

RESPONSES I

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

& Guatemala

Vinicio Joaquin Morales

Here are some reflections that came to me when I read the letter of Fr General to the people related to the Society of Jesus.

I consider myself one of those related with the Company of Jesus because of twenty-three years of connections, first with Fe y Alegría and now with the Instituto Centroamericano de Espiritualidad (ICE). The years have been a time of growth, personal maturing, apprenticeship, new horizons. Thinking of myself as one of those related with the Company of Jesus makes me feel good, secure, confident. It reminds me of the witness and example of many Jesuits. It highlights all the various different fields that I was called on to make my way in. It gives me the gift of special and very different experiences. I have felt, as Fr General's letter says, that I have a position, a place, in this great network that I share in with other lay people, and that also has opened for me relations with other religious congregations, other institutions, and other worlds.

What has supported me through my whole experience with the Company of Jesus—and I can't doubt, helped me take care of myself and have a sense of well-being all along—is that in all the different positions and

areas that were entrusted to me I have been able to be myself, speak my own word, express what I felt. To talk just about myself, I believe that I have encountered during these years many Jesuits and also many lay persons formed by Jesuits who have been the “Pygmalions” in my life. I mean, they have known how to wake up in me vital hidden aspects. They have found the wellspring of my qualities—and they have purified it so that the water flowing out of that wellspring has gotten clearer and clearer, for the sake of others. They have helped me discover and heal many of my personal hurts, and have uncovered with affection and clarity all the positive that I have in me. In other words, they have known how to find the *presence of God* in me, and that has helped me a lot to move toward a deeper spiritual experience.

Along this line, and very much in spite of my years being closely linked with the Company of Jesus, I spent a number of those years identifying myself somehow with *mission*, for a number of reasons, or sometimes because of the witness of some Jesuits or the example of their lives. No matter. I want to say that it was as if a full appreciation of what is most precious in the Society of Jesus had been postponed to another time. Because during many of the years that I’ve talked about I did not know Ignatian spirituality. I didn’t know the *Spiritual Exercises* very well, and I didn’t bother to know or read the life of St Ignatius of Loyola. The whole thing has been something like the Cana Feast, when the wine ran out, and the best was served at the end of the celebration. That’s the experience of my interior life right now, during the year and a half that I’ve been at ICE—here, it’s like I am supposed to drink and enjoy to the full, since I am receiving the best wine of my relationship with the Company of Jesus. I have been able to know St Ignatius better. I’ve had the experience of making the month-long Exercises. I have read, and have gotten guidance, about how to give the Exercises. I’ve taken the first small steps in companioning others as they live the Exercises of ten days – and during this year, it will be the month-long Exercises. I believe that I am still sort of integrating, sort of coming to understand; but the grace of God is manifesting itself, and God Himself, in His own way. I am finally seeing that I have to act as though everything depended on myself, but in the end it is God who does it. And though this is exactly the stage I am at, now that I am

writing these lines I believe that my life has taken another step forward, and another new horizon is opening up.

My vocation is to the lay life and my election is to the married state—and I can never stop seeing that my encounter with ignatian spirituality has given meaning to all that, given taste and flavor to both my vocation and my election. At the same time, I believe that the basic task that runs through all of ICE's activities has given me the insight and the chance to serve people who are in my own professional field of education and pedagogy. So now, when I am reading some of the ignatian documents, I can see that the Company of Jesus has been able to generate various guidelines orienting the process of education, and I find that my life makes sense for this latest stage. Now when I am accompanying teachers or directors of education centers, I realize that every one of the steps in the process of the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm* corresponds to some educational proposition—real, valid, coherent, essential, constructive, and positive. And because of this, I can say that my own inner experience is like discovering treasures that always existed but that I didn't know about, and this leaves me with a feeling and a sense, like if I keep on going deeper, I'm going to find many more treasures. And the most gratifying thing of all has been that, when I share all this richness that I am finding and living for myself, I feel sure that it has done good for the rest, it has transformed them, it has built up their integration as persons.

