

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN THE *SPIRITUAL EXERCISES*

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“Ne ullae reliquiae in nobis residuae sint illius pelagianismi spiritualis, in quem multi non advertentes incidunt . . .”
(Achille Gagliardi, S. J., *Commentarii in Exercitia Spiritualia*, p. 74).

NOT the least attractive side of the formal study of the *Spiritual Exercises* as an ascetic document is that it can be made the focus of many of the theoretical problems that arise for the student of ascetical theology. From the days of Melchior Cano down to Henri Bremond the *Exercises* have been a sign of contradiction to many Catholics, who have levelled against them strictures of the greatest diversity, varying in their severity from “heretical” to merely “obsolete.” Conversely, apart from official Papal approval, the *Exercises* have never failed to raise up champions. Rightly regarded as the corporate heritage of a religious order which has always been jealous of its orthodoxy, the *Exercises* have found apologists from Doctor Ortiz to Brou and Grandmaison and Cavallera. One could, doubtless as a *tour de force*, write a history of the spiritual trends of the last four centuries against the backdrop of the *Exercises*.

The chief criticisms directed against them stem from those subtle and vexed problems oscillating about the co-operation of man with God in the life of grace. In this problem practice can be as difficult and dangerous as theory: St. Ignatius has been called by Catholic writers, not necessarily in a pejorative sense, a “pragmatist” and a “voluntarist.” A mere cursory reading of the *Exercises* shows that Ignatius did not minimize personal effort and activity, nor shrink from setting down in the book a number of *industriæ* and methods calculated to deploy to their maximum the energies of the human instrument in its co-operation with God. One can list the election, the examen, the methods of prayer, additions and annotations, formulae such as “agendo contra,” “se exercere,” “id quod volo,” a general attitude of control and prevision, etc.—

all of which seem to some Catholics to be an excessive ingercence of human effort, to the prejudice of the divine workings. The result has been that Jesuit spirituality has been taxed with individualism, an arid voluntarism, stoic moralism, and anthropomorphism—all facets of one and the same grievance. As Brou writes:

D'aucuns aiment peu cette façon de faire. Ils souhaiteraient dans la vie spirituelle plus d'abandon. Ils n'oseront pas trop accuser un saint canonisé de semi-pélagianisme; ils se compenseront sur les commentateurs. Du moins trouvent-ils saint Ignace médiocrement augustinien.¹

Father Sierp re-enforces this view:

Es ist mir immer unerfindlich und unbegreiflich gewesen, wie man dem heiligen Ignatius von Loyola eine gewisse Geringschätzung der Gnade, eine Überbetonung des Eigenwirkens, ja sogar eine Hinneigung zum Pelagianismus oder wenigstens Semipelagianismus vorwerfen konnte, und dieser Vorwurf wurde sogar von katholischen Priestern und Ordensleuten erhoben! Man könnte leicht eine Reihe Namen nenne.²

A grievance that is akin to the preceding one lies in the alleged extrinsicism of the Ignatian imitation of Christ. The imitation of Christ found in the second, third, and fourth weeks of the *Exercises*, so the charge runs, reduces itself in practice to a moral mimetism not unlike Carlylian hero-worship. Father Plus puts the objection in the following terms:

Un reproche que l'on entend parfois: la pratique des vertus telle que l'enseignent les Jésuites ne semble guère mettre en leur vraie lumière les grandes doctrines: l'élévation surnaturelle et l'incorporation à Jesus-Christ. . . . La spiritualité des Jésuites insiste sur le Christ-modèle et sur le Christ-entraîneur, mais néglige un peu le Christ-vie.³

Thus, the mediation of Christ tends to become, as is the case with the Protestants, purely exemplary rather than efficient and final.

It is clear that there are in the spiritual spectrum many shades between the two extremes of Pelagianism and Quietism.⁴ The critics of Jesuit spirituality would never be guilty of the ineptitude

¹ *Les Exercices Spirituels* (Paris: Téqui, 1922), p. 169.

² *Die Hochschule der Gottesliebe* (Warendorf, 1935), I, 86.

³ *Vers Dieu par s. Ignace* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1938), pp. 90, 98.

⁴ Cf. L. de Grandmaison, S. J., *Personal Religion* (Herder, 1929), pp. 77-79; 87-93.

of making out St. Ignatius to be heterodox; what they do find in Ignatian doctrine are tendencies and emphases that are in danger of upsetting our spiritual balance in the direction of Pelagianism, a complex of centrifugal forces that tend to shoot away from the true center of Catholic equilibrium.

THE NATURE OF THE *SPIRITUAL EXERCISES*

Before we can begin to sift these criticisms, there are preliminary questions to be handled which will serve as prologomena to our main discussion. First of all, it is beyond our purpose to defend the *Exercises* as they have been presented and elaborated by some commentators in the course of their long history. Just as much that has been written "ad mentem divi Thomae" is not Thomistic, so too much that has been put forth "secundum methodum S. Ignatii" is not Ignatian. There is no one who has complained more bitterly of the "Exercitiorum corruptores"⁵ than Father Roothaan, and a modern student of the *Exercises* can write: "Que, parmi les commentateurs des Exercices, il se soit rencontré des 'forgerons', c'est indiscutable, et personne n'eût blâmé M. Bremond de leur faire leur procès."⁶ It is not to be thought that these aberrations have been irremediable, but it is quite true to say that the *Exercises* have at times been conceived in an illiberal and narrow spirit quite foreign to the suppleness and breadth of their author. For such commentators we have no brief.

Secondly, we must recall that the spiritual doctrine of St. Ignatius does not mark an eccentric phenomenon in the history of spirituality. The *Exercises* had their links with Christian tradition, and were not wholly uninfluenced by the currents of thought and life of the milieu in which they came into being. The internal logic of St. Ignatius' doctrine forces us to conclude to the objective reality of these relationships and affinities; whether or no the saint was conscious of them is a matter from which we can prescind.

