

**SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT
DURING THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES
ACCORDING TO ST. IGNATIUS OF
LOYOLA**

Introduction

A story. There once was a shepherd who had many sheep in his fold. Every night, after walking with his flock through the hills and mountains, the shepherd guided his sheep along the path to the corral where they were safely protected from the dangers of night. The corral, which had been constructed many years earlier, had a small opening – just the size through which each sheep could pass. One evening, unbeknownst to the shepherd, one of the sheep decided to flee the enclosure by setting off along the same path in the darkening night. The sheep enjoyed the evening landscape and the calm breeze that blew through the fields surrounded by silence and solitude. But this happiness was short-lived. Little by little the sheep began to realize that he was unable to return unaided to the fold. He knew that he was lost and began to search for a way back amidst the ever growing darkness. Distressed and anxious, the sheep bleated loudly, only to result in the calling attention to the wolves that were hunting in search of an easy prey. The wolves' howling grew nearer and panic began to overtake the hopelessly lost sheep. Just when tragedy seemed imminent the shepherd appeared, gathered the sheep and

carried him back to the fold. Even though everyone urged the shepherd to fix the opening in the fence, he did nothing¹.

Some Preliminary Reflections

Although there are many messages in this simple story, it is worth emphasizing the same relationship that exists between those who make the *Spiritual Exercises* and the person who directs them – an experience that must be defined by freedom. If the fold is the place where the *Spiritual Exercises* are realized and the shepherd is the spiritual director, there must be no relationship of dependency between the retreatant and the director. Spiritual directors do not own the path that the retreatant follows, rather one must be free to choose from among the many possible alternatives available at any given moment. Of course, a good director must warn anybody making the *Spiritual Exercises* of possible dangers and pitfalls, cautioning the retreatant to avoid the hungry wolves that linger about during the dark nights of desolation along the spiritual path. But one must never force another to follow a path that he or she does not freely choose, although perhaps even when wrong. What is important is that retreatants discover their own errors through personal spiritual experiences and that they freely make their own decisions.

Frequently the “person who gives to another a method and order for meditation or contemplation” (SpEx 2) may want to guide others in the Exercises according to his or her own experience, thereby running the risk of not allowing others to recognize their own unique experience of God. Saint Ignatius even warned against this as he reminds:

No mistake is more harmful than when teachers of spiritual things want only to guide others according to their counsel alone and by thinking that that which is good for themselves is good for all others².

Our goal here is thus to enlighten those who act as spiritual directors for others and to highlight – so as to avoid – some of the possible errors that can occur in the process of spiritual direction during an experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*. We will review the recommendations left by Saint Ignatius in the text of the Exercises and in other sources that can contribute to this process.

The Annotations of the Spiritual Exercises

An ordered life. The Annotations at the beginning of the Spiritual Exercises reveal important insights of Saint Ignatius garnered from his own spiritual experience. They are not lofty, intellectual recommendations issued forth from the Saint's desk, rather they stem from Ignatius' real and lived experience of his own journey and search for the will of God in his own life. Fr. Luis Gonçalves, one of the Jesuits most close to Saint Ignatius during his later years, writes in his *Memorial* about the ways in which the founder intensely lived precisely that which he himself proposed in his writings about the Exercises:

One thing I knowingly remember is how often I observed that Father [Ignatius], in his whole way of proceeding obeyed exactly all the rules of the exercises, for it seems as if they were first planted within his soul, and that the rules came from his own interior actions.³

They are, essentially, the rules and norms that the same Ignatius followed in his daily life and that had been formed during his experience of directing others in the Spiritual Exercises. Furthermore, Gonçalves de Câmara relates how these principles of Master Ignatius began to formulate as a way of guiding others who were also beginning to direct the Spiritual Exercises:

Father [Ignatius] said that he wanted to create a Directory of how the Exercises were to be given, and that Polanco should ask him about any doubts he had at any time, because in matters regarding the Exercises he wouldn't need much time in order to respond⁴.

