

# **“...FOUNDED CHIEFLY FOR...”**

## **CONCERNING PRIESTHOOD IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS**

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### ***1. A context for priesthood in our present-day environment***

**T**hinking about priesthood today in the abstract and priesthood in reality is a complex subject, not easy to define and to cover theologically. It can also give rise to certain dissatisfaction with what can be said about it.<sup>1</sup> That is true of a number of theological topics, but certainly this is one of those which resist being confined in one clear and univocal definition.

The priest's role is to carry out a function in society. Immersed in that society, he is bound to share in the tradition, the values and the socio-cultural evolution in which his priestly activity is set and comes to life. In the best case, he will always aim to keep its prophetic dimension alive, but this will inevitably be 'cultural prophecy'. So, even though marked by the same prayer of consecration and the same rite of ordination, it is not the same thing to be a priest in the Congo as in Guatemala, or in India, Germany, the United States, in Spain or in Korea. The socio-cultural matrix which surrounds him will give him a view and an understanding of the world, and so make him part of itself, assimilating him to some extent. Strange as it may sound to some people, the

laying-on of hands does not ‘immunise’ against all the energies present in the culture where he finds himself. To think he can define himself apart from it, and to try to do so, is simplistic, and very often the primary cause of fundamentalisms that have nothing to do with religion.

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The theology and significance of the priesthood, and of the priest, have passed through a complete trajectory in the last forty years. Maybe because of our socio-political situation, in Spain it has covered a wide trajectory between two extremes:

*from* a quasi-sacred figure, model of perfection, integrated into a state of sanctity and able to be a mediator of salvation through his spontaneous access to God, custodian of the truth and master of many consciences, with prestige and social recognition conferred automatically by his ‘status’, *to* a figure bound to be unknown, ignored or exotic, visible representative of an institution which in our time finds itself at very low levels of appreciation and social credibility.

Here very many deep aspects come together, beyond the terms of this reflection and the competence of the present writer, aspects that belong to the sociology of religion. The priesthood in a religious institution, seeks its meaning and develops its existence in a context where the religious significance of life is of less concern and disappearing more and more. Loss of the sense of the sacred, lack of interest in the transcendental questions of existence, absence of the question of God’s existence or non-existence, immanent anthropologies completely satisfied with their openness to a finite time-scale, a semantic gap in the great theological terms around priesthood: salvation, redemption, Mass, sacrifice, creation, sin, grace ....; society has been running away without stopping from ‘religious’ concerns that used to bind it to the visible institution of the Church. The fundamental preoccupations of the one are no longer of interest to the other. ‘At least they will leave us to manage death’, the clergy might think, sadly; but society is taking even that away from them. The lack of interest, at least socially recognised, in the great eschatological questions, leaves one of its great traditional centres of power, the key to endless life through the Catholic rites for a good death, outside the Church.

For those who understand priesthood more on these lines, the priest's energy comes from his *ordination*, which raises him to a spiritual or pseudo-mystical sphere within the Church, different from the rest of the People of God. Ordination is desired and lived, partly because he believes that he enters and shares in this sphere of spiritual reality which other people, not ordained, are not able to reach. Underlying this there is also a particular vision of the Mystery of Jesus, who does not come to reveal himself to everyone with complete radicality. A part of him remains hidden, and will be unveiled solely to those who receive the sacrament. God in Christ is more Pantocrator clothed in majesty and authority than Galilean worn out and tired from the journey, or Nazarene executed and nailed to a cross. Sharing in this Powerful Christ is also a partial sharing in his majesty and power.

The priest's energy comes also from his faithfulness to *prayer*, as the place of unconditional encounter with the Lord, prayer that is largely liturgical, the prayer of the Church (the breviary especially), lived with fidelity and with a great concern for preserving forms and methods.

From this intimacy with Christ his action and *apostolate* also flow. The accent falls notably on liturgy and explicitly priestly ministries: confession, other sacraments, explicit spiritual direction, catechesis... all actions related to a 'healing' character which seeks to reproduce the gestures and words of Jesus. Other kinds of action will not be ministries, because considered as less priestly; so less appreciation is allowed to more 'social' ministries, which are to be carried out by lay-people or by non-ordained religious.

As part of this interpretation, the *vision of Church* must be more hierarchical than popular, and God allows himself to be known in the Church more through the Pope or the Bishop, real priests, than through

the baptised people. The body of Christ is the Church, most clearly in its hierarchical structures, of which the priest is part. The vertical view of the Church and its objective element have primacy over the personal experience of grace, love which have already been poured out in our hearts. Uncritical obedience is always the right thing. To say 'Church' suggests first of all mitre and crook. In the ordained priest's perception of himself, his life is

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## ***2. Between two theological coordinates***

Along with the post-conciliar evolution of theologies of priesthood, different ways of living as priests also evolved. How we should understand this important aspect of our Church life is a matter for discussion, sometimes heated, and also, sadly, a motive for division inside the Church community. Since we are heirs to a socio-political situation which is so markedly binary, there is an underlying spontaneous application of it in various spheres inside the Church: progressives and conservatives, right-wing and left-wing. How we understand, and how we understand ourselves in our *being* as priests and in our *acting* as priests, reveals unintentionally a whole articulation of underlying theological values: a vision of man/woman (anthropology)<sup>4</sup>, a particular interpretation of Christ (Christology), a vision and evaluation of the believing community (ecclesiology), a way of understanding mediation and grace (sacramentology), an image of God, a way of thinking about the beyond (eschatology) and also, in many cases, a vision and evaluation of the world. The priesthood / priest is the tip of an iceberg under which other deep-lying theological problems are quietly submerged.