Let us consider first the place the *Exercises* have in the history of the development of Christian asceticism. Father Böminghaus believes that it was the Ignatian genius to effect a fusion of the

⁵ The question of Roothaan's own influence on the interpretation of the *Exercises* is a difficult one, not yet fully explored.

⁶ J. Lebreton, S. J., *Etudes*, CXCVIII (1929), 549.

spiritual forces represented by the *Devotio Moderna* with the spiritual forces embodied in the Franciscan School, by applying the ascetico-psychological methods of the former to the experiential evangelicism of Francis of Assisi.⁷ The nexus with the *Devotio Moderna* is obvious enough, but the coupling of Ignatius and Francis of Assisi may seem unreal to those who reflect only on the temperaments of the two men and not on their inward spirit. Would not Francis have recognized the third degree of humility?

If now we turn to the relations in which Ignatius stood to the semi-Christian and anti-Catholic movements of his own day, we find that this welding of psychological finesse to a passionate love of Christ is not without its impact on that ferment of ideas which we now term the Renaissance. The Renaissance man (and he is the modern man) was born on the ruins of medieval Christianity. As one writer puts it:

Au xvi^e siècle un homme nouveau vint au monde, qui lisait et qui discutait, qui interrogeait la nature et voulait la dompter, un homme inquiet, pressé, curieux de lui-même et des autres, indépendant et chercheur, artiste et averti, qui avait ses pudeurs et ses secrets, individualiste aussi et critique, amoureux de l'antiquité pour mieux prendre barre sur l'avenir. Cet être douloureux et fier, il fallait une fois encore en faire un chrétien: entreprise difficile et presque désespérée, car des traits sommaires que nous venons d'indiquer, si aucun n'est absolument mauvais, combien sont en marge du christianisme proprement dit.⁸

The religious and moral education of these tormented and introspective souls presented a problem the Church had to face, and the ascetic tactics and pedagogy of the Middle Ages were not wholly equal to the task. In the Middle Ages, as Masure says, "l'ascétisme fait partie de la vie de la cité, et le fidèle du Moyen-Age exhibe violemment en public sa vie religieuse."⁹

Moreover, there was the danger with the medieval man of attaching an excessive importance to the material component of any pious work or act—pilgrimages, shrines, the cultus of the saints, processions, etc. This materialization of religion is always a danger, and in practice it comes to a denial of the law of

⁷ Cf. E. Böminghaus, S. J., *Die Ascese der ignatianischen Exercitien* (Freiburg: Herder, 1927), pp. 13 ff.

⁸ E. Masure, in *Mélanges Watrigant* (Collection de la Bibliothèque des Exercices, nn. 61-62 [1920]), p. 84.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

liberty promulgated by St. Paul, "omnia vestra sunt."¹⁰ In other words, the Christianity of the Middle Ages was too literal. St. Ignatius interposed and taught both in theory and practice that, the sacraments apart, grace is not attached essentially to any determined series of works, and that the good news of the New Testament is not necessarily circumscribed to any definite mode of life. This teaching is only a corollary of St. Ignatius' doctrine on means and end, and comes down to an affirmation of the total penetrability of nature by grace.¹¹ The Renaissance was more than classical antiquarianism; it was rather an immature neo-paganism, equivalently a denial of the fall of man, a distorted belief in the goodness of human nature. Ignatius countered with a declaration of total human dependence on God, but a dependence that was not dishonorable or hostile to legitimate human aspirations, for it was grounded on the belief that grace could heal and sublimate all human values. This temperate optimism, coupled with a skillful ascetic pedagogy, was the Ignatian riposte to that current of ideas and values we call today the Age of Humanism or the Renaissance.

The Protestant Reformation is not without its relation to the *Exercises*. Although the *Exercises* were written, in their main outline, long before their author came into direct contact with the new heresies in the university world at Paris, still the likelihood is not to be denied that certain modalities of thought and expression owe their provenance to the Reformation. It is very probable that the "Regulae sentiendi cum Ecclesia" were modelled on the Articles drawn up in 1535 by the Sorbonne against the Lutherans,¹² and it is certain that these rules are directed against Lutheranism and Calvinism,—and that, too, in matters of grace which now engage our attention. Suarez offers us the following interesting comment on the fourteenth and seventeenth of these rules: "Hoc ergo ipsum quod faciendum praemonuit S. Ignatius, usu et exercitio in suo opere (i.e., the Exercises) observavit. . . ."¹³ The basic

¹⁰ Cf. *Christus*, ed. J. Huby, S. J. (5me éd.; Paris: Beauchesne, 1927), pp. 12.12 ff.

¹¹ Cf. *Constitutiones Societatis Iesu*, Pars X, n. 3. Surely the "Contemplatio ad Amorem" means that all things have been redeemed, and that the world is not a barrier keeping us from God, but a meeting place with Him.

¹² Cf. H. Watrigant, S. J., *La Genèse des Exercices* (Amiens, 1897), p. 71 ff.

¹³ *De Spiritualibus Exercitiis S. Ignatii* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1909), p. 79.

metaphysical error of Lutheranism is an exaggerated dualism between an infinite God and finite man, a dualism which saves the transcendence of God at the expense of denigrating all human powers and capacities. This metaphysical error is paralleled by the dogmatic error of an exaggerated dualism between nature and grace.¹⁴ Luther regarded it as impossible that any work of man should also be a work of God, and so we have the doctrine of extrinsic justification. The Ignatian answer is clear; and yet we may ask ourselves, if Ignatius had written at the time of the Pelagian heresy, would he have written exactly as he did?