The function of the Annotations in the whole of the Exercises. The same title Saint Ignatius gives to these practical guidelines highlights their function within the body of the *Exercises*: "Introductory explanations (or

Annotations) to gain some understanding of the Spiritual Exercises which follow, and to the one who is to receive them" (SpEx 1)⁵. Saint Ignatius is conscious that they do not say it all, rather that they are instructions meant to be adapted to the particular circumstances given to this experience.

He highlights the most important recommendations as much for the director as for the one making the Exercises. It should also be remembered, nevertheless, as Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach reminded us in a conference last year, that there are four actors, or partners, in the Exercises: "God, Ignatius, the one who gives and the one who makes the Exercises."⁶ Referring to the relationship between these last two, Kolvenbach stresses:

So it is that in the Annotations, Ignatius' great preoccupation is to maintain a communication between the one who gives and the one who receives Exercises that shifts between reserve and warmth. The reserve – for instance, in a sufficient detachment while one gives the mysteries of the life of Christ in a brief and summary way, precisely so as not to hinder the Spirit, who gives greater spiritual savor and profit (SpEx 2). The reserve, again – in the impartiality with which one probes and learns every detail of the Exercises when the one who is receiving them is not moved by the Spirit (SpEx 6). The reserve – engendered by the fact of not having any information about what is still to come (SpEx 11). The reserve – unavoidable when the one giving Exercises, who is elsewhere recognized for allowing full liberty, intervenes authoritatively to fight against temptations that risk hindering the Spirit (SpEx 13), or to temper enthusiasm and fervor not of the Spirit (SpEx 14), or above all to adapt the *Spiritual Exercises* to suit the real abilities of each one who makes them (SpEx 18). This reserve is indispensable in keeping the relationship between the one who gives and the one who receives the Exercises open to the activity of the other two actors – God and Ignatius.⁷

But this "reserve" should not translate into a type of therapeutic distance, a relationship void of internal movements and feelings, as in psychother-

apy. Rather, a spiritual guide of the Exercises should create a comfortable working environment with sufficient “warmth” that may facilitate a closer encounter with God:

On the other hand, the reserve must not obstruct warmth. The warmth of showing oneself gentle and good, giving strength and courage for what is to come. The warmth of revealing for the exercitant the play of evil spirits as they move to hinder the good Spirit that leads one to dispose oneself and to prepare for the consolation to come (SpEx 7). Warmth, too, in wholly accepting the exercitant in all of his capacities, in all of his vital energies, to direct him to God the actor, in the rhythm of the experience of Ignatius, also an actor (SpEx 18). Warmth in an accompaniment that discloses the impasses and the mistaken routes, for not every route leads to God (SpEx

10). Warmth in the shared listening to the work of Spirit, which can include the help to “react with all his forces” to anything that seems not to be “solely for the service, honour, and glory of the divine Majesty” (SpEx 16). Such help may perhaps require obedience on the part of the one who receives the Exercises:

This is an obedience nothing like the arbitrary power of one person over another, but rather like a service to someone who, in utter freedom and confidence, completely opens his heart because he wants to have counsel given in full awareness (SpEx 17).⁸

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Directors of the Exercises must embrace this balance between “reserve” and “warmth”, for in doing so they more effectively help others in their face to face encounters with God. So, in spelling out these first two characteristics in the relationship between the one who gives and the one

who makes the Exercises we can then view the Annotations of the *Spiritual Exercises* as a triple-objective: to facilitate an immediate experience of God, an experience adapted to the rhythm of the one who is making the Exercises and an authentic experience in which one receives the graces desired.

To facilitates an immediate experience with God. Ignatius of Loyola experienced his first steps in the spiritual life far from any external references. As Ignatius convalesced in his family home he read the *Life of Christ* and *The Lives of the Saints* without anyone to challenge his conclusions, perhaps forced alone to go deeper along his own interior journey, full of surprises and unknown landscapes. This particular situation during his year of convalescence, as he himself later described, and in his retreat at Manresa that lasted almost another year, made possible an experience overflowing in a process dependent upon an external guide. This is what is referred to in the Exercises as “an *interior knowledge* of my sins” (SpEx 63); “of our Lord who became human for me, that I may love him more intensely and follow him more closely” (SpEx 104); or “of all the good I have received, in order that, stirred to profound gratitude, I may become able to love and serve the Divine Majesty in all things” (SpEx 233).