To the extent that society has gained in openness it has also favoured pluralistic positions at the heart of the Church. As regards the priesthood, and in very general terms, a double vision of its ministerial dimension might be formulated. Taking the risk of a certain reductionism, here we shall accentuate the most typical characteristics of its profile, to be more graphic in describing it. Without needing to go to the extremes to which they might point, I think that they may help us to come closer to this complex problematic. One of these two lines is more Christocentric, the other more ecclesiocentric. The two are complementary and need each other, because we cannot think of one without the other.

### ***2. 1 The Christocentric approach***

This approach accentuates the experience of personal friendship with Christ, of conformity with him. It tends to see the priest as a person specially bound to Jesus, *and Jesus to him*, with an awareness of a special call to sanctity and with certain efficacious powers of mediation before God, due precisely to his intimacy with Christ.

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about visible exercise of priestly functions rather than about being human or baptised. Clothes, colours, forms, manners, gestures and language are important as marking out a special person. What he *risks* is losing sight of the community as a theological place, and making his brethren ‘second class Christians’, seeing the Church as above all a clerical body with a direct line to the Spirit, and amidst so much sacristy and incense forgetting the little, the weak and the poor. He runs the risk of slipping down a slope of self-complacency into a pseudo-sanctity which he believes is conferred automatically by the priestly ‘state’ in which he has been placed.

For priesthood understood in this way it is clear that the *community* takes on a passive role in the Church, including the local Church, and its principal activity is to let itself be instructed by the leader. The priest established here often thinks that it is not necessary for a lay-person to receive theological formation (Sacred Theology) because it is not necessary for his role in society. He has to be a good professional, but to direct and animate his life of faith, the really important thing, there is the priest. Access to theological learning belongs most properly to the person who has been ordained, which promotes, indirectly, an increase of power and inequality, in keeping the other man (not to mention the other woman) in the poverty of ignorance; good will, work well done, together with trust in the ordained leader, are enough to save the lay man or woman.

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This vision of the Church supports a way of living and celebrating the *sacraments*, especially the Eucharist, as primary source of identity. The priest set in this way is preoccupied with presiding at, or at least concelebrating the Eucharist always and visibly, and easily feels uncomfortable, maybe involved in a little betrayal of the Lord, if he participates in the Eucharist among the people, as one of them, a thing difficult to accept because, in fact, he is not ‘one of them’. Not infrequently the Eucharist loses its community dimension, even though many of the faithful may be present. The important thing for the priest in this way of thinking is to celebrate the Mass, and it is less important whether or not others of the faithful are present. There is also the one who prefers to celebrate alone, feeling, perhaps, greater intimacy and exclusive relationship with the Lord. If he presides, the presidency will be solemn and clear, as is

proper to one who speaks with authority; the rubrics will be followed in detail, and some things will be said in Latin, to maintain a certain exclusive 'complicity' between the one who presides and God.

As for eschatology, the world may be interpreted in this way of thinking more as a vocation to fulfilment at the end of time than as a place of the real presence of the Creator in the present time. The world has meaning as vocation to the future, and passing through it may call for much 'resistance' until God wishes to call us to his definitive and infinite fullness. Here, the Kingdom has not yet come, it is still to come. To pass through this world necessarily implies struggle to win the world to come, following that of the 'vale of tears' which has done us so much evil, and the temporal structures in force (economic, political, social) in history are not to be a primary concern for the believer. The Church has other concerns, loftier and more spiritual; disasters, injustices, catastrophes.... are in the hands of God. Rather than getting involved in the world with actions for justice, always an inconvenient and dangerous word, we should pray for it, and then we shall never go wrong.

## ***2.2 An ecclesiocentric approach***

This approach accentuates the reference to the community, and, therefore, the pastoral dimension of the priest, a shepherd with the people and for the people. He makes his work and activity the centre of his vocation, with the risk of losing sight of its transcendent dimension. He is clear that to be a priest is above all to serve the brethren, and that the washing of feet is the true Eucharist. He will be available without picking and choosing for all kinds of service, even though they have little or nothing to do with the ministries 'proper' to the priest. God is more Jesus made low and humiliated than Christ exalted and clothed with power; Nazareth and Palestine are places for contemplation more commonly than the Heavenly Jerusalem triumphant and in glory.

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In this line, the vision of the *Church* is horizontal, more democratic and about communion than vertical-hierarchical. God's will can be known through the will and consent of the community. The Body of Christ is the Church, above all the suffering, poor and fragile part of the community, and every other structure within the community has meaning only if it is at the service of this primary dimension of commitment to the poor and help for the little ones.

The way of understanding and celebrating the *sacraments* reflects this image of the Church. Liturgies are more participative, less solemn and 'mysterious', without strange theological formulas or sacred spaces that exclude. The preferred geometrical figure is the circle, which seeks to include all as equal, women and children as well.

The *world* and history in this way of thinking are places of revelation, which speak to us of God, and in which it is possible and probable for us to reach Him, because in them God has willed to make himself accessible. Here the eschatological horizon of the world and of history is less of a concern, because what is important now is that 'man may live', and live with dignity. In the Lord's name, we have to block current or structural injustices, disasters or catastrophes effectively, to place our brothers and sisters in the dignified position of creature, where God wants them to be here and now. It is a line of thinking very much concerned with the present. Good works are not seen as punctilious practices of charity, but as the systematic attempt to transform unjust and oppressive structures; the true follower of Jesus cannot give up this commitment to history. The Kingdom is already present among us.