Moreover, to avoid misunderstanding, it is well to premise some general truths about the nature and purpose of the *Spiritual Exercises* as they were conceived by St. Ignatius. The *Exercises* have been the starting-point of an abundance of *Florilegia Ignatiana*, and similar ascetic writings, which, while doubtless a legitimate accommodation of the original text, are no more the *Exercises* in their radical bearing than is an accommodated sense of Sacred Scripture the inspired literal sense. It is only of the original "Long Retreat" that we speak, and we accept the interpretation of it given by P. de Grandmaison and P. de Guibert. In this sense the *Exercises* are not a book in our ordinary concept of the word, much less a book containing a complete theory of spiritual theology. In fact, it is dubious if the *Exercises* would ever have been printed in Ignatius' lifetime, were not this the only way to secure formal Papal approbation. His concern was not to sponsor the diffusion of a book but to form a generation of expert retreat masters who would in turn pass on the Ignatian skill to those who were to follow them. The *Exercises* are a living method, a practical manual, a grammar of election, and it is with this understanding that one must confront the inert text. An illiberal bibliolatry should not be a Catholic vice, and much less a Jesuit vice where the *Exercises* are concerned. Moreover, the very fact that the *Exercises* are a manual dealing with a highly complex art discounts any pretensions that they are exhaustive and cover all possible contingencies. "Les Exercices sont tout en points de départ," says P. Théodore de Régnon. All this is further complicated by the fact that St. Ignatius did not possess literary gifts of the

¹⁴ Cf. E. Mersch, S. J., *Le Corps Mystique du Christ* (Louvain: Museum Lessianum, 1933), II, 238-44.

first order, as did Francis de Sales or John of the Cross. Indeed, the composition of his *Exercises* may seem to some not only jejune but also confused.

It is clear, then, that the *Exercises* are not to be interpreted facetly by any cursory reader. It is interesting to reflect that St. Ignatius himself, at the instance of some of the early Fathers, started work on a Directory to the *Exercises*, and that the First General Congregation decreed the compilation of a Directory which was finally realized under Aquaviva in 1599. In fact, the book of the *Exercises* has been called an *Urdirectorium*, a very suggestive and accurate term.¹⁵

If the *Exercises* are an *Urdirectorium*, it follows that under God their success is due to the suppleness and dexterity with which the director uses this spiritual arm, and that he is in reality the soul of the Ignatian *Exercises*. The enormous importance of the function of the retreat master is evident from the role which the Directory assigns him;¹⁶ and Gagliardi says, "In applicatione vero, quae doctrina spiritualis potest appellari, omnia fere Exercitia ipsius dantis prudentiae committit."¹⁷

We must recall, too, that St. Ignatius was not a theorist but a practitioner of the spiritual life, and that the bias of his mind was toward the real rather than toward the notional:

Notons au passage un tour d'esprit caractéristique de s. Ignace. Il n'a rien d'abstrait. Il est tout entier tourné vers les faits. Ce sont des faits qu'il donne à méditer, plus que des doctrines: le fait de notre dépendance à l'égard de Dieu, le fait de nos péchés, le fait de l'enfer, le fait de l'appel des âmes par Jésus-Christ, tous les faits de l'Évangile, etc.¹⁸

Suarez, too, warns us that "illud opus per se et ex instituto non esse ad theologiam doctrinam tradendam."¹⁹ What Suarez and Brou say of the *Exercises* is true more or less of all of St. Ignatius' writings; they were dictated by occasion and need, and not constitutive of a formal didactic treatise on Christian perfection.

We may, then, expect to find very little dogma or theology in a "pure" state in the *Exercises*; it is, of course, present, but *in actu*

¹⁵ P. Sinthern, S. J., *Studien zu den Exercitien des hl. Ignatius* (Innsbruck: Rauch, 1925), I, 49.

¹⁶ Cf. *Directory to the Spiritual Exercises* (Manresa Press, 1925), pp. 10-11, 23, 100-101.

¹⁷ *Commentarii in Exercitia Spiritualia* (Brugis: Desclée, 1882), p. 4; cf. pp. 40-41, 43, 46-47.

¹⁸ A. Brou, S. J., *op. cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

exercito rather than *signate*. Now, it is a commonplace that all ascetical and spiritual pedagogy must have a dogmatic basis under pain of forfeiting its right to the name of Catholic; and it is equally true that all the major dogmas of the Christian economy must articulate the structure of any school of spirituality that is Catholic. The modern simplicist tendency to label schools of spirituality as, e.g., "anthropocentric" rather than "theocentric," is indicative of shades of emphases rather than of affirmations or negations of dogma; else we have heresy. The essential truths of the Christian life are the same for all. We go to God through Christ in His Body which is the Church; we can do nothing without Christ's grace and are never quit of the effort to co-operate faithfully with the grace of Christ; all our spiritual life is a work of purification, which leads to union with God; prayer, abnegation, humility, faith, trust in God and mistrust of self, with charity having the primacy over all—none of these elements can be absent from any true Catholic school of spirituality. One school of spirituality differs from another by its emphases, by the prominence which any one or several of these truths occupy in the conscious spiritual strivings of its adherents.

In this connection we must remember that in schools of Catholic spirituality there are two distinct, not contradictory but complementary, propensities or attitudes toward dogma and theology as the basis of spiritual living. One is more speculative and puts great stress on explicit dogmatic and theological truths, whilst the other is more experiential and intuitive, satisfying its piety with the evangelical accounts of Our Lord's words and works. Thus, for instance, in their devotion to the Passion, many of the faithful meditate on the Gospel account of what and how much Christ has suffered for our sins, and thus stir up affections of gratitude, repentance, etc.; but, in so doing, they focus their spiritual eyes on the material element of the satisfactory and redemptive work of Christ. Whereas, on the other hand, a spirituality with a more conscious dogmatic tendency would emphasize more the formal element in Our Lord's Passion, i.e., *caritas erga Deum et homines*, and place less stress on the sensible aspects of Our Lord's Passion, e.g., the instruments of the Passion.²⁰ The same tendencies

²⁰ Cf. P. Galtier, S. J., *De Incarnatione et Redemptione* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1926), pp. 397-98, 407-8.

can be seen at work in the Berullian School's adhesion to the inner states of Christ, and the more literal Franciscan imitation of Christ with its watchword, "Evangelium sine glossa." Each way has its advantages, and shortcomings. The more intuitive and directly evangelical school is prone to conceive of divine things in too human a way; yet it has the enormous advantage of never losing from its sight the scandal of the Cross and the mystery of suffering. It is interesting to reflect that de Guibert believes that the *Exercises* belong to the more empirical and intuitive tendency.²¹

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE

There are several ways which we might adopt in our investigation of St. Ignatius' doctrine on grace. We could, for example, examine each passage in the *Exercises* and *Constitutions* where the saint treats explicitly of grace, collate them, and draw conclusions. Again, it would be profitable to study the use Saint Ignatius makes of the principle, "Facienti quod est in se, Deus non denegat gratiam." Or we could study the main lines of St. Ignatius' spiritual doctrine and then attempt to see his doctrine on grace in the perspective of the whole. I have chosen the last method. I repeat that I am not trying to vindicate the orthodoxy of St. Ignatius. That would be superfluous. What I am trying to do is to discover the nuances of St. Ignatius' teaching on grace.

It seems to me fitting to start with a document which, so far as I know, has been strangely neglected by commentators on the *Exercises*—I refer to the letter to the Jesuit scholastics at Coimbra.²² This letter is both hortatory and educative, inasmuch as it is meant to stimulate to greater progress in that markedly apostolic spirituality which is so Ignatian, and is calculated to show how zeal for souls can be exercised in time of studies. It is, I think, an authentic gloss on the *Exercises*: first, because it deals with men who are ideal exercitants, and secondly, because it exhorts them to the perfection of that genre of life which is the ideal term-product of the *Exercises*, i.e., the apostolic. The motivation, which is developed on a very ample dogmatic basis, can be summarized as follows:

²¹ *Theologia Spiritualis* (Romae, 1937), sect. 106-7; cf. his *Etudes de théologie mystique* (Toulouse, 1930), pp. 253 ff.

²² *Epistola S. P. Ignatii ad scholasticos Conimbricenses* (Romae: apud Curiam Praepositi Generalis, 1926); all references are to this edition.

1. The Concept of God: "God, from whom every good thing descends" (p. 1); "from whose infinite liberality every gift and every grace flows" (p. 2); who is "the author of all good" (p. 22), "in His supreme goodness, which is surpassingly communicative of His own goods" (p. 2); who is "infinite goodness" (p. 15); He is "Divine Majesty" (p. 15); "Creator" (*passim*).

2. The Role of Christ: In Christ and through Christ all God's gifts come to us (pp. 13-15); we are instruments of Christ in the spread of His Kingdom (pp. 15-16).

3. The Purpose of Life: to be "co-operators in this lofty work of bringing back God's creatures to Him, as to their last end" (p. 21); "to glorify the Creator and to lead His creatures to Him according to their capacity" (p. 10).

4. The Economy of Providence: "Expend yourselves in uninterrupted sacrifice for the divine glory and the salvation of men, by co-operating with Him; and this, not by example alone, or simply by prayers and desires, but also by other, even external, means, which His divine providence has put within reach, that each man may be a help to all men" (pp. 9-10); "Surely you will see how right it is for you to be equipped for the careful accomplishment of every task, that you may be fit instruments of divine grace" (p. 16); "Fashion yourselves into powerful instruments of divine grace, to be allies (*cooperatores*) of divine grace in this lofty work of leading back God's creatures to Him, their last end" (p. 21); "This work [study], not less than sermons and confessions, can be an instrument for the assistance of the neighbor" (p. 21); "God wills that the immediate cause which He uses as an instrument in shaping others to the form of humility, charity, etc., namely, the preacher or confessor, should be himself humble, patient, clothed with charity. Consequently, while you are yourselves making progress in every virtue, you are being of great help to other men; for the preparation of an instrument adapted to bestow graces on them is accomplished not less but rather more by a virtuous life than by human learning, though the perfect instrument has need of both" (p. 22).

5. Habitual Gifts of Grace: Man has "the gift of His [God's] image, bought back by the life-blood of Jesus Christ" (p. 1); faith is a gift (p. 9); vocation to the Society is also a gift (p. 9); man is by participation in the perfection of God what God is by nature (p. 14); he is "the image of the Most Blessed Trinity and capable of its glory" (p. 16); "members of Jesus Christ" (p. 16); "the living temple of God" (p. 18).

6. Actual Gifts of Grace: "It is certain that on His part He is ready to do this [pour out His gifts in abundance], provided He finds on our part the humble desire to receive His graces, and as soon as He sees that we are

using well gifts already received and are actively and diligently begging for His favor" (p. 8; cf. DB 804); "I beg God our Creator that, as He has been pleased to grant you so great a grace, in calling you, and in giving you the efficacious will to resolve to expend yourself completely in His service (*obsequium*), it may please Him to preserve and increase His gifts in all of you, that you may persevere and urgently press on" (p. 23); cf. the use Ignatius makes of the principle, "Facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam" (pp. 11-12, 20).

For the time being it will suffice for our purpose to call attention to the prominence which St. Ignatius gives to the idea of instrumental co-operation in the service of God. Later in our paper we shall return to a more detailed analysis of this matrix-idea in the spirituality of Ignatius.

Now we turn to the *Exercises* and the *Constitutions* in order to appraise the main lines of Ignatian spiritual teaching, with a view to disengaging from the whole his doctrine on grace.

In any school of spirituality the concept of God must be central and not peripheral, for religion is the living communication of God with man. St. Ignatius speaks much of God under three aspects: He is an absolute Sovereign; He is holy Will; He is infinite Liberality. These three aspects do not merely lie juxtaposed in St. Ignatius's mind; rather, they are firmly articulated one to another. For him, God was an incomparable sovereign,²⁸ "Majestas Divina," to whose service he was passionately devoted; God is the Lord, "Dominus." We are by our very creaturehood God's liegemen, bound to His service in the very roots of our being. The imagery that invests this concept may be military or even feudal, but the truth underlying it is purely divine. And yet we are freedmen in God's service, not serfs, for it has pleased His most holy Will to condescend to each of us, to make each of us the term of one of His particular intentions, to catch up our lives in His life and His work. That God's holy Will is not an abstract law, but is personalized in *Christo et erga nos*, should be clear to one who is penetrated with the internal movement of the *Exercises*. We must not conceive of God's Will in any narrow or circumscribed fashion. It is God's hand resting on the center of our being, and God's voice calling us in the totality of our lives to the realization

²⁸ Cf. J. P. Roothaan, S. J., *Opera Spiritualia* (Romae, 1936), II, 16, n. 10.

of that divine idea which He has cherished of each of us from all eternity. It is the vocation to the fulfillment of the thoughts of God in our regard. God's Will is, then, sheer goodness in the sense in which St. Augustine says, "Nos sumus quia bonus est." Our service of the Divine Majesty reduces itself, as St. Ignatius saw it, to our co-operation with God's holy Will in the interests of His diffusive goodness. That is the Ignatian concept of apostolic service.

This summary analysis of the Ignatian concept of God is, it is clear, somewhat impatient of apodictic proof. Then, too, we are likely to be put off by that alphabetical adage to which, it would seem, many reduce all Ignatian spirituality, the AMDG. Ignatius, we are told, was a man consumed with the idea of the glory of God, so much so that "dans les seules Constitutions, s. Ignace en appelle 259 fois à la plus gloire de Dieu, à peu près une fois par page."²⁴ The phrase, "glory of God," evokes the Augustinian "clara cum laude notitia," especially when it is understood in a very limited and mechanical sense born of a desire to make a real distinction between each member of the Foundation triad, "praise, reverence, and service." How many rhetorical conceits have been wasted on that simple phrase! The belief that AMDG (or equivalent formulas) occurs 259 times in the *Constitutions* is a pious legend. I have made the count myself twice over, and the truth is that Ignatius uses the formula about 135 times—often enough, to be sure. A more significant, and much less well known, fact is this: that locutions such as "ad majus servitium Dei," "ad majus Dei obsequium et animarum auxilium," and their like, are repeated about 157 times in the *Constitutions*. "Service" is the operative word in the Foundation text and in all Ignatian spirituality.²⁵ In St. Ignatius' mind God is *Dominus*, man is *servus*.

This service means, as Ignatius understood it, our co-operation as free instruments in the work of God *ad extra*—that great circular movement of all beings out from God and back to God. Happily, these two formulae, the glory of God and the service of God, are,

²⁴ A. Brou, S. J., *La Spiritualité de s. Ignace* (2me ed.; Paris: Beauchesne, 1928), p. 10.

²⁵ Cf. J. de Guibert, S. J., "La Formation spirituelle des premiers disciples de s. Ignace", (*Gregorianum*, XXI [1940], p. 323): "Ce souci constant du service de Dieu, de sa volonté à connaître et à accomplir, est le fond même des Exercices et l'âme de toute sa spiritualité."

I think, ultimately integrated in the Ignatian school of spirituality. As Billot writes, "In beneficiis enim nobis collatis divina gloria consistit";²⁶ and it is our service to co-operate with the divine goodness in the receiving and giving of His gifts. And so we are always brought back to the goodness of God, *bonitas fontalis* and *finalis*. It was a principle dear to St. Ignatius that God desired only one thing, to give, to communicate His goodness.²⁷ The following saying is attributed to him: "Perpaucos, ac fere vix ullum esse, dicebat, qui perfecte intelligat, quantum Deo volenti in eo operari, ipse impedimento sit, quantum Deus in nobis efficeret, nisi a nobis ipsis impediretur."²⁸ The very first sentence of the *Constitutions* reads, "Quamvis summa Sapientia et *Bonitas* Dei Creatoris ac Domini sit quae conservatura est, gubernatura atque promotura in suo sancto servitio hanc minimam Societatem, ut eam dignata est inchoare. . . ." This analysis of the Ignatian concept of God is, I think, borne out by all the texts.²⁹

Now let us consider the spiritual teaching of St. Ignatius insofar as it is contained in the celebrated consideration on the "Foundation." Ignatius speaks much of "order" and cognate ideas.³⁰ Read, for example, his two definitions of "exercitia spiritualia": "Quilibet modus praeparandi et *disponendi* animam ad tollendas a se omnes affectiones *inordinatas* et, postquam quis eas sustulerit, ad quaerendam et inveniendam voluntatem divinam, in vitae suae *dispositione*, ad salutem animae. . . ." "Exercitia spiritualia, ut homo vincat se ipsum, et *ordinet* vitam suam, quin se determinet ob ullam affectionem, quae *inordinata* sit."

The "Foundation" stands at the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises* as a sort of dogmatic annotation designed to provoke an intensive act of faith in the divinely ordained dynamic order of things. As St. Thomas says: "Omnia autem pertractantur in sacra doctrina [theology] sub ratione Dei, vel quia sunt ipse Deus, vel quia habent ordinem ad Deum ut ad principium et finem";³¹

²⁶ *De Verbo Incarnato* (ed. 4; Romae, 1904), p. 42; it is to be noted that the glory of Christ "consistit in beneficiis nobis collatis."