*I finally understand that
the Christ of ignatian
spirituality is not the
dead Jesus—empty,
motionless—but Christ
doing and acting*

Now, the words of St Ignatius that come up in the letter of Fr General make sense, but as far as I'm concerned, from my experience: I can assert that human life has meaning; that we are not creatures without any purpose; I continually see the possibilities that open up, particularly when St Ignatius talks about how the world is filled with the Spirit of God, if only we would look for it. Now I understand better, though I don't do much, that God has called all of us and every one of us to a great enterprise. And the thing that I have convinced myself of is that I can, in my lay state and

in a lot of situations, give glory to God by serving others, because of all these gifts.

Now that I get to take some small steps at ICE in accompanying others, and also because of what I am still going through myself, I can see how basic it is to get really clear about anything superficial in our personality, so as to unmask what hides behind the superficial. The job is to bring each person into the condition of being able to experience God, and out of that experience, of being able to raise Jesus up in each of the “crucified” in our own world. Because I finally understand that the Christ of ignatian spirituality is not the dead Jesus, empty, motionless—but Christ doing and acting.

What worries me every day—taking up what Fr General said—is that our faith ought to have practical consequences in our lives. I understand that and I believe it, but I also see that because of human weakness I have to be constantly in better condition to be able to take into my own life this transformation which—according to my belief and also because of my encounter with God Himself, by His gift—He is able to make happen in me, for the building up of the rest.

Vinicio Joaquín Morales and his spouse have two daughters. During twenty years with Guatemala's Fe y Alegría, he moved from teacher to director to coordinator to National Director and Secretary of the system's international federation. After a stint with a European Union program for small businesses, and the experiences he details above, he joined the team at ICE. He is now assistant director.

& Holland

Mary Blickman

W*orking with Jesuits.* Ten years ago, September 1991, on the occasion of the Ignatian year, Fr Kolvenbach wrote a letter to friends and collaborators of the Society. This letter touches various fields in which lay persons can help Jesuits. It states that lay persons not only help, but working together can be an enrichment for both. In view of the very different states

of life of Jesuits and lay persons, is it not amazing that working together enriches both? But is it collaboration? How far do “we” work together, and are “we” equal to each other?

Getting to know the Jesuits. My own experience goes back much further than ten years. I started working with and for the Jesuits in 1966. By sheer coincidence I had to replace the secretary of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in the Jesuit college where eventually all our six children went. PTA was at that time a novelty, for the parents as well as for the Jesuits.

In a very short time, we became very practical as parents because the Jesuit teaching religion was the only one in a school with (at that time) some 200 pupils. A programme was invented to give the children at least some basic knowledge—and even more important, some “feeling”—for what religion was all about. Because... we were living the famous sixties.

One of the things I did was to translate *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and this translation has been used for years. Do you think, at that time, that I got the credit for all this work? Collaboration, yes; but thanks awarded to the cooperative work of lay persons and Jesuits, no. Well, of course I did not want anything like special honours, because all those pupils learned something out of that programme. But to add to the worshipping of the Jesuits – that was not exactly collaborating. I have brought out in the open and discussed a great many things like this and always found a willing ear with all different sorts of Jesuits, and together we have grown in real collaboration.

Christian Life Community. In 1973 I was asked to go to attend the World Assembly of CLC in order to bring home some information on how to renew the CLC in the Netherlands. In those days, the Marian Congregations with a director-Jesuit were slowly disappearing. But in a more and more secularised country, how were we to initiate groups in living the *Spiritual Exercises*? We needed the Jesuits, but in those days it was difficult to make clear that we did not want to go back to former days; we wanted to start something useful and new.