This was the type of experience that led Ignatius to express the deep conviction that guided him on his journey. It wasn't only God that directly guided him and treated him “in the same way that a teacher treats a school child” (Autobiography 27⁹), but rather he was able to express his own radical convictions, as, for example: “...if there weren't Scripture to teach us these matters of the faith, he would be resolved to die for them solely on the basis of what he has seen” (Autobiography 29).

This kind of experience or *interior knowledge*, as Saint Ignatius calls it, can only be achieved by the one who personally and directly gives of him or herself in relation with God. As so, Ignatius insists, both actively and passively, it is necessary that:

The person who gives to another, the method and procedure for meditating or contemplating should accurately narrate the history contained in the contemplation or meditation, going over the points with only a brief or summary explanation. For in this way

the person who is contemplating, by taking this history as the authentic foundation, and by reflecting on it and reasoning about it for oneself, can this discover something that will bring better understanding or a more personalized concept of the history – either through one’s own reasoning or insofar as the understanding is enlightened by God’s grace. This brings more spiritual relish and spiritual fruit than if the one giving the Exercises had lengthily explained and amplified the meaning of the history. For what fills and satisfies the soul consists, not in knowing much, but in our understanding the realities profoundly and in savoring them interiorly (SpEx 2).

However, I am reminded of one of the stories in *Song of the Bird* by Anthony De Mello that says, “*on a certain occasion one of the disciples complained to his Master: –you always tell us stories, but you never reveal their meanings–. The Master replied –would you like someone to chew a piece of fruit before giving it to you? Nobody can discover what something means to you in your place. Not even the teacher.*”¹⁰ The same is true in the Exercises, and a director must be aware of not over explaining or reflecting too much on the texts and passages that accompany the Exercises. By not letting another taste the fruit by himself and by offering of a mango that has already been eaten is not very agreeable to the palate of the other.

In his comments on the way in which Ignatius spoke, not only in the Exercises but also in his daily life, Luis Gonçalves de Câmara highlights a special trait asked of those who give the *Exercises*:

The way of speaking of Father [Ignatius] is straight forward, with few words, and without explaining every meaning, but rather he simply narrates; and in this way he lets others reflect and come to their own conclusions; and he is admirably convincing without leaning one way or another, and only by narrating. He skillfully mentions the essential points to deliver his message, leaving out those points which are not necessary to the particular context. And in his way of speaking he has received so many gifts from God that it would be too much to write about here¹¹.

This is what Ignatius wanted to make clear in the second Annotation, that the one who is having the experience may discover for him or herself the truths and conscience that comes as invitation in an experience of God. Giving the Exercises, then, is not, as contrary to common understanding, indoctrination, persuasion or debate of understanding and reason, rather it is creating adequate space so that the one making the Exercises may, with the help of method and order, arrive at an internal knowledge to be able “to overcome one’s self and to order one’s life without reaching a decision through some disordered affection” (SpEx 21) – which is the ultimate goal of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

Moreover, what Ignatius is really searching for in this approach of utmost respect is for the person making the Exercises to achieve and establish a direct relationship with God.

The one giving the Exercises should not urge the one receiving them toward poverty or any other promise more than toward their opposites, or to one state or manner of living more than to another. Outside the Exercises it is lawful and meritorious for us to counsel those who are probably suitable for it to choose continence, virginity, religious life, and all forms of evangelical perfection. But during these Spiritual Exercises when a person is seeking God’s will, it is more appropriate and far better that the Creator and Lord himself should communicate himself to the devout soul, embracing it in love and praise, and disposing it for the way which will enable the soul to serve him better in the future. Accordingly, the one giving the Exercises ought not to lean or incline in either direction but rather, while standing by like the pointer of a scale in equilibrium, to allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord (SpEx 15).

A director of the Exercises must be deeply convinced at the center of his or her core that it is possible to have a real and immediate experience of God, and that this will become a foundational experience for the one in relationship with God. Similarly, by using Saint Ignatius’ own words Karl Rahner addresses today’s Jesuits:

When I confirm having had an immediate experience of God I do

not feel the necessity of supporting this assertion in a theological dissertation about the essence of such an experience, just as I do not intend to speak about all the accompanying factors involved –which evidentially also contain their own peculiar individual and historic circumstances; I do not speak, either, of the visions and symbols or of any heard message, nor of the gift of tears or things related. All that I can say is that I experienced God, the unfathomable, the silent, and nevertheless near, as a multidimensional gift to me. God, with initiative and by grace, approaches, and this cannot be confused with anything else.¹²

The belief in that people making the Spiritual Exercises can have a genuine experience of God is indeed fundamental to those same Exercises. And it is upon such a foundational experience that we begin to build up our faith and a life of following Christ.

Annotation 17 compliments an attitude of the respect and *reserve* that Kolvenbach stresses, for Ignatius recommends that a director of the Exercises proceed “without wishing to ask about or know the exercitant’s personal thoughts or sins” (SpEx 17). In the *Directorio Autógrafo* Ignatius himself recommends that “it is better, whenever possible, for the exercitant to confess, and not by the prodding of the director.”¹³

Nevertheless, this Annotation contributes an element that is related to the second characteristic of these instructions, which is the process of adapting to the one who is making the Exercises. Essentially, the one who is giving the Exercises “should be faithfully informed about the various agitations and thoughts which the different spirits stir up in the retreatant. For then, in accordance with the person’s greater or lesser progress, the director will be able to communicate spiritual exercises adapted to the needs of the person who is agitated in this way” (SpEx 17).

We have, then, the skills that allow us to facilitate an immediate experience with God by the exercitant. This leads us now to the next characteristic of spiritual direction just as Saint Ignatius himself proposed.

Allowing for an adapted experience to the rhythm of the individual. The first few years after Ignatius’ conversion were marked by an intense interior search for the path the Lord was paving for this gentleman from

Loyola. God guided him slowly and patiently, we could conclude, toward his Principle and Foundation. But God did not force Ignatius, just as the Lord has never forced anybody throughout history. God seduces, as Jeremiah recognizes in his prophecy (Jer 20:7). God invites, calls, encourages and appears in the lives of individuals, and then God asks these people to participate in the work of salvation. In doing so, God takes into account each individual's particular circumstances, thus is uniquely made manifest in different situations and realities of daily life. God approaches and walks with us (Luke 24:13-35), and shows us the way step by step without pushing, forcing, or any type of violence to us.

Ignatius felt the same way in his relationship with God at the beginning of his spiritual journey. He recorded this in the Spiritual Exercises, as Annotation 4 recommends that the one giving the Exercises must realize that not everybody progresses at the same pace:

Four Weeks are taken for the following Exercises, corresponding to the four parts into which they are divided. That is, the First Week is devoted to the consideration and contemplation of sins; the Second, to the life of Christ our Lord up to and including Palm Sunday; the Third, to the Passion of Christ our Lord; and the Fourth, to the Resurrection and Ascension. To this Week are appended the Three Methods of Praying. However, this does not mean that each Week must necessarily consist of seven or eight days. For during the First Week some persons happen to be slower in finding what they are seeking, that is, contrition, sorrow, and tears for their sins. Similarly, some persons work more diligently than others, and are more pushed back and forth and tested by different spirits. In some cases, therefore, the Week needs to be shortened, and in others lengthened. This holds as well for all the following Weeks, while the retreatant is seeking what corresponds to their subject matter. But the Exercises ought to be completed in thirty days, more or less (SpEx 4).

The ability to adapt the progress to the rhythm of an individual also requires a spiritual director to be attentive to mood and energy. This allows a director to hold back or to challenge a retreatant accordingly to

the spiritual moment being experienced.

If the giver of the Exercises sees that the one making them is experiencing desolation and temptation, he or she should not treat the retreatant severely or harshly, but gently and kindly. The director should encourage and strengthen the exercitant for the future, unmask the deceptive tactics of the enemy of our human nature, and help the retreatant to prepare and dispose himself or herself for the consolation which will come (SpEx 7).

Furthermore, Annotation 14 adds:

If the one giving the Exercises sees that the exercitant is proceeding with consolation and great fervor, he or she should warn the person not to make some promise or vow which is unconsidered or hasty. The more unstable the director sees the exercitant to be, the more earnest should be the forewarning and caution. For although it is altogether right for someone to advise another to enter religious life, which entails the taking of vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity; and although a good work done under a vow is more meritorious than one done without it, still one ought to bestow much thought on the strength and suitability of each person, and on the helps or hindrances one is likely to meet with in carrying out what one wishes to promise (SpEx 14).

*we must not force
the tender shoot
to grow
at the rhythm of impatience*

Along these same lines, Annotations 18, 19 and 20 present similar approaches to the Spiritual Exercises in accordance to “the disposition of the persons who desire to make them, that is, to their age, education and ability” (SpEx 18); or taking into account if someone “is involved in public affairs or pressing occupations” (SpEx 19); or if another “is more disengaged, and desires to make all the progress possible” (SpEx 20).

Within this group of Annotations that recommend adapting the experience of the Exercises to the pace and rhythm of the retreatant, we should also include number 8 – which speaks of informing those making of the Exercises about the rules of the discernment of spirits found at the

end of the text of the Exercises (SpEx313-336), again in accordance to each individual's needs.

According to the need perceived in the exercitant with respect to the desolations and deceptive tactics of the enemy, and also the consolations, the giver of the Exercises may explain to the retreatant the rules of the First and Second Weeks for recognizing the different kinds of spirits, (in SpEx 313-327 and SpEx 328-336) (SpEx 8).

The giver of the Exercises, then, should be careful not to approach this task as one would a kitchen recipe. Rather, a director should be sufficiently prepared in knowing how to adapt unique experiences according to individual rhythms so as to be able to achieve the goal in each situation. This, of course, does not happen over-night, but requires – like all good wines – a time of maturation and a solid grasp of the whole dynamic involved. The spiritual director of the Exercises should not be too technical in his or her approach, rather proceed as if the task were an art form, viewing –with freedom and flexibility– the life of each person as a sacred story.

In reference to this same rhythmic and paced growth process of each individual in relationship with God, Benjamín González Buelta writes:

We must not force
the tender shoot
to grow
at the rhythm of impatience.

Nor can we grab at
the heart with our hands
to make it beat faster,
just as fantasy cannot jump
over the abyss and the borders
toward a better tomorrow
by forgetting to distances
and the paths under foot.

We cannot stir
the rhythm of time,

wanting to mature history
 by imposing our will
 and harvesting the kingdom
 before the appointed hour.

Caress the rough edges,
 encourage the long day,
 look tenderly
 upon insecure steps,
 free the imprisoned moment,
 and let the kingdom
 reach its height
 by the hand of God
 that holds the mystery!¹⁴

Facilitating an authentic experience. As we examine those first few years of Ignatius' pilgrimage and conversion, we see how he moved, little by little, from a spirituality grounded in his own impulses towards a greater docility and obedience to the way in which God was speaking to him –through his human meditations along an initially difficult journey. Ignatius himself recounts that in his time at Montserrat that “he made a general confession in writing, and the confession lasted three days. He also arranged with the confessor that he should give orders to have the mule collected, and that his sword and dagger should hang in the church at the altar of Our Lady. And this was the first person to whom he revealed what he had resolved, because up till then he had not revealed it to any confessor” (Autobiography 17).

Even though the process was slow and gradual, Ignatius had to learn to let go of guiding himself in his spiritual journey. For example, in wanting to cure himself of the scruples that haunted him, because of his vane and dissolute past life, he performed excessive penances and later had to obey his confessor:

He persisted the whole week without putting a single thing into his mouth, while not ceasing from his normal religious practices (also going to the divine offices), nor from making his prayer on his knees (and at midnight too), etc. But when the following

Sunday came with the need for confession, since he was accustomed to telling his confessor what he was doing in great detail, he told him also about how he had not eaten anything during that week. The confessor directed him to break that fast, and, though he still had some strength, he obeyed the confessor. And he discovered he was free of scruples that day and the next (Autobiography 25).

Some time after, when he wanted to remain living in Palestine visiting the holy sites and helping souls, he was confronted by the Franciscan guardians there who spoke to him about the problems they had with pilgrims who stayed there begging:

To this his reply was that he was very firm in his intention, and that in his judgment on no account should he refrain from putting it into practice; politely he made it clear that, although the Provincial did not think it a good idea, he would not abandon his intention on account of any fear unless it was a matter of obliging him under pain of sin (Autobiography 46).

Only later on, when they threatened him with excommunication if he disobeyed, did he comply and obey – not without great trial – the definitive order he was given to leave the Holy Land.

There are many other accounts that show how Ignatius eventually became convinced of the importance of surrendering himself to be guided along his spiritual path. There was not really a need for others to tell him the meaning of his experiences of God, but to point out the external conditions that made the experiences possible. Similarly other Annotations in the Exercises, such as the sixth, which recommends that the giver of the Exercises question a retreatant in great detail about his or her experience with praying the meditations.

The director should question the retreatant much about the Exercises: whether he or she is making them at the appointed time, how they are being made, and whether the Additional Directives are being diligently observed. The director should ask about each of these items in particular. Consolation and desolation are treated in (SpEx 316-324), the Additional Directives in (SpEx 73-90, 6).

The director is responsible for preparing a retreatant according to these conditions in order to allow for the best possible experience. Annotation 12 expresses precisely this point:

The one giving the Exercises should insist strongly with the person making them that he or she should remain for a full hour in each of the five exercises or contemplations which will be made each day; and further, that the recipient should make sure always to have the satisfaction of knowing that a full hour was spent on the exercises –indeed, more rather than less. For the enemy usually exerts special efforts to get a person to shorten the hour of contemplation, meditation or prayer (SpEx 12).

These conditions allow for an authentic experience of God and must be insisted upon by the director, who must not be afraid to question the way of method that one is making the Exercises. Ignatius himself arrives at the same conclusion regarding this matter as he says: “If there is anyone who does not obey and wishes to proceed by his or her own judgment, it would be best to not continue making the Exercises.”¹⁵

Presupposition (SpEx 22)

After the annotations and title of the Spiritual Exercises Saint Ignatius includes a short text meant to guide and help both the director and the retreatant in the whole of the experience of the Exercises. He calls this the Presupposition, which says:

That both the giver and the maker of the Spiritual Exercises may be of greater help and benefit to each other, it should be presupposed that every good Christian ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbor's statement than to condemn it. Further, if one cannot interpret it favorably, one should ask how the other means it. If that meaning is wrong, one should correct the person with love; and if this is not enough, one should search out every appropriate mean through which, by understanding the statement in a good way, it may be saved (SpEx 22).

We are not going to get into all of the implications of this text nor discuss

all of the reasons Saint Ignatius had for placing this as the gateway passage into the Spiritual Exercises. But we must insist upon what these words say about the relationship between director and retreatant. The insights and words of the other person deserve our respect and we must create a climate of trust and believe in the retreatant just as the retreatant will the director.

This point of departure is not always evident. We often distrust the words of another by judging their comments with reluctance and suspicion. While at times there is a tricky balance between what we hear and how we interpret, there must be a foundation of mutual trust between the two.

Final recommendations of Polanco

We conclude by referring to some of the recommendations of Juan de Polanco in his Official Directory On giving the Spiritual Exercises, which highlight the role of the director in relation to the retreatant:

It is spiritual good sense to seek out a judge in his own affairs other than himself, as was said in chapter I. But this spiritual guidance by another is especially necessary when a person inexperienced in the spiritual life embarks on the path of the Spirit. The doctors even counsel not setting foot on this path rather than doing so without a master. Hence, the exercitant should disclose to the director how he is making the exercises and should give his account of them. In this way, if he has failed to understand anything fully, he can be instructed. His insights and illuminations can be subjected to scrutiny. His desolations and consolations can be discerned. And he can be helped with advice on any penances he does or temptations that beset him (Polanco 34).

And in the next section Polanco adds:

The director likewise should be careful to visit the exercitant at the proper times, to ask an account of the exercises made since his last

visit along with his manner of meditating and using the Additions, and to monitor the illuminations of the exercitant's understanding and the movement of his affections. Thus, if the exercitant is going forward nicely, the director can give his confirmation. If not, he can inquire how carefully he is making the exercises and Additions. If the exercitant's understanding is so weak or spiritually inexperienced that he cannot find matter for meditation, the director can get him started by giving him a few ideas to work on. On the other hand, if the exercitant overstresses the intellect and fails to exercise his affections, the director can instruct him to advance with equal strides in both, and if he veers too much to one side can set him straight. If the exercitant has any doubts or questions, the director can answer them. Especially with the intelligent and learned he can anticipate questions by explaining the reason for some of the things he says, especially when proposing things that may seem novel to the exercitant. If the exercitant is lukewarm in making the exercises and Additions, the director can spur him on. If he is trying too hard the director can restrain him. If he is in desolation the director can console him. If he is flooded with consolations the director can sift them. If he is agitated by temptations or diverse spirits, the director should make the inquiries needed for the discernment of spirits, applying the rules for the First Week with some persons and those for the Second with others, according to Annotations 9 and 10 (Polanco 35).

The particular relationship that exists between director and retreatant is, most importantly, at the service of an immediate encounter with God – “of seeking and finding God's will in the ordering of our life for the salvation of our soul” (SpEx 1). Just as in our own personal relationship with God, so should the relationship be between director and retreatant. In both having compassion and providing challenge for the retreatant there must be complete and total freedom – as Benjamín González Buelta similarly describes a personal relationship with God:

You are the God of perfect proximity,
of the necessary sacrament

that allows us to grow
 without too much cold and night
 so that our remains clay raw
 and without so much fire
 from sun and noontime
 that would burn us.¹⁶

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NOTES

1. Anthony De Mello, *El Canto del Pájaro*, *Sal Terrae* 23, 1996, 198.
2. *Thesaurus Spiritualis Societatis Iesu*, Santander, 1950, 316.
3. Luis Gonçalves de Câmara, *Memorial*, No. 226.
4. Luis Gonçalves de Câmara, *Memorial*, No. 313.
5. Citations of Exercises from *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, translated by George Ganss, S.J., St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992.
6. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, *Exercises and Partners*, 18 February 2002, No. 1.
7. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, *Exercises and Partners*, 18 February 2002, No. 8.
8. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, *Exercises and Partners*, 18 February 2002, No. 9.
9. Passages from the Autobiography are from *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings*, translated by Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean, London: Penguin, 1996.
10. Anthony D Mello, *El Canto del Pájaro*, *Sal Terrae*, Santander, 1996, 14.
11. Luis Gonçalves de Câmara, *Memorial*, No. 227.

12. Karl Rahner, *Saint Ignatius speaks to a Modern Jesuit*, Sal Terrae, Santander, 1979, 10-11.
13. Directorio Autógrafo No. 4. This is a detailed manuscript of notes and points by Ignatius for instructing those whom he was forming as directors of the Exercises.
14. Benjamín González Buelta, *En el aliento de Dios, Salmos de Gratitud*, Sal Terrae, Santander, 1995, 80.
15. From the Directives of Saint Ignatius, No. 12. This is a collection of advice and suggestions by Saint Ignatius, but was recorded and edited by Polanco and Nadal.
16. Benjamín González Buelta, SJ, *La Transparencia del Barro, Salmosen el camino del pobre*, Sal Terrae, Santander, 1989, 115.