²⁷ Cf. the first point of the "Contemplatio ad Amorem."

²⁸ *Epistolae, Liber Sententiarum*, (Bologne, 1804), n. 364, p. 596.

²⁹ De Guibert, in the article cited (*Greg.*, XXI [1940], pp. 309-49), implicitly confirms this analysis.

³⁰ Cf. Thibault, *Exercitiorum Spiritualium S. Ignatii Concordantia* (Louvain: apud auctorem, 1921).

³¹ I, q. 1, a. 7 c.

and further: "finis autem hujus doctrinae, in quantum est practica, est beatitudo aeterna."³² The "Foundation" is a *synopsis brevior practica* of the Ignatian theology of things, "ea quae habent ordinem ad Deum ut ad principium et finem"; the complete elaboration of the Ignatian theology of things is reserved to the "Contemplatio ad Amorem." Father Charles writes:

La signification divine, la valeur des choses, de toutes choses, c'est donc ce que la théologie a pour tâche de faire voir. . . . Puisque tout vient de Dieu, créateur unique, et que toutes les choses ont une signification divine, adorer Dieu, tendre vers lui, et respecter le monde, lui demeurer fidèle, ne sont pas deux attitudes, deux tendances divergentes, entre lesquelles il faudrait choisir. Ce sont les deux aspects solidaires, complémentaires, logiquement et naturellement liés, d'un seul et même devoir, d'un seul et même amour. . . . Il n'y a qu'un chemin qui mène au ciel, et ce chemin c'est la terre, quelque choquante qu'elle paraisse a nos idealismes.³³

Ignatius in the "Foundation" affirms a double dynamic order of things, the second subordinate to the first. All things are ordered to God, with man having the primacy in this relation; secondly, "reliqua creata sunt propter hominem," in order to enable him to realize the primary order of things. There is an enormous amount of supernatural humanism in that jejune phrase, "reliqua creata sunt propter hominem, ut juvent eum, etc.;" and there is a high tension put on our faith to realize this truth in all its implications.³⁴ St. Paul expressed the truth of the "Foundation" in these two phrases: "Non estis vestri" (1 Cor. 6:19), and, "Omnia enim vestra sunt" (1 Cor. 3:22). It is the "reliqua" which is the key to the right understanding of the positive phase of the term "indifference." Positively, indifference means that I can use all things to get me back to God, or in other words, that I can find God in all things, even though—and this is the negative

³² *Ibid.*, a. 5 c.

³³ "Créateur des chose visibles," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, LXVII (1940), pp. 269, 275.

³⁴ Cf. *Conc. Flor.*, "Decretum pro Iacobitis" (DB 706): "[The Holy Roman Church] most firmly believes, professes, and preaches that the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the creator of all things, visible and invisible; that He, when He willed, in His goodness fashioned the whole world of creatures, both spiritual and corporal—[creatures that are] good because they have been made by the Supreme Good, but changeable because they have been made of nothing; and [the Church] asserts that there is no creature [made of what is] evil, because every nature, inasmuch as it is a nature, is good."

side of indifference—that means that at times no quarter must be shown to my feelings, etc.³⁵ Things, therefore, put no definitive obstacle to my salvation. Things do not betray me, but I can betray them. Things are not out of joint, but I may be so; whence the constant need of that intellectual, moral, and affective education which we call asceticism. In that small area of the divine order of things where the focus comes on me in my way back to God, there must be selection and choice with reference to God. Well, then, says Ignatius inexorably, take the better means.

The First Week of the *Exercises* shows us sin in the light of that order which God has placed in things, and which St. Ignatius has sketched in broad outline in the "Foundation." Through the medium of historical facts (the angels and our protoparents) and of very likely cases (a lost soul and my own serious sins) we see something of the nature and effects of sin. There is a precious phrase on the nature of sin in the third point of the first meditations: "in peccando et agendo contra bonitatem divinam." St. Thomas says: "non autem videtur esse responsio sufficiens si quis dicat quod [peccatum] facit injuriam Deo. Non enim Deus a nobis offenditur nisi ex eo quod contra nostrum bonum agimus" (3 CG, 122). That is why, I think, St. Ignatius emphasizes so strongly the effects of sin, both original and personal, in the First Week of the *Exercises*. By sin we deny the divine order of things and interpose a definitive "No" ("nolentes se adjuvare ope suae voluntatis") to the diffusive goodness of God. We hurt only ourselves, the angels and damned sinners irremediably so, whilst the rest of us sinners are in a state of spiritual impotency that we can do nothing to redress. Then comes the colloquy before the crucifix, the *Protoevangelium* of the First Week. It is reminiscent of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul cries, "Infelix ego homo, quis liberabit me de corpore mortis hujus? Gratia Dei per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum."³⁶ The First Week is a purification, a spiritual education in the nature of sin as the unique obstacle to the diffusive goodness of God;

³⁵ Cf. P. Charles, *La Prière de toutes les heures* (Louvain, 1931), n. 16, "Propter Nos." On the Ignatian attitude to things in the "Foundation" and the "Contemplatio ad Amorem" read G. M. Hopkins' sonnet, "God's Grandeur," with attention to the difference between the octet and the sestet. I might also suggest that the "Foundation" might be transposed on the basis of the moral virtue of religion.

³⁶ As is well known, the Greek text differs slightly from the Vulgate.

it is an act of faith in the spiritual impotency of sinful man; it is an act of love for Christ the Savior—"non est in aliquo alio salus."⁸⁷

It is St. Ignatius' understanding of the mystery of Jesus that is decisive in our inquiry. During His earthly life our Lord inaugurated, at least virtually, all the ways that lead to sanctity. One can study Jesus as the solitary contemplative (St. Bruno), as the voluntary poor man (St. Francis), as the teacher and witness of God's truth (St. Dominic). St. Ignatius conceives our Lord as the Leader in the great struggle for the expansion of the Kingdom of God, as Christ the King,⁸⁸ the exemplar of the apostolic life. The "Meditation on the Kingdom" is, as the official *Directory* tells us, "a compendium of the life and works of Christ our Lord in the mission entrusted to Him by the Father, concerning which Isaias lxii, 11, says: 'His work is before him.'" This *missio et munus Christi* are well expressed in the Preface of the Mass of Christ the King:

. . . ut seipsum in ara crucis hostiam immaculatam et pacificam offerens, redemptionis humanae sacramentum perageret: et suo subjectis imperio omnibus creaturis, aeternum et universale regnum, immensae tuae traderet Majestati. Regnum veritatis et vitae: regnum sanctitatis et gratiae: regnum justitiae, amoris et pacis.

The Christ of the *Exercises* is not precisely the *Verbum Aeternum*, but the glorified Head of humanity, the "Victor Rex," who is working in His members for the completion of His own victory. As Karl Adam says:

Christentum ist nicht Fertiges, Vollendetes, Christentum ist Wachsendes, Werdendes. Christentum ist Aussaat, ist messianische Zwischenzeit. Es ist ein Wachsendes und Werdendes, weil auch Christus ein Wachsender und Werdender ist. Christentum ist die raumzeitliche Entfaltung der Menschheit Jesu. Immerzu, durch alle Zeiten und Orte, fügt Sich der Menschgewordene, das Haupt des Leibes, neue Glieder ein. Immerzu wächst Er, vollendet Er Sich, bis Seine Ganzheit, Seine Fülle,

⁸⁷ Several commentators on the First Week have called attention to the fact that the meditations parallel, both dogmatically and psychologically, the process of justification as described by the Council of Trent.

⁸⁸ Whatever is to be thought of the timeliness of the parable in the meditation "On the Kingdom of Christ," the title "King" is both biblical and messianic.

Seine Pleroma erreicht ist. Das Christentum ist wesentlich ein Hin-Zu, ein Drängen auf zukünftige Vollendung, Eschatologie.³⁹

The Christ with whom we thus come in contact is Christ living in His Church and in its members. To His service we offer ourselves in the colloquy of the "Kingdom"; with the aid of His victorious grace we share His work.

It is St. Ignatius' great originality to have equated the terms, "imitation of Christ" and "apostolic service of Christ and with Christ in His redemptive mission."⁴⁰ The goodness of God, the will of God, the service of God are henceforth concretized in the person of Jesus Christ—"omnia in Ipso constant." He is now "recta ratio ad finem." As it says in one of the Holy Saturday collects: "Totus mundus experiatur et videat . . . per Ipsum redire omnia in integrum, a quo sumpsere principium: Dominum nostrum Jesus Christum. . . ."

Now, how does St. Ignatius conceive of our co-activity with Christ in His redemptive work? Under the formality of instrumental causality. At first sight, this concept may seem quite alien to the almost transparently simple doctrine of the *Spiritual Exercises*; in fact, the word "instrument" is never once mentioned in the text. The "Kingdom" and the "Two Standards," which are the capital meditations in this matter, are only parables and allegories. Yet the notion of instrumental causality is there all the same, not as an elaborate philosophical or theological concept, but as an idea that is accessible to our common sense. We can prove this by reading the *Exercises* against the background of the *Constitutions*. In the *Prooemium* to the *Constitutions* St. Ignatius says quite simply that he has written them "quia suavis dispositio divinae Providentiae exigit *cooperationem* suarum creaturarum," although he makes it quite clear that it is "summa Sapientia et Bonitas Dei Creatoris ac Domini nostri" which is the prime mover in the work of the Society. Further, he prays, "ut Deus omnes ad gratiam suam excipiendam per debilia hujus minimae Societatis *instrumenta* disponeret."⁴¹ He prefaces the very important *Pars*

³⁹ *Jesus Christus* (2. Aufl.; Augsburg: Haas und Grabherr, 1933), pp. 22-23.

⁴⁰ Cf. H. Pinard de la Boullaye, S. J., "Jésus dans les Exercices," *Revue d'ascétique et mystique*, XVIII (1937), 217-30.

⁴¹ *Const. Soc. Iesu*, Pars VII, cap. 5, n. 3.

Decima with the statement that the work of the Society cannot be achieved by natural means but only "per gratiam omnipotentis Dei ac Domini nostri Jesu Christi." Then he continues:

. . . ad ultimum et supernaturalem finem Societatis consequendum, media illa quae cum Deo instrumentum conjungunt ac disponunt ut a divina manu recte gubernetur, efficaciora sunt quam quae illud disponunt erga homines. . . . Illa enim interiora sunt, ex quibus efficaciam ad exteriora permanere ad finem nobis propositum oportet.

Hoc jacto fundamento, media illa naturalia quae Dei ac Domini nostri instrumentum in proximorum utilitatem disponunt, in universum, ad conservationem et incrementum totius hujus corporis conferent; si tamen et addiscantur et exercentur sincere ad solum Dei obsequium; non ut illis fiducia nostra innitatur, sed potius ut divinae gratiae juxta summae Providentiae suae ordinem per haec cooperemur; qui ad gloriam suam tam dona naturalia quae Ipse ut Creator, quam supernaturalia quae ut gratiae Auctor donat, vult referri. Et ideo media humana, vel per industriam acquisita, ac praecipue doctrina exacta et solida, et modus eam proponendi populo in contionibus et lectionibus, et forma agendi cum hominibus eodemque tractandi, diligenter curanda sunt.