If in the previous line of thought the accent falls on the ontological character of the sacrament, now it falls on its functionality, in its 'so that'.

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Commitment is a 'magic' word which integrates a large part of the meaning of his vocation. One must be committed to history, as Jesus was committed even to giving his life. But commitment to history is not lacking in risks: generous and unconditional

dedication, long and self-denying days of dedication, justify 'fiddles' with his explicit spiritual life. There are some more or less formulated underlying principles used for bargaining: 'with the poor, everything is prayer'... There is a priesthood of notable pastoral leadership, and joined with the pastoral



there may also come personal gratification. For this line of thinking it is easy to appropriate a 'flock' and to feel that what he has been building on the basis of so much work and effort is his own. Unbridled activism can also choke the community's initiative. Looking without discernment at the poor (of whatever kind) may make the priest in this position slide into a progressive detachment from the historical-hierarchical mediations of the Church and turn him into a solitary freelance uncritically convinced of the goodness of his attitudes and criteria.

### ***3. Proposals for an Ignatian synthesis***

GC31 (1965) argued for a clear integration. 'Each priest must integrate all these aspects of his life into a unified, personal, concrete spirituality; he must, with the interior help of the Holy Spirit and under the guidance of superiors, bring them to fulfilment in an organic and vital unity'. It continues clearly 'we need to avoid all one-sided solutions and tendencies; for then some single aspect, be it humanistic, religious or priestly, is so stressed that others fall into the background...'<sup>5</sup>

Fr. Arrupe went on encouraging this proposal to integrate the two trends and explained the tension, seeking to reconcile the paradox of their extremes: '[priests] separated from the world but immersed in it, weak human beings from whom God's strength is required; committed and living present reality in depth, but reaching out towards the eternal';<sup>6</sup> creative ways of integrating 'being with the Lord' and 'working with him and like him';<sup>7</sup> watching him and knowing him in his 'innumerable acts of prayer' which also lead him to 'move, act, wear himself out: Jesus was active, very active'.<sup>8</sup> He also recognised clearly this division within the Society: 'It has been possible to say that St. Ignatius understood priesthood more in 'the missionary' than in the 'cultic' sense, and that nevertheless, in the life of Jesuits, at times post-Tridentine theology has had more influence than the Formula of the Institute when it comes to understanding and practising priesthood.'<sup>9</sup>

*integrating 'being with the Lord' and 'working with him and like him'*

More recently, in 1997, the former Fr. General, P-H. Kolvenbach, still recalled the diversity of orientations within the Society at that crucial

moment, and was amazed to discover how for some leading ecclesiastic the priesthood could be thought incompatible with social service. He asks ‘What is there to say about a letter asking for the canonisation of Blessed Fr.

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Hurtado of Chile not to be carried forward, because he was too involved in social action, a field which ought to be exclusively for lay Christians?’<sup>10</sup> Will it be possible to reconcile these two ways of thinking?

Fr. Arrupe’s very life, not only his writings, may be an image of this reconciliation. Looking into the inner world of his inclinations and devotions allows us

to understand the personal integration of a man devoted to Christ and passionate about history.<sup>11</sup> In the same way Kolvenbach notes: ‘If we separate what is united in Christ – the bread of life and daily bread, the last Supper and the washing of feet – it is impossible to ensure the consistency of the Jesuit’s personal life and working life within the apostolic body of the Society.’ ‘It is, effectively, in the celebration of these [the sacraments] that the call to ‘help souls’ ought to culminate; the consistency of a priestly life, marked permanently by a sacramental consecration which calls to be realised in appropriate words and gestures, leads precisely to them.’<sup>12</sup>

#### **4. We Jesuits**

In this culture, at this moment, with these coordinates of understanding of priesthood, where do we Jesuits come from? Where and how do we want to be? The second of these questions ought not to be separated from the first, but rather to take it up creatively, to aim to respond today out of the indispensable values of the charism we have received.

##### **4.1. A look back to the origins**

In our beginnings, the priesthood naturally and spontaneously became part of the first group in Paris. *Ignatius’* progress towards the priesthood, of which, curiously, he says hardly anything in the *Autobiography* and other writings, seems to flow uncritically into the priestly option. Ignatius

left Loyola with a certain intention of dedicating his life to God and to helping souls in Jerusalem, which, though this is not made explicit, we may well think included the project of a life of celibacy and poverty, dedicated to some ministries close to those of priests: preaching, initiation into prayer (meditation on sin, examen), catechesis, spiritual conversation.

The crisis of Jerusalem, expulsion from the Holy Land by the authority of papal bulls, shows a will to filial obedience to the Church, and the first interpretation that what the Church orders is what God wills for me. [*Aut.46*]. It is the first time that the expression 'the will of God' appears in the *Autobiography* [*Aut.50*], curiously before such an objective request, and when Ignatius' own judgment seems firmly set on the opposite.<sup>13</sup> Between the confused and agitated stays in Alcalá and Salamanca Ignatius decides to go to Paris to achieve the academic qualifications that will allow him to speak about God in public and in private without being molested by the Inquisition. About this time we begin to see priesthood in Ignatius.<sup>14</sup> In Paris he moves smoothly towards priestly ordination, which seems to be a point not questioned by the group.<sup>15</sup> Let us look briefly at particular cases within the group.