*I have brought out in the
open a great many
things and together we
have grown in real
collaboration*

So how were we to start collaborating? First of all we had to make clear, very tactfully and diplomatically, what this new (ignatian) movement proposed. In the end we made real friends by working together, inside and outside of the country. During ten years—intertwined with a very busy family life—I ran the CLC secretariat in the Netherlands. There were some twenty-four CLC groups in our country. Then the time had come that I move on to something different.

Spiritual Exercises. Through the Jesuits in our country, and through CLC, I became more and more interested in the Spiritual Exercises. Not only did I make them every year, but I gradually began giving them. I was encour-

aged to do so by a great many “big shots” in this field. I followed courses with Fr Alex Lefrank, Fr Gilles Cusson, and Fr Maurice Giuliani. And one day in 1978 I started giving them. I still do.

*Jesuits and lay persons
live the same spirituality,
but each in their
own way*

Further, I was invited to join a seminar on the *Spiritual Exercises*, consisting of Flemish and Dutch Jesuits. Meeting twice a year since 1976, the seminar still exists. In this seminar,

too, collaborating meant trusting one another; more specifically, it meant trusting me as a lay person and a woman. In my turn, I had to get rid of the feeling that those Jesuits were superior to me in intellect and experience. More and more I discovered that indeed there was no gap; we each had our own richness and talents to give.

Did the Jesuits feel the same? I think so. Anyway, without expressing these feelings, we shared on the deepest level at these meetings – and then, year-round with others.

I took part in two formation sessions with Jesuits to learn how to teach others to give the Exercises. I collected the material from these sessions and put it in a binder, which we still use. Fr Mark Rotsaert, Fr Hans van Leeuwen, and I have just completed a session for young Jesuits—three weekends a year during three years—to give them practical information how to give the Exercises.

After joining the editorial staff of a Flemish-Dutch periodical specializing in ignatian spirituality, I started translating articles into Dutch, having

already translated *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear*, by David Lonsdale. Along with others, I helped Fr Mark Rotsaert re-translate the book of *Spiritual Exercises*. And working with another group of Jesuits, we composed a handbook to give the Exercises in daily life. In this field of ignatian spirituality, mutual encouragement has been the most important thing. Jesuits and lay persons live the same spirituality, but each in their own way.

Family-life. It goes without saying that I could not have done anything in this field at all without support in my home. My husband gave me space to do all sorts of things and helped out when I had to travel, for CLC or for any other reason. That in itself was extraordinarily valuable, for the six children got to know their father very well in this way. (My husband was a doctor and had a very busy life at the university hospital as well). As a family, we have discovered in a very unobtrusive way what it means to find “God in everything”. All of the children now have their own lives; in them, I have discovered over and over what the *yeast* injected into them by their Jesuit education has done for them and for their families. The oldest one even extended his Jesuit education by becoming a student at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts.

We are thankful. I am more than thankful. After my husband passed away five years ago, I still have the same goal in life, although in a very different way: to bring each individual to the core of his or her life. By doing this I try in my own way—but never alone, because of the bond with the Jesuits—to bring the Reign of the Lord.

The harmony with the Jesuits, grown over so many years, has become very natural these last ten years. Looking back I can see real growth. So I can end with the same words that Fr. Kolvenbach used when he ended his September 1991 letter: “Together we can continue to learn from him how best in all things we can love and serve *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*.”

Mary Blickman started working with Jesuits in 1966 at St.Maartenscollege in Groningen, the Netherlands. She has lived ignatian spirituality since 1973. She gives Annotation 19 exercises year-round, and spiritual direction (including to Jesuits), and gives Exercises in Flemish in the Jesuit retreat house. She is currently on the editorial staff of Cardoner and with Fr Mark Rotsaert helped make a modern translation of Spiritual Exercises.

& Australia**Peter Saunders**

My way is not God's way. This thought has kept coming to mind as I have reflected on my eight-year relationship with the Jesuits at the Campion Retreat Centre in Melbourne. I am a pastoral psychotherapist and I have been working at the Campion Retreat Centre for the last four years. During this time I have also been a member of the Campion Retreat Team. Our team numbers ten and is made up of Jesuits, women religious, and lay men and women. Our program of retreats, which continues to evolve, includes conducting the thirty-day retreat, six- and eight-day silent retreats, weekend directed and theme retreats, and the Spiritual Exercises in daily life.

What am I doing with these Jesuits? As I reflect on my last four years working at Campion I still wonder. What am I doing here? I grew up in the Catholic Church with a suspicion and dislike of the Jesuits, though I had never met one. For me they were associated with one of the wealthy schools of Melbourne, whose students always seemed better than me. Two of my closest friends, whom I met not long after I started work, had gone to this elite Jesuit school. I didn't know this at the time and our friendship formed in spite of my prejudice. When I found out later I told them that, if I had known at the time, I would not have considered having them as friends.

Like them, I left the Catholic Church in my early twenties and gave away my faith. I chose a path of socialism, political resistance, philosophy, education, business, and psychology. By the time I turned forties, in 1990, I was a senior executive in human resource management and an atheist. I was married with two children and a workaholic set on proving myself to the world. Then my world began to crumble. I lost my position as a senior executive and began to fall apart. I became ill suffering from migraines, depression, and chronic fatigue syndrome. It was during this journey of great darkness that I began to discover God again. A therapist suggested that I consider returning to my faith. She gave me the name of a Jesuit, Fr Frank Wallace, at the Campion Retreat Centre. It took me a couple of

months to get up the courage but I did begin to see Frank. He guided me in what I discovered later was spiritual direction.

Thus began my journey back into my faith, into my relationship with God, and the beginning of my relationship with the Society of Jesus. During that first six months I went on an eight-day silent retreat with Frank, and in that silence I discovered the presence of Jesus in a way I had never known before. I knew after that I couldn't live my life without Him.

The journey ahead was not easy. Frank died six months later and it took me sometime to find a new spiritual director. He came in the person of Fr Michael Smith, the Director of the Campion Retreat Centre, whom I met while I was on a Men's Retreat. I also discovered that there were lay men leading the retreat, including Nick Galante. Both these men have had a significant influence on my faith journey. I came to realise that I, as a lay person, could have something to offer others who were seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus of Nazareth. This time was also a period of significant discernment and change for me. I returned to study and retrained to become a pastoral psychotherapist. I had a growing desire to integrate the psychological and the spiritual dimensions as persons face the struggles in life. This desire still continues to grow in my work as a therapist. It has been enhanced greatly over the last four years, since I was invited by Michael Smith to be a member of the retreat team, as a pastoral psychotherapist working from a Christian perspective.

During the last eight years, as my journey has unfolded, I have been learning about the Society of Jesus. For me the Jesuits had always been the elite of the Catholic Church; they were the intellectual giants. I have discovered that there is a lot of truth in this. But I have also discovered Jesuits to be men of deep spirituality and great compassion. This has been particularly so of the Jesuits with whom I work at Campion. I have also come to realise that Jesuits are men like me and they are human. They face the same struggles in life that I face. In some ways, my relationship with the Jesuits has been about demystifying my image of the Society of Jesus. While at times this has been confronting, it has also been reassuring that these are a group of men who are committed to the same journey that I am. For them, the journey involves a celibate commitment to living in community with other men trying to serve God. For me, it is living my life as a family

man in a parish trying to serve God. Yet we all live in a very secular society in Australia, where Christianity is becoming more and more one of the minority religions.

What we have to offer together. So what is it that we at Campion have to offer people in secular Australian society? One of the great things that I have received from the Jesuits is the experience of the Spiritual Exercises. They are the great gift Ignatius of Loyola gave to the world; a way of finding the eternal God of Love who lives deep within every person's heart, and then discovering the way to live out this love. Campion Retreat Centre is situated in one of the inner suburbs of Melbourne. We have the opportunity

in some ways, my relationship with the Jesuits has been about demystifying my image of the Society of Jesus

at Campion of offering a place of quiet and solitude away from the frenetic busyness of secular society. I believe that the need for this sort of space in people's lives will grow in the future. It is a space where those who come have a chance to reflect on their lives, and to rediscover and deepen their spiritual dimension. At the heart of our work at Campion is the development of this dimension through the Spiritual Exercises. Although I am just a beginner

when it comes to understanding the meaning and the depth of the Exercises, they inform my work as a pastoral psychotherapist, as well as my ministry of retreat direction.

So here I am working in a place that I never expected to be, and with a Catholic order that I never liked. As I said at the beginning "God's way is not my way." Yet I feel blessed that I am here at Campion. I feel welcomed and supported by the Jesuits. I feel that I am truly involved in a process of collaboration with the Society of Jesus in the service of God.

How do I see the role of lay people in the work of spiritual formation with the Society of Jesus? Initially I saw my role as supporting the work of the Jesuits at Campion, both in my work as a pastoral psychotherapist and as a member of the retreat team. As time has gone on I have begun to take on a leadership role within the team. I have begun to see that lay people in this ministry have considerable skills, knowledge and experience to offer. We have a different perspective on the world from a Jesuit priest or brother,

who lives a life of celibacy in community with other men. Significantly, the women on the retreat team have been as influential in my formation as the Jesuits. These women bring a way of looking at the world that men don't have. We need their experience in this ministry.

The Society of Jesus in Australia faces the dilemma of not having enough Jesuits to take up the leadership roles in spiritual formation in the future. This has been a difficult and sensitive issue for the Society to address, as spiritual formation through the giving of the Spiritual Exercises has been the foundational charism of the Society of Jesus. We are not far away from a time when we will not have enough Jesuits to give the Exercises and provide the spiritual formation that is greatly needed in our secular society. In the future I believe that it will be well-formed lay men and women who will provide formation in the Exercises, with the support of the Jesuits.

With this in mind, the Campion Retreat Team, with the support of the Province, has put in place a program to train suitable lay people in the art of giving the Spiritual Exercises. This program runs over two years part-time and is led by the Jesuits, other religious, and lay people from the retreat team. It is this collaboration that I believe is the model for the future in the ministry. It is a collaboration at Campion that is centered in prayer, sharing our journey together, reflection, dialogue, and discernment that leads to action. For me this collaboration involves my listening to others in the context of what God wants of me in my deepest, holiest desires. And continuing to recognise that "God's way is not my way."

Peter Saunders is from a large, strong Catholic family of nine—nightly rosary, altar boys, Catholic schools. He is married and has a son and a daughter, teen-aged. He has worked variously as an electrical engineer, personnel director, teacher of humanities, organisation-development consultant, and psychotherapist, with the education to back it up: B.A., Dip.Ed., M.Org.Beh., Dip. Psych. He has lectured at university level in humanities and management, and besides his work at Campion House, now lectures at the Australian Catholic University on Pastoral Counselling.

& Rome

Roswitha Cooper

Ten years ago, with his letter to friends and colleagues of the Society of Jesus, Fr Kolvenbach invited us to a *continuous dialogue and closer cooperation with Jesuits worldwide*. As a member of Christian Life Community I ask myself, my companions in CLC, and my friends and brothers in the Society of Jesus: Where are we now, ten years later, at the beginning of the third millennium in which the future of the Church and the world will depend so much on how open and responsive “the laity” will be to the guidance of the Lord’s Spirit?

During my time as Executive Secretary of CLC, I had been in contact with many Jesuits worldwide. Friendships developed which are built on sharing the ignatian charism and on the common desire to imbue this world with the love of God and the joy of the Risen Christ. These fruitful and enriching relationships have prompted me, in my new responsibility as director of a foundation for international social projects, to work with Jesuits whenever possible. These positive experiences are those of an individual CLC member with individual Jesuits. But is this enough?

In preparation of the Thirty-Fourth General Congregation, some Jesuits expressed their hope that CLC would be re-confirmed as having a priority with the Society. Common discernment in working out cooperative approaches to apostolic work had been desired. Joint formation of Jesuits and CLC members in individual human and spiritual growth and development, and for cooperation in mission was seen as a possibility.

I have heard Jesuits sharing that their experience working with CLC has strengthened and clarified their own vocation; and we in CLC know how much we owe the Society of Jesus. The *Review of Ignatian Spirituality* has published good examples of what has been achieved already in working together. My own experience of being formed by Jesuits in cooperation with CLC for spiritual guidance and as guide for *Spiritual Exercises* convinces me how much good can come out of a true partnership and cooperation. Good has been done—more needs to be done.

What is hindering a good, fruitful working together for the mission entrusted to us by the Lord? Fr Kolvenbach’s keynote address (printed in #95) in Loyola last year, *Creative Fidelity in Mission*, is important

*individualism that hurts
Jesuits even more than it
hurts us lay people*

and meaningful not only to the Jesuits but also to us in CLC. “The collaboration we want will remain a dream if we lack the patient effort to get at the underlying problem of a community still too often infected by the virus of individualism,” gave me much food for thought. I felt the need to examine myself. It is this individualism that hurts Jesuits even more than it hurts us lay people. Jesuits who are not deeply rooted in their own community will not be able to work in partnership with lay people. I know more than one case of a Jesuit who “created” a community according to his liking and personal needs and so hindered the lay people from growing and developing into an authentic CLC. A symbiotic relationship and interdependence were the result. Only a Jesuit who understands and accepts CLC as a radical vocation for lay people to live the *magis*—similar to his own vocation—will be able to help CLC as an ecclesial assistant.

We in the Ignatian family are and should be more and more mutually supportive in reviving and deepening our ignatian spirituality, living the *creative fidelity in mission* Fr Kolvenbach talks about. Only persons, religious or lay, who live the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises—the growing intimate relationship with the Lord in which the *third degree of humility* is not a fantasy but at least a desire—will be open to being questioned, challenged, and formed by others as *men and women for others*, working with others to build the Kingdom. Are we ready to take this step forward? Are we ready to join together for the good of our brothers and sisters who are seeking the redeeming love of God incarnated in Christ throughout the world? It is up to each of us to make that decision.

Roswitha Cooper found grace in the Christian Life Community in Germany after her husband's death at an early age. She served as World Executive Secretary during the nineties, constantly promoting Spiritual Exercises as the basis for formation. At the end of her term, she chose during a thirty-day retreat at St Beuno's to keep Rome as the base for her work with a charitable fund, which takes her to places as far apart as Novosibirsk and Nairobi.

& France

Louis Sintas

C

collaborating with the laity. My entire apostolic life has evolved collaborating with lay people. I have been successively a chaplain to students, the rector of a college, and a member of a spirituality center. Currently, I am director of a publishing house and the national secretary of the Apostleship of Prayer. All along, I have had the opportunity of working beside lay people. So I put here some observations that I am able to make. (It is important to note that I make these remarks in the context of French law.)

As a general rule, we Jesuits do not collaborate very easily. Not among ourselves, and not, a fortiori, with lay people. We have difficulty letting go of our convictions and sharing our power. We do not spontaneously have a spirit of compromise and there is no collaboration without compromise. Among our collaborators, we readily appreciate dedication; less readily, the spirit of initiative.

It is useful to distinguish three kinds of collaboration: the collaboration of subordinates, the collaboration of people with equal responsibility, and the collaboration of volunteers.

In the collaboration of subordinates, two situations present themselves. If the layperson is a subordinate of a Jesuit—no problem, at least for the Jesuit. The Jesuit has to take meticulous care with respect to social laws, particularly about work hours and about not demanding more of the laity than the law allows. If the Jesuit is a subordinate of a lay person—there could be difficulties for the Jesuit. Even if we are “specialists in obedience,” humility is not always our dominant virtue. The governance of the Company—which is a good thing—has nothing in common with the government of an enterprise that does not recognize the principle of subsidiarity. Only with difficulty could a Jesuit accept being an underling.

In the collaboration of people with equal responsibility, that is, among people who are co-responsible, a Jesuit has to go through a genuine apprenticeship. Sharing information takes time. A decision worked out by two, or by several, requires a lot of work. And yet it falls to the Jesuit to make certain that the co-responsibility is accepted by those who are our “clients.” These will more easily approach a Jesuit than they will a lay person. Of course, it falls on the lay person to know his or her place; yet, a Jesuit can make their task quite difficult, without meaning to, insofar as

he continues to accept clients' thinking of him as the one who is really responsible.

In the collaboration of people with equal responsibility, I point out one difficulty connected with our civil law. In works that are directly apostolic, we choose our collaborators according to their professional qualifications, certainly, but also according to their commitment to the faith and the Church. It can happen that the spiritual stance of our collaborators evolves over time. Well, in the eyes of the law, we do not have the right to turn their religious stance into a clause in the contract. On the part of our collaborators, there can be only a moral commitment to our criteria. Any time a difficulty with this comes up, the only possible solution is voluntary resignation on the part of the collaborator. If the person refuses to resign for serious reasons—usually legitimate from the collaborator's point of view—we do not know what to do. It is important to recognize this problem before employing someone at a high level of responsibility.

*among people who are
co-responsible,
a Jesuit has to go through
a genuine apprenticeship*

Concerning the collaboration of volunteers. The truth is that we would do much less than we do without them. It is important to feel respect for them. It is important not to “engage” them except for some genuine competence, or else we will soon be embarrassed. It is important not to “engage” them except for clearly defined roles. It is important that their “engagement” not encroach on the work of regular employees of the enterprise. It is necessary to be aware that, in reality, a volunteer can give you extraordinary service today and tomorrow leave you. The fact is that there are works that cannot get along with such hazardous help.

So far, I have been thinking of the situation in an institution or established work. In other fields, we are called to live with collaboration in the design of apostolic works not shaped by an institution. I am thinking of the *Spiritual Exercises*, as an instance. This field is also the place for collaboration with non-Jesuits—importantly, with laity. These collaborations are often enough very productive.

It appears to me that the engagement of lay collaborators in this particular field ought not be done by one particular Jesuit. The ambiguity would be too strong. Every such engagement ought to be handled through an institution or a community. The collaboration must not trend into a servitude, either affective or psychological.

It is also to be kept in mind that, in this field, there is no possible control over what happens between one of our collaborators and the retreatant. This is just as true of Jesuits; but in their case, we have the guarantee of our membership in the Company, of our long formation, and so on. With the laity, we have no such guarantee. Hence, obviously, very great prudence.

To conclude these over-brief lines, I would single out a fundamental error to avoid. Collaboration with the laity should have a positive look. At stake here is giving the Church a truer profile, the one which the last council rediscovered. Consonant with this: the collaboration with the laity is not an attempt to fill up the holes in our disponible membership as we grow fewer. We have to keep distinguishing *Jesuit* and *ignatian*. For our collaborators can very well become true ignatian; Jesuits, they will never be. Given this, we should no longer imagine that our works might remain Jesuit works without the presence of any great number of Jesuits, particularly in positions of authority. Certainly, they can remain ignatian, but that is not the same thing.

Fr Louis Sintas, S.J., a writer and preacher, is the National Secretary of the Apostolate of Prayer in France. He gives Spiritual Exercises and is the editor of Christ Source de Vie. Practicing what he preaches here, he heads an editorial team mostly lay.