Moreover, the Ignatian teaching given in the *Constitutions* must be completed by the doctrine contained in the Letter to the scholastics of Coimbra.⁴² Nadal, faithful interpreter of St. Ignatius' teaching, has expressed the fulness of this instrumental subjection to Christ:

Accipe atque exerce diligenter unionem quam tibi gratificatur Spiritus Domini ad Christum Jesum atque ejus potentias, ut sentias in spiritu te per voluntatem velle, per memoriam recordari, totusque te et esse et vivere et operari, non in te sed in Christo. Haec est hujus temporis perfectio summa, virtus divina, admirabilis suavitas.⁴³

The ascetical implications of this idea of instrumental service with regard to obedience, purity of intention, self-abnegation, etc., are, I think, reasonably clear. It is rather with its theological implications in the matter of grace that I am chiefly concerned. St. Ignatius says very plainly that, unless the instrument is conjoined to its prime mover, God, it is useless. Then he goes on boldly to say that, granted this absolute subordination of the instrument to its mover, the human instrument must (to be sure,

⁴² Cf. *supra*, the analysis of this letter, under (4).

⁴³ *Epistolae Nodalis*, IV, 684.

with the aid of grace) develop all its capacities and natural gifts in order to be of more perfect service to its Master, "ut divinae gratiae juxta summae Providentiae suae ordinem per haec cooperemur."

This teaching is the solution of the antinomy of the alleged activism of the spirituality of the Society. St. Ignatius would answer, "Act always as a perfect instrument; thus you find God in every action; action itself will unite you to Him." What he says of the qualities of the General ("quam maxime conjunctus et familiaris cum Deo ac Domino nostro, tam in oratione quam in omnibus suis actionibus")⁴⁴ is an ideal that he holds up before all who adopt his spiritual doctrine. All his life the saint resisted within the Order what he considered to be eremitic or contemplative aberrations away from the apostolic activity of the Society; the answer he gave was always the same, "In omnibus quaerant Deum." The Ignatian ideal is to be "in actione contemplativus"; it is "l'exstase de l'opération" of St. Francis de Sales. It is, if you will, a dangerous spirituality with a bias toward naturalism, unless counterpoised by an expert spiritual education, constant vigilance, and real faith. Yet it is Ignatian. A fellow Jesuit once told P. Gin hac that it did him good to read Lalle mant. Gin hac answered:

Read him, but take care. These pages were edited by two of his disciples, and here and there we find that Père Lalle mant is credited with saying that apostolic work does harm to the spiritual life. Any work should help a Jesuit to find Jesus Christ in the interior of his soul. It is a necessity, and it is possible, since it is our vocation.⁴⁵

Gagliardi is very much to our purpose:

Hinc etiam patet, altissimam esse unionem cum Deo in Societate, et perfectissimam, et hoc duabus rationibus potissimum: prima est, quia invenit Deum in omni opere. . .⁴⁶

It is also the idea of instrumentality which furnishes us with an understanding of another controverted feature of Ignatian spirituality. I take the words of P. Mersch, S. J. to illustrate this point:

⁴⁴ *Const. Soc. Iesu*, Pars IX, cap. 2, n. 1.

⁴⁵ As quoted in A. Calvet, *A Man After God's Own Heart*, trans. W. Doyle, S. J. (2nd ed.; London: Burns Oates and Washbourne), p. 277.

⁴⁶ *De Plena Cognitione Instituti* (Brugis: Désclée, 1882), p. 95; cf. pp. 93-96.

The instrument of the Word is humanity, our own humanity. We must, then, make our divinisation our own affair. It is, to that extent, the object of human sagacity and tactics, the object of human science. We shall, therefore, have to determine exactly what our nature and its psychology is, what our manner of acting is, and what are its moral laws. The common maxims of human prudence ought here to neighbor with our philosophic theses and the results of even clinical observation. . . . Nothing will be too small from the moment it is useful: we shall have to develop skill at keeping ourselves attentive along with systems of accountability and the play of sanction to maintain perseverance. Briefly, spiritual doctrine will be a science as complex as human conduct. But it will have to be more complex still. After having given all its rules, it will have to keep repeating that they are all essentially insufficient; because, in the work of salvation, human conduct has the value only of an instrument.⁴⁷

That, then, is why St. Ignatius has his examens, his etiquette of prayer, and all the other *industriæ* which to many have seemed a scandal. They were meant, as far as human skill allowed, to put the human instrument in perfect form for its work. Ignatius realized their essential inadequacy, but he did not scorn their limited usefulness.

In conclusion, may we not say that St. Ignatius conceives of our union with Christ as dynamic and operative? The expression of our organic union with Christ under the metaphor of an instrument may be judged to be poorer in content than other analogies more authentically biblical, e.g., the Vine and the branches, the Head and the members; moreover, the absence of the term "instrumentum" from the text of the Exercises may seem a tacit recognition by St. Ignatius of its inadequacy and incompleteness. Yet the term admirably describes the Ignatian spirituality of service. Christ's own humanity was the *instrumentum conjunctum*⁴⁸ with which He wrought the work of our redemption; our human natures are still the *instrumenta conjuncta* with which He constantly realizes His mission. The theological values of the term, "instrumentum," seem to me to be richer and fuller than its symbolical value; perhaps that is why St. Ignatius never uses it in the Exercises. As dogma develops, spirituality also must develop. The Exercises are supple enough to assimilate dogmatic developments that come from the impulse of the breath of the Spirit.

⁴⁷ *Morality and the Mystical Body*, trans. D. Ryan (New York: Kenedy, 1939), pp. 80-81.

⁴⁸ This term, though not biblical, is at least Scholastic.