*Favre* made a vow of chastity very young and grew in wisdom and the fear of God at the hands of his master, the devout priest Pedro Veliardo. Francis Xavier appears in 1531 in the registers of the University of Paris as 'Cleric of the diocese of Pamplona'. *Lainez* felt a vocation early, through Matt.16 'He who would follow me...', coming to interpret it as 'there could be no greater cross for him than to marry and take a wife.' *Salmerón* came to Alcalá to study Biblical philology in 1528, when he was only 13 years old, with intentions similar to those of Lainez.

*Bobadilla*, for his part, received the clerical tonsure at the age of 11, and moved to Paris intending to making progress in the study of classical languages. Of the three who joined the group later, *Claude Jay* was already a priest (28 March 1528, nine years and three months before the rest of the group.) Jay had had a priest-uncle since 1524. His home was near the Charterhouses of Valen and Melan, and not far from the monastery of Reposoir, where one of Favre's uncles was prior. He also knew the same master as Favre, Pierre Viellard de la Roche (1517-1519). Meeting Favre in Savoy in 1533 was decisive in directing him to the Sorbonne and to joining the group in Paris. The unknown *Paschase Broët* came to Paris when he had already been ordained for nine years (12 March 1524), and a little more than thirteen when the rest of his companions received orders. (1527). *Jean*

*Codure* entered in Paris with a bachelor's degree in theology and with the clerical tonsure; he was to be the first to die (Rome 1541).

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the moment to recall it. Polanco remarks that it was providence which helped them not to join any of the already existing religious orders. The only thing that was more or less clear to them was their desire to go to Jerusalem and spend their lives there.

+ **Ignatius**, in a letter to Juan Verdolay (Venice, 24/7/1537), also has little to say

specifically about priesthood: 'Having arrived here in Venice on the feast of St. John the Baptist, we completed the reception of all the orders, including priesthood.'

+ **Favre** says in his *Memorial*: 'At Easter 1537 we dispersed to various places [...] so that those who were not yet priests might prepare themselves better for such a high ministry.' (*Recuerdos*, 17) And in a letter to Diego Gouvea (23 November 1538), speaking of the characteristics of this first group, he says that they were united in one same company (in hac societate colligate) under obedience to the sovereign Pontiff (devovimus nosmetipsos summo pontifici) and prepared to be sent anywhere, but makes no reference to priesthood.

+ **Lainez** writes in his *Epistola* to Polanco (Bologna 1547): 'and in this way [waiting to go to Jerusalem] we prepared ourselves for the priesthood to which we were ordained on the feast of St. John the Baptist, with much consolation to ourselves and to Bishop Arbense [...] Then, having all been made priests and having said our first masses, apart from Fr. Master Ignatius, who said his much later, we thought about dividing ourselves among several Italian universities.'<sup>16</sup>

This spontaneous familiarity with the ordained ministry, which seems to integrate uncritically and harmoniously into the group, passed a little later into the Formula of the Institute, where we just detect a timid allusion to the priesthood amidst preoccupation with the mission: 'And all the members of the Society, since they should be priests....'<sup>17</sup> This natural

appropriation comes down to our own time in the person of Fr. Arrupe: our attention is caught afresh by the almost complete absence of references to priesthood in the pages already quoted from I. Iglesias on Fr. Arrupe in his 'Aportaciones a su biografía interior'. To sketch an outline of the then general's mystical experience, Iglesias considers such deep aspects as gratitude, the need for intimate contact with the Lord (991-992), purity of soul (981), the vow of perfection ((1002-1997), abnegation, the second conversion (1004-1006), devotion to the Sacred Heart (982-984), poverty (1008-1010)... but he leaves out priesthood, to which he only refers in relation, again, to the Sacred Heart (994), and briefly in connection with Arrupe's first Mass.<sup>18</sup>

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#### **4.2 Three non-Ignatian characteristics of priesthood**

##### ***a. Far away, very far away, from power***

Priesthood in the Society, to be such, can never be understood or interpreted as a priesthood bestowing *power*, even though in certain contexts the community, or obedience, bestows on the priest an *authority* to be exercised as a service to the Church.<sup>19</sup> This narrow boundary between receiving and using authority and exercising it as power must be the subject of constant discernment and examination, personal and institutional. Reference to some elements in the *Exercises* such as indifference, the third way and desire for identification with Christ poor, humble and humiliated [cf. Exx. 23, 155, 167] is an effective antidote to displace, gently, the omnipresent temptation to power. Even if we never recognise explicitly that we are seeking power (something which, however we look at it, goes against the model of virtue recognised socially, religiously, institutionally<sup>20</sup>), we also recognise that on not a few occasions tendencies and drives, more or less conscious, pull us to build a powerful ego, personally and as Society.

In this area of the planet in which we have been placed, and without denying anything said in the first point about the socio-cultural situation in which we find ourselves, the temptation to power reaches us, for example, through the ostentation of owning numerous institutions, and, in short, through holding the key to many jobs, management of large sums of money, and a name in our centres which is still socially recognised. A provincial, for example, undoubtedly has great authority, but also the opportunity to accumulate and dispose of a great deal of power. This is also true of many Jesuits in the various platforms or institutions where we work as directors, rectors or heads of some section, department, delegation, commission, secretariat... Our priesthood carries with it, like an ‘attachment’, participation in an institution which, badly run, could turn itself into a power-machine rather than an instrument for service in the Vineyard. This conditions a way of carrying out a work, a manner of understanding and developing human relationships and a particular way of establishing links with our own institutions, that are unthinkable and unimaginable for the non-Jesuit men and women who are our companions.

Being placed in priesthood as power can be another way of covering up insecurity or fear of social and cultural irrelevance. We can deceive ourselves naively, thinking that we are witnesses to the Lord through our

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being priests, when the image that we project, or for which we are respected or accepted, is simply that we are custodians of the power and prestige recognised in the institution, beyond or in spite of the qualities which inspire it or should inspire it.

In many other parts of the planet access to priesthood in the Society of Jesus is often linked with high economic and social class, and

not infrequently means the opportunity to escape from poverty or misery. So, getting to be a priest, ‘destined goal’ for the misguided vocation, brings with it access to a package of power and authority, sometimes along with echoes of ‘caste’ or of prestigious, highly-esteemed social roles. The priest can be seen as a person who incarnates an economic power made visible in large institutions (colleges, universities), cultural power (study and degrees) in face of people with very little education, a moral power (direction

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finds in the Eucharist the meaning of its vocation to work in history, with help for souls as the rationale of its existence.<sup>23</sup> Our mission as Jesuits, our service to the Church and the world, cannot be measured by dedication to the liturgies that we celebrate, cannot be evaluated by the number of explicitly ministerial activities that we carry out in the course of a day.

In this sense, over the last 30-40 years we have seen a certain movement towards a ‘more liturgical’ liturgy in the Society, thanks, no doubt, to changes in personal and group sensibilities, or to social and cultural circumstances which are changing in many countries. I think we have gained in the spiritual and formal quality of celebrations; a number of forms, behaviours, much of the rich symbolism of our liturgy, have been recovered.... without, on the other hand, inventing anything new, but coming closer, in a sensitive way, to the Church’s directives on celebration with the People of God.

All the same, once again a window is opening to the light of discernment on an important point, so that we may go on being attentive to the direction in which we are developing. Today, in this movement ‘back to the temple’, in times of crisis over relevance and meaning, we are in danger of affirming ourselves through what distinguishes us most from other people - our ministerial priesthood - trying to see there, in my opinion mistakenly, the core of a fragile identity which may disguise other kinds of personal, communitarian or institutional insecurities as yet in shadow.

The goodness of recovering the richness of the liturgy - with the moderation proper to our charism -<sup>24</sup> should not be confused with an attitude of falling back on the protection and security which the temple offers us, before the challenge of a difficult cultural context where we have to live in an often thankless and disagreeable climate which helps little in building a religious-Jesuit identity. The dynamic of possible deception, given the apparent objective validity of the goal – to celebrate more and better Masses – may be very subtle; we have to discern.

### *c. Narrow vision and cold heart*

Neither are we, nor do we wish to be, a local priesthood, static, in a certain way autonomous or, colloquially, ‘parochial’, as if the Spirit would be exhausted crossing the street from the residence or college where I have lived all my life, or a little way beyond my permanent province. The



experience of Paris, perhaps the most cosmopolitan city of sixteenth-century Europe, the scope of the group's desire formulated in Montmartre, or the expansion of heart to 'whatsoever provinces they may choose to send us – whether they desire to send us among the Turks or any other infidels, even those who live in the regions called the Indies'<sup>25</sup>, re-dimensioned the intellectual and mystical boundaries of the first group in Paris, and in them of all.<sup>26</sup> It is not,

*it is not, then, a priesthood  
lived exclusively from or for  
a single mission, institution,  
area or task*

then, a priesthood lived exclusively from or for a single mission, institution, area or task. 'Ignatius would not be ordained priest for one diocese or fixed place, but to be available apostolically at the service of the Vicar of Christ on earth.'<sup>27</sup> Rooted in Jesus Christ and bound together in him,<sup>28</sup> we can look at history without fear from many and various perspectives. We are not Jesuits settled in a conformist priesthood, satisfied with the shortness of its reach. Particular interests, whether personal, community or provincial, become one of the most powerful brakes on the development of the Society's mission. As Jesuits we look at the world in its 'whole expanse or circuit', [Exx.102], and this look keeps awake a certain 'dissatisfaction', which disturbs us with the radical question for all discernment: What is to be done?' [Aut.50], and keeps us attentive to circumstances, times, persons and places.

#### ***4.3. Jesuit priesthood in its context.***

##### ***a. Religious priesthood.<sup>29</sup>***

We want to be men of good will, men of prayer, men who desire to live with Christ and for Christ, men who have lived their lives through the evangelical counsels so as to become simpler, poorer and more austere, more available.<sup>30</sup> This religious life, understood according to the charism received and the institute in which the charism is made history, life and flesh, offers a context for priesthood received and lived.

Our religiosity loses its abstract suffix in looking at Jesus. We become religious in Christ, 'despite the differences, what unites us as Jesuits is Christ

*Jesuits know who they  
are by looking at him*

and the desire to serve him.... Jesuits know who they are by looking at him.<sup>31</sup> However, we look at him not in any way, or from any position, we look at him from the absorbing, never-to be-surrendered experience of the

*Exercises*, and from the spiritual home granted to us by the *Constitutions*. So, after the years of formation, the experience of the Exercises is offered to us as priests, helping us to go deeper into the religious nature of our mission, deepening our interior knowledge of Christ, so that we can love and serve more,

as he did, and transforming the way our hearts see, so that they see the world as divinity emanating from God, as water comes from the source or rays from the sun. [Exx.237]. Sinners but called, ‘fragile and weak’<sup>32</sup> but with deliberate choice [Exx.98], ready to act and suffer for him, but happy to share what he experienced [Exx.197].

Only in this way are we priests. ‘It is a characteristic note of the ‘mission’ and of the Society as body, and forms, for that reason, an Ignatian note of great value in the fulfilment of its mission.’<sup>33</sup> GC32 refers to the Society as a priestly Society ‘since all, including coadjutor brothers and the scholastics take part in one unique apostolate: that which the Society performs as a priestly body. This term is understood not only in the full sense of baptismal priesthood, but in the specific sense of ordained priesthood.’ By the priestliness of the Society its members contribute to helping the neighbour Word and Sacrament, which underlie more or less explicitly every ministry that we carry out <sup>34</sup> This is the first of the aspects which Kolvenbach picks out in his address to the Congregation of Procurators: ‘the first ten Jesuits are above all priests who, coming from different countries, expressed the desire to join themselves together in one single apostolic ‘body’, in a ‘priesthood’, not around a bishop at the service of a diocese, but around the Supreme Pontiff at the service of the universal Church.’ <sup>35</sup> The priesthood is for us a ‘meeting-point’, in that our way of entering into familiarity with God and our way of coming to the world to care for, help and heal, but at the same time to be cared for, helped and healed in our weak fragility, flow together: word, sacrament, conversations, catechesis, classes, management, prisoners, the sick, books or camps....<sup>36</sup>

***b. Humble and learned***

The first impression made by the group in Paris introduced the *preti reformati*, the reformed priests, into a clerical body in urgent need of new encouragement and renewal. Besides revitalisation of the spiritual life and deep friendship with Jesus Christ, this reform included as an indispensable element solid human and theological formation. Certainly the long stage of formation for the Jesuit is a specially concentrated period of learning, but study must accompany the whole process of following the Lord.<sup>37</sup> Paraphrasing the gospel text, we may follow the Lord without sandals, without a knapsack and without a

*a priestly Society 'since all,  
including coadjutor  
brothers and the scholastics  
take part in one unique  
apostolate*

stick, but, Jesus will say to us, with a book: 'take a book, a good book, for the road.'<sup>38</sup> This is not only good practice to keep a person agile and young, and to avoid obsolete ways of thought and expression. It is a way of serving better, and so of showing the love which flows from above and passes through our lives for the sake of others. The Jesuit priesthood is priesthood for the world, and the world is a complex reality. Serving in this world involves clarity, observation, a critical attitude, evaluation, deliberation, putting into practice, Examen, decision, action.<sup>39</sup> 'Few things frighten me more', Fr. Arrupe used to say, 'than the Society giving yesterday's answers to today's problems.'

So Benedict XVI reminded us in GC35: 'The Church thus urgently needs people with a deep and sound faith, a well-grounded culture and genuine human and social sensitivity [...] Faithful to its best tradition [the Society of Jesus] must persevere in taking great pains to form its members in knowledge and virtue and not to be content with mediocrity....'<sup>40</sup> In his homily at the closing Eucharist of GC35, Fr. General Adolfo Nicolás echoed this indispensable point of the charism, in speaking of mission: 'The gospel tells us: Go, go. We have indeed gone and we have encountered many problems [...] We have come to understand that going does not mean simply getting on a plane but entering into the culture, into the life of the people. 'Going' means study, research, entering into the life of the people.'<sup>41</sup>

The world has ceased forever to be a static reality. It is a living dynamic, continuously changing and evolving. Thinking and formulating is our way of entering into the dynamic of the world's evolution, and of being able to intervene in it as Good News. Much more important than growing in erudition, studying is our method of connecting with the Cardoner experience, which was granted to Ignatius passively;<sup>42</sup> trying to understand the divine core of everything that exists, to let ourselves be surprised by its inexhaustible newness and to act in it in the most fitting way. In this we collaborate with the dynamic working of the Spirit in the world.<sup>43</sup>

*solid human and  
theological formation*

The Society's activity, our influence in history, is not random, nor spontaneous, it is *discreet* activity, that is, discerned so as to try to settle on what may be the best possible action, not for the glory of man, nor even for the glory of God, but for the *greater* glory of God.<sup>44</sup> To be learned, or to study, is one way of respecting, first of all, and then loving and serving the people who are with us. No Jesuit ministry, whatever it may be, can fail to be a learned ministry.<sup>45</sup>

### *c. Ready welcome and social help*

Another has disposed of us and we have accepted his disposition. Another has thought of us and called us here, now, in this way. And here we are. His desire precedes us. Only in this way can we come to be missionaries to spread sacred doctrine throughout the whole world. [Exx.145]. Only in this way shall we be able to keep ourselves in loving humility. 'Priesthood for the mission marked by the gratuity of this apostolic availability.'<sup>46</sup> Our apostolate, which is made specific in a determined mission and task, cannot be carried out on the margins of priesthood, but by integrating it and making it the silent foundation of what we do.

It is a priesthood which integrates the preparatory prayer of the Exercises<sup>47</sup> and helps our actions in ministry to be a revelation of the Spirit's work within us. It is help for souls, helping more and better to reveal what it means to be a creature and to place the creature with his Creator. We help in this, and for some or much of it we make use of priesthood, a priesthood

at work, in ministry received. In this sense we are carers more than priests, even though the term may please us less, maybe because it is simpler and humbler. 'Jesuits have exercised their ministry most particularly....where there are not others to minister to these needs, and where the more universal good may be found.'<sup>48</sup> 'The Society cares for those persons who are either totally neglected, or inadequately attended to. This is the basic reason for the founding of the Society, this is its power, this is what makes it distinctive in the Church'<sup>49</sup>

And this is all done as corporate mission. What builds us together as a body and gives us cohesion in a more spiritual way is the bond with the Vicar of Christ, 'our head and chief foundation', as Bobadilla recognised.<sup>50</sup> We serve on mission chosen and recognised by the Vicar of Christ and we are on the mission with that ecclesial horizon, which supports and guides us.<sup>51</sup> The mission received from the provincial or the general is derived from a corporate availability and obedience to the Holy See, which in short supports the '*circa missiones*'. This horizon, symbolised in the Supreme Pontiff, roots every mission of the Society in the Church; our vineyard is the vineyard of the Church, the Lord's vineyard. There are not two vineyards to work in, even though we may work either beyond the institutional boundaries or included ideologically, theologically or culturally in what the Church institution can reach and include in its ordinary mission.

To renew our priesthood as Jesuits is to ask ourselves honestly about how we are in relation to the Body. Not only about *what* we are doing – certainly good and of high quality – nor only about *where from*, which can only be from Christ, but also about *how*. Our 'sanctification' through work, or the spontaneous unfolding of our capacity to love, which is revealed in service, is corporate, relational. We do not carry out individual actions of good service, even though they may really be very virtuous actions, maybe even holy. But we serve as part of a Body which seeks to be organic love of God for the world, and which enters into history dynamically articulated into provinces, projects, commissions, teams.... actions. A whole Spirit-filled process, which, interpreted in this way, is what keeps making us 'contemplatives in action.'

*helping more and better to  
reveal what it means to be  
a creature and to place the  
creature with his Creator*

*d. Poverty and emptiness*

In order to act in this way, dispossessing ourselves, we go on making ourselves poor, and our poverty consists in being only, however active we may be, a channel for grace.

God comes to the world through what we do in our ministries; it is his practical way of breaking out of himself, as water bursts out of the spring or rays from the sun. But it is necessary to be very poor and to become very *humbled* to live in this absolute receptivity of love and to be sure to translate it into works of service for our brothers and sisters. But it is here, in this way, that Ignatius wants us to be. ‘The extension [of apostolic service] is only that, when charity is extended; the means are only those that may be practised by the humility of a simple priest.’<sup>52</sup>

Very often we look on priesthood, or interpret it, in an ascending mode, more appropriate to the mediator of the Jewish temple, as the one who, raising his hands with the offerings in the name of the assembly, offers the life and work of human beings to God, like incense. This upward dimension is necessary, indispensable as vehicle for the community’s religious desire. But the descending dimension is no less present in our ministries. It receives God’s love coming down from above, and applies it effectively through the ministries, translating it into help for souls. In this

way we are mediators of God’s love, and help to make it visible in history. This is the visibility which God asks, that our ministries may be so poor, empty of our own selves, that is, transparent to God, that people may recognise us by the love of God that flows in us, made authentic and credible in the ministry of help.

*this acceptance of the  
action of God who goes  
before us makes us more  
humble*

Nadal asserted that ‘Our house is the world’, but the world is inhabited by God [Exx.235], who dwells in all creatures, and stays faithfully in them, working and labouring unceasingly, without interruption, in the world.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, what Nadal did not say – maybe for fear of the Inquisition? – but very probably thought, is that ‘Our house is in God’, and our way of uniting ourselves with him is through our actions, which we call ministries.<sup>54</sup> Our activity is a channel of grace, of gift to the world; we work and labour in the world as God works and labours in it and also in us ‘being a temple in us.’

This acceptance of the action of God who goes before us makes us more humble than if we refused it through false humility and a desire to maintain our absolute autonomy.<sup>55</sup>

The third of the traditional mystical ways, the unitive, takes form in the Society's charism as we are incorporated in the Spirit into God's work in history<sup>56</sup>. Through him, as we are oriented according to the preparatory prayer and made poor by our humility in Christ, knowing that we are only stewards of something holy which comes from above, people cannot not feel themselves helped. For us, doing is a way of being, and this way of being reflects God's way of being, giving ourselves, turning towards the world, which is nothing but allowing his being to flow through our own.

The ministries are, then, a theological place of encounter and of union with God. We ourselves, as ourselves and through ourselves, do nothing; we should never manage to become contemplatives, even though we might be very active. The world already has a stole over it before I get there, the Creator himself who has been dwelling in it and sustaining it from the beginning.<sup>57</sup> The place where I put myself to celebrate is secondary, an echo or memory of the sacred dimension of the real, of what exists.<sup>58</sup> God makes everything holy through his presence, like the rays of the Sun or the waters of the Spring.

### ***Conclusion***

Priesthood is the hub that integrates a dedicated life. Priesthood for the Jesuit may be the integrating hub of his individual life, which cannot exist without spiritual life, or the life of the Spirit in us. Our mysticism consists in this, in living united. We can think about ourselves only as our priesthood, which cannot be read simply as one more dimension of our life, along with working life, leisure and community life. Mysteries of the life of Christ, ministries-action-work, creation-world-history are the language of the same spiritual life, in the Spirit. In Eucharist for the world, which takes up and raises love made work, where we offer life incorporating all the lives in our little world, expression of care for creation and the desire to draw it towards its identity. Eucharist also which welcomes what comes 'from above', or from the depths – it doesn't matter which – and sends us back to the world in works which are transparent to a love eternally received.<sup>59</sup>

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**“...FOUNDED CHIEFLY FOR...”**

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***Finally....***

*‘Be good.* Good in your face, which should be relaxed, serene and smiling; good in your look, a look which first surprises and then attracts. Jesus’ look was always good, divinely good. [...] Be good in the way you listen.....

*Be good* in your hands: hands which give, which help, which wipe away tears, which grasp the hand of the poor and the sick to give them courage, which embrace the opponent and bring him to agreement, which write a kind letter to someone suffering through our fault [...]

*Be good* in speaking and judging; be good, with the old, if you are young; and if you are old, be good with the young.

Looking at Jesus, to be his image, be, in this world and in this Church, contemplatives in action: transform your ministerial activity into a means for union with God.

*Be good.* The priest should certainly be a man of holiness, of faith, of hope, of the joy of the word, of silence, of suffering. But he ought, above all, to be good: he ought to be the man of love’.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In these pages we shall refer to priesthood as ordained ministry in the Society of Jesus. So we cannot deal with subjects as topical today as the ordained priesthood of women, the priesthood of the coadjutor Brothers in the Society of Jesus or the priesthood of all believers, all very important subjects which call for individual separate studies.

<sup>2</sup> So I felt myself more or less meaningless during the terrible terrorist attacks of 11 May in Madrid when I visited the IFEMA pavilion where they had collected the dead bodies, and anguished relatives were waiting for the terrible news of the death of a loved one. Psychologists, anthropologists and volunteers of all kinds and with all kinds of motives were dealing competently with this situation traditionally in the hands of the ‘clergy’.

<sup>3</sup> Juan Maria Uriarte in his recent document in *Vida Nueva* no. 2673 (5-11 September 2009) ‘Ser presbítero en el seno de nuestra cultura’ (‘Being a priest at the heart of our culture’) points out the following cultural trends which have an impact on the priest: a culture pervaded by narcissism; a culture which favours the individual;



which promotes sexual liberation; which weakens the sense of belonging; which emphasizes the satisfaction of desires; which does not build up 'basic trust'; which marginalizes God. It is also a culture which is more critical, more university-educated, more egalitarian, more challenging, more liberated, more questioning, more pluralistic, more open, more intercultural than that of 50 years ago, when the clergy and the Church had everything too much clearer.

<sup>4</sup> This is not just about a concession to politically correct inclusive language, but an allusion to the difference in the way that the Institution still looks on man and woman.

<sup>5</sup> General Congregation 31, Decree 23, The Jesuit Priestly Apostolate, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, Saint Louis, 1977, 199-200. From now on 'GC'. Other abbreviations: Aut. – Autobiography of St. Ignatius of Loyola; D – Decree (of GC); Exx. – Spiritual Exercises

<sup>6</sup> Arrupe, P., 'Sacerdocio ministerial de los religiosos', *La Iglesia de hoy e del futuro*, Mensajero – Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 1982, 491-502, 492

<sup>7</sup> These are the three large section of the article by Fr. Arrupe quoted above.

<sup>8</sup> Arrupe, P., 'Sacerdotes para la Iglesia y para los hombres', *La Iglesia de hoy...*, 512-513.

<sup>9</sup> Arrupe, P., 'La misión apostólica, clave del charisma ignaciano', *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, Sal Terrae, Santander 1981, 105-124, 121. cf. GC31, D23, 195[1]

<sup>10</sup> Kolvenbach P-H., 'Un amor pascual por el mundo'. Conferencia en el Congreso de lo social', *Selección de escritos* (1991-2007)II, Curia del Provincial de España, Madrid 2007, 248-259, 248, with more examples of 'wonder'

<sup>11</sup> Iglesias, I. 'Contributions to his interior biography', *Pedro Arrupe, General de la Compañía de Jesús. Nuevas aportaciones a su biografía* (la Bella, G., ed.), Mensajero – Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2007, 975-1019. Arrupe's passion for the world and for history needs no comment or argument to convince; guided by Iglesias, we can enter into his friendship and intimacy with Christ, an ocean of Ignatian spirituality and mysticism still to discover. They can be seen by way of a small point, the surprising paragraphs which Iglesias transcribed in 1991, taken from *Documentos dejados por el P. Iturriz con destino al Fondo Arrupe del ARSI*.

<sup>12</sup> Kolvenbach P-H., 'En el 450 aniversario de la aprobación de la Formula del Instituto por el Papa Paulo III (Loyola, 26 September 1990), *Selección de escritos* (1983-1990) (I), 253-268, 263, and especially 254-257.

<sup>13</sup> 'It was his firm determination to remain in Jerusalem' [Aut.45]; 'he held to this purpose very firmly, and was resolved not to fail to put it into action for any reason.' [Aut.46]

<sup>14</sup> Thus Arrupe: 'In the first place, for Ignatius, the priesthood enables him to dedicate himself more 'easily', which is to say in a position to obtain greater fruit, acquiring an intellectual foundation for his spiritual life [...] In the second place, to benefit souls, because from his point of view he could not do this to the full except as a priest, like the apostles.' (P. Arrupe, 'Inspiración trinitaria del carisma ignaciano',

*Identidad del jesuita...*,404)

<sup>15</sup> For all these aspects of the beginning of the first group, García de Castro, J, ‘Sