

INTRODUCTION

Edward Mercieca S.J.

*Secretariat for
Ignatian Spirituality*

The Jubilee Year

The Jubilee year which began on December 03, 2005, making present and rediscovering Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier and Peter Faber, is proving to be a gift to Jesuits and to all the Ignatian network of persons and groups, together with all our apostolic commitments. The response to the wish of Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., "...to examine and intensify our fidelity to the call of the Lord...as companions of the third millennium" (Rome, Celebration of the Jubilee Year, January 06, 2005), in the light of these three saints, has been generous, creative and joyous. This Jubilee is helping us to understand better in the words of Fr. General, that "...our identity is inseparable from our mission" (G.C.34, D.2.26) and that we are invited "... to express our identity which was given to us through the Call of the King and by which we should be recognized" (Santiago, Chile. Encounter with the Chilean Jesuits, May 01, 2006.). It is impressive to see the diversity of programmes planned and the amount of material produced in each one of the ninety or so provinces in all the continents to celebrate the Jubilee: publications of books and articles, conferences, exhibitions, CD's, drama, films, concerts and paintings, programmed community meetings of renewal, spiritual retreats, annual Jesuits' eight day spiritual exercises inspired by these three saints, etc.

Certainly the Jubilee year is proving to be a great inspiration to all young and old, Jesuit and lay. Our ministries continue to receive new energy and meaning for their future. The mysticism and deep desires of these apostolic men help us rediscover our ignatian spirituality as "...an important help to be better Christians, to grow in our love of God and to find Him in all persons and situations wherever we are; to serve the world in its efforts to be freer with the freedom Christ

INTRODUCTION

wants to give us" (Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J. Conference to Lay Persons of Ignatian Spirituality, May 01, 2006, Santiago, Chile). In a time of ideological crisis we need models who invite us to live fully high ideals and to offer our whole life to radical and definite commitments.

We thought it fit to present our readers with three inspiring contributions which make solid spiritual reading during this time of the Jubilee year. "Welcoming the Gift-Urging the Mission", the common project of a group of Spanish Jesuits, invites us to rediscover our common mission and to discern together in the light of our original charism and way of proceeding; David L. Fleming, S.J.'s "Three Holy Jesuits" talks about Ignatius and the God of communication, Xavier and the Busy God, Faber and the Eucharistic Christ; the Jesuit provincial of France, Francois-Xavier Dumortier's two messages to Jesuit students can help us widen our apostolic vision and take more seriously being friends in the Lord in our Collaboration in Mission.

Directory of Ignatian Spirituality Reviews.

The Directory of Ignatian Spirituality Reviews we are presenting in this issue proposes to give readers the opportunity to have more referential access to topics they are looking for, especially through the websites and to be informed about formation programmes and courses being offered in various countries. Most ignatian reviews, if not all, are edited by Centres of Ignatian Spirituality or by groups very much related with them. We would like to encourage editors of these journals to put more material on-line. The "Review of Ignatian Spirituality" (CIS-Rome) is working on this. We hope to have all the articles ever published – in English, French and Spanish – since its inception in 1970 to be on-line and accessible to all by early 2007.

Even if the number of Ignatian Journals world wide is not numerous and is uneven among the continents, it is interesting to note a sustained effort. In Latin America eight reviews of Ignatian Spirituality are published, seven in Spanish and one – "Itaici" – in Portuguese in Brazil. From North America, besides "Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits", we also include "Review for Religious". Even if it is not intended to be a specifically ignatian spirituality journal its contribution in original and solid ignatian reflections in its long history is very significant. "Ignis" comes from India and reflects the effort of dialogue where the church is minority even if vibrant. "Polanco" (Sweden) was started and is aimed at Protestants who have discovered

INTRODUCTION

Ignatian spirituality. Some of the journals – including those with a long history and eminent reviews, such as “Christus” (France) and “The Way” (Great Britain), have gone through several distinct directions in their effort to reinterpret Ignatian Spirituality in a new expression connecting with the readers’ life and experience of today. Their challenge is to remain spirituality publications in the Ignatian tradition. “Manresa” (Spain) and “CIRE” (Colombia) and some others should be encouraged to continue publishing Ignatian Spirituality as such. Obviously, the same is true of the “Review of Ignatian Spirituality” (Rome – Italy). The inaugural issue of a new virtual review “Ignaziana” (Naples – Italy), has just been put on-line. It is meant to be a channel of Ignatian Spirituality with research papers and articles which do not easily find their space in written reviews owing to their length and academic standard.

Most editors of these reviews have additional jobs and budgets are tight. Practically all of these journals have a rather small circulation due to the decline of religious congregations in the first world. Lay persons though, reading ignatian spirituality is higher than ever and the number would increase if we offer better information. These reviews are a real asset for formation among Jesuits, religious and lay persons collaborating in mission inspired by Ignatian Spirituality.