 1983–2008	Nicolás 2008–
Professed	77.4	84.9	88.0	72.3
Coadjutors	22.6	15.1	12	27.7

I wish to thank Fr. Ignacio Echarte, S.J., secretary of the Society of Jesus, and his sub-secretary, Fr. Agnelo Mascarenhas, S.J., for their

⁴⁰ Taken from *Lettres du Bas-Canada*, trans. James P. Jurich, in “31st General Congregation: The Letters from the Second Session,” *Woodstock Letters*, 98 (1969): 25.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* The report of the French Canadian delegate also intimated that Pope Paul VI was becoming concerned with the direction being taken by the general congregation, and had expressed this privately to Father General Arrupe.

assistance in obtaining these data. Thanks are owed as well to Brother Charlie Jackson, S.J., who provided the initial data from Father General Arrupe and the first years of Father General Kolvenbach.

It is interesting to note that Father General Arrupe's percentage of professed only climbed to 77.4 percent in the eighteen years of his generalate. An asterisk might also be placed by his data as well, since he implemented the decree of GC 31 and reevaluated the status of a substantial number of spiritual coadjutors and called them to the Profession of Four Vows. One explanation for the larger percentage of spiritual coadjutors might be the brief continuation of the shorter course in theology as formation continued to be restructured following GC 31 and Vatican II. Nevertheless, the trend towards professing young Jesuits with four vows began to increase.

The marked difference between the generalates of Father General Peter Hans Kolvenbach (1983–2008), and Father General Adolfo Nicolás (2008–) raises the question of why the trend is reversing once again. During the governance of Father Kolvenbach, it was presumed that those admitted into the Society who had successfully completed all the stages of formation met all of the criteria for the Profession of Four Vows. Those called to be spiritual coadjutors, then, would have been exceptions to this presumption. It embraced the hypothesis argued by Father Lukács, that someone whose entire spiritual, intellectual, and religious formation occurred within the Society, would generally be qualified for the fourth vow. It also appeared to reject, at least in part, the interpretation articulated by Father Aldama that, as one progresses through the Society's formation, the criteria become more strict, and therefore that fewer candidates would fulfill the criteria necessary for Profession. While this significantly reduced the percentage of spiritual coadjutors, it did nothing to improve the negative stigma that remained attached to the grade among many Jesuits. Because of the emphasis on obtaining all the qualities necessary for Profession, the Spiritual Coadjutor continued to be defined more as a nonfulfillment of those criteria rather than as a positive grade in the Society in its own right.

On September 7, 2009, the newly elected general, Father Adolfo Nicolás, wrote to major superiors, clarifying his perspective on crite-

ria for final vows.⁴² In this letter, Father General noted a lack of a universal practice regarding the criteria for final vows. He asserts, once again with several of his predecessors, “that those who are admitted to final vows, no matter their grade . . . are completely embraced and esteemed by the Society of Jesus as dear brothers and companions.” Acknowledging the diverse gifts that each Jesuit brings to the Society, he cautions against any “images of discrimination, social distinctions, academic elitism, or any other limited criteria.”⁴³ Father Nicolás then cites the *Complementary Norms* (no. 121) approved at the Thirty-Fourth General Congregation (1995) which amplified decree 11 of GC 31. GC 34 added to the previous criteria outlined in GC 31 “availability for missions and ministries of the Society” and a requirement of “sufficient . . . health” for apostolic mobility.⁴⁴ Accompanying Father General’s letter was a new schema for gathering this information on a Jesuit being considered for final vows. It appears that this perspective returns to the distinction of grades as one of talents (adding availability) for Jesuit ministries (to which Father Nicolás further adds a particular emphasis on the Spiritual Exercises, echoing Pope Benedict XVI’s allocution to GC 35).

Given the broader approach to the “outstanding level of learning” required for profession of four vows, the turn to availability takes on increasing importance. Father Nicolás also reminds those who will propose candidates for final vows to him that profession of four vows does not simply rest in the ability “to take part in our Mission,” since all members of the Society of Jesus do so according to their particular gifts, but those professed of four vows also have a particular responsibility “to care for and guarantee the preservation and well-being of our Institute.”⁴⁵ It is for this reason that profession is followed by a series of promises that touch on this requirement.⁴⁶ Finally, Father Nicolás reminds the superiors of no. 122 of the *Complementary Norms*, which outlines the process by which a Spiritual Coadjutor who subsequently dis-

⁴²ARSI, 24 (2009): 777–86.

⁴³Ibid., 777.

⁴⁴See *ConCN, Complementary Norms*, pt. V, no. 121, 5° (p. 199).

⁴⁵ARSI 24 (2009): 778.

⁴⁶These promises would theoretically also be made by those professed of three vows should that grade be utilized (see *Complementary Norms*, pt. V, nos. 134, 135 [pp. 27, 209]).

plays all of the characteristics might be subsequently proposed for the Profession of Four Vows.⁴⁷

The clarifications made by Father General Nicolás in his letter underline the reality that the distinction in grades between Spiritual Coadjutor and Professed of Four Vows has not disappeared in either law or practice. The spiritual coadjutors called to final vows in recent years are less likely to point to an objective evaluation of a deficit in learning or talent for Jesuit ministries than in the era when the *examen ad gradum* provided those data. Therefore, some of the same incomprehension and confusion about its significance for the particular charisms of this grade can be found in present interpretations as have been found in other periods of the history of the Society. The lack of a clear enunciation of what particular gifts and charisms the spiritual coadjutor brings to the whole Society of Jesus gives rise to a misconception of this grade as inferior, a lack of the qualities required for profession.⁴⁸ What decree 7 of GC 34 accomplished for the brothers in the Society of Jesus has not been done for the spiritual coadjutor. In part this can be explained by a desire on the part of many Jesuits to simply abolish it, as well as the limitations placed on discussing the matter at key moments in previous general congregations. It might therefore be time to take up these questions of grades once again.

⁴⁷ *Complementary Norms*, pt. V, no. 122 (pp. 199, 201). Unfortunately, no instruction is given in the letter or *Complementary Norms* as to when or how often this process might be undertaken. In fact major superiors do not often keep track of who is a spiritual coadjutor or what characteristic was judged to be lacking in him. It is a question that came to the attention of Father General Arrupe and his councilors in the years following the Thirty-First General Congregation when many Jesuits were being evaluated by this process. At that time it was clearly determined that the initiative should come from the superior rather than the spiritual coadjutor. At that time most, if not all, of the spiritual coadjutors were reevaluated.

⁴⁸ Some would argue that this was, in fact, the intention of St. Ignatius in making a series of grades in the Society of Jesus that would reflect a Thomistic/Aristotelian notion of an increasing service of the universal good or end of the Company. Even if this were explicitly the case, the number and permanence of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor (like that of the Professed of Three Vows) remain a legitimate question.

VII The Distinction of Grades Today

Should the next general congregation, called for October 2016, decide to take up this complex question, there are several points to keep in mind. Since the questions regarding the distinction of grades necessarily touch on the nature of the Institute, the Holy Father must be involved at some point in the process. While the question of abolishing the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor *in law* may have been suspended by previous popes, permission to discuss the question might still be allowed. This permission should be sought from the Holy Father out of respect for the previous pontiff. In any case a discussion and perhaps a more definitive articulation of the particular charisms of the Spiritual Coadjutor might also help develop the unique identity of this grade and its contribution to the mission of the Society of Jesus.

Other options might also be discussed without touching the Institute. The general congregation might take up the question of making the vows of the Spiritual Coadjutor the Solemn Profession of Three Vows. This would eliminate the Spiritual Coadjutor as a grade, but reestablish the Professed of Three Vows, and potentially extend the five simple promises to all the priests in the Society (the first ones regarding poverty might also be made by the brothers so that all members of the Company would promise to safeguard poverty in the Society). While this would bring the vows in line with the Code of Canon Law of 1983, there would still need to be a more positive articulation of the intended role and particular qualities of those who would not make the fourth vow.

If a discussion on the nature of the Spiritual Coadjutor and/or Professed of Three Vows does take place, several questions might further direct that discussion. The most important question would be what particular charisms might be identified as characteristic of the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor. The historical review revealed only one specific office closed to the Professed in favor of the Spiritual Coadjutor, that of procurator (i.e., a treasurer or fund raiser, someone who is concerned with the business affairs of a province). This might indicate that the spiritual coadjutor might be someone with the practical skills of financial administration and fund raising. Recent congregations have addressed the *Statutes on Poverty* and diminished the limitations on the professed holding positions in this regard. Nevertheless, this is one

clear qualification that was at one time particular to the spiritual coadjutor.

Given the most recent turn towards the charism of availability for “missions and ministries of the Society,” one might assume that another possible charism is an occupation or specific talent for research or particular commitment to a ministry or place that would encourage the Society to free the person from the wider availability implied by the fourth vow. Thus someone whose research or particular role requires stability in an institution might be an apt candidate for the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor. Of course those men who suffer prematurely from significant health issues might also be given this grade until their health allowed for the greater mobility required for profession. In all these cases should the need arise for them to move into internal governance in the Society, which remains reserved to those professed of four vows, they would necessarily be called to it. While the spiritual coadjutors may now vote and be elected to the provincial and general congregations and so have a role in the governance of the Society, they might still be occasionally evaluated for aptitude for governance and, if called to that role, be reconsidered for Profession of the Fourth Vow. This should be seen, not as a promotion into a hierarchy of governance, but as an assurance that all who have roles in the governance of the Society also make the promises important to the preservation of the Institute, particularly in regard to poverty, as well as enjoy the special bond of unity to the Holy See with regard to mission.

Another instrument that remains available to aid the discernment of this question would be the grade of Professed of Three Vows. It remains a grade existing in the “Formula of the Institute” but not currently in practice. Pope St. Pius V required its use in the sixteenth century when he insisted on solemn profession by all Jesuits before their ordination. Saint Ignatius appears to have seen it as an intermediate grade to which the spiritual coadjutor might be called out of devotion. Pope St. John Paul II also suggested to GC 34 that the grade of Spiritual Coadjutor might be considered as including those solemnly professed of three vows as defined in the new Code of Canon Law, though this appears not to have been taken up by that congregation. Thus it could be possible to have all Jesuits ultimately solemnly professed of three or four vows.

A document or decree on the Spiritual Coadjutor might also provide an opportunity to emphasize the common qualities of all Jesuits called to final vows, and to underline the abnegation and humility which allows one to be placed by the Society where God and his Church might best be served. Regarding the missions of the professed, especially in governance, as an opportunity for simple service and not preference makes it easier to propose that the missions of the other grades, too, emerge from a spirit of humble service. No matter what the outcome of any eventual discussion and discernment on the diversity of grades, a better understanding of the history and complexity of this aspect of the Society should be sought for all Jesuits. By studying and understanding the important contributions and authentic sanctity of spiritual coadjutors in the past, Jesuits might be more able to fulfil the request of Father Nicolás to banish discrimination, elitism, or any implication of a superior/inferior distinction between all the grades.⁴⁹ This would help to accomplish the *aggiornamento* sought for religious orders by *Perfectæ caritatis* and perhaps finally bring to a close the unfinished business of the last half-century.

⁴⁹ Among the more famous spiritual coadjutors remains St. John Francis Regis (1597–1640), who left off completing his theology studies because of the great need for preachers in the missions of rural France. One of the North American Martyrs, St. Jean de Brebeuf (1593–1649), was also a spiritual coadjutor. In both cases their availability and competence for the mission of the Society was never in doubt.

Appendix

Proportio inter professos 4 votorum et coadiutores spirituales in universa Societate (1541-1965)

Professus	4 votorum	Coadiutores	Proportio
Ignatius	92	8	11.6
Lainez	884	74.9	24.9
Borgia	751	53.2	46.8
Mencurian	532	51.9	42.1
Aquaviva	519	64.1	35.9
Vitelleschi	641	70.2	29.8
Carrafa	702	69	31
Piccolomini	69	67.7	32.3
Gottifredi	67.7	78.1	21.9
Nickel	78.1	77.8	22.1
de Noyelle	80.2	76.1	19.8
Gonzalez	76.1	85.5	20.9
Tamburini	85.5	88.8	14.5
Retz	88.8	90.8	14.2
Visconti	90.8	90.7	9.2
Centurione	90.7	94.9	9.3
Ricci	94.9	81.7	5.1
Brzozowski	81.7	52.6	18.3
Fortis	52.6	40.4	47.4
Roothaan	40.4	37.2	59.6
Beckx	37.2	37.8	62.8
Anderledy	37.8	34.7	62.2
Martin	34.7	35	65.3
Wernz	35	34.7	65
Ledochowski	34.7	41.1	65.3
Janssens	41.1		58.9

Professi 4 votorum

Coadi. spir.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

There is a wonderful wealth of information and intelligence in Fr. John O'Malley's recent essay, "Jesuit Schools and the Humanities Yesterday and Today," *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2015). Grateful as I am for this excellent issue, I must oppose its diminishment of the *Ratio studiorum*.

Fr. O'Malley calls the *Ratio* an "in-house" document, but in fact it is universal and foundational both to the Society of Jesus and to the system of education that was its mega-apostolate for centuries. (See my paper "The Curriculum Carries the Mission" at the point where I say, "However, I would like to go even further to claim that the *Ratio Studiorum* is in fact a foundational document for the Society of Jesus" (http://www.newjesuitreview.org/newjesuitreview/Vol._2,_No._5,_A._2.html). Even the general congregation of 1957 commended it in very strong and universal terms: "All should know well and greatly esteem the *Ratio studiorum* and its method and rules should be carefully observed in the education of our young men."

At the end of his essay, Fr. O'Malley says that the *Ratio* was

hopelessly out of date in the Restored Society. But Father General Roothan also gave it the greatest respect in his cover letter to the (non-binding) version of 1832, and the document remained a perceptibly significant force at least all the way to GC 30 and beyond, insofar as Jesuit formation was structured on Letters, Philosophy, and Theology. It was only with the Society's 1960's suppression of the Juniorate that this framework was explicitly broken down.

Today we need some radical re-discovery of the *RS*'s genius and values. Our culture seem to have lost not only the substance of the *RS* but almost any specific idea of structure and content as well—not a very good outcome for us or our students or the Church. The Society of Jesus cannot be what it is without an intelligent recovery of this defining foundational document. With that recovery, we can hope for an adequate and appropriate translation of it into our formational and educational institutions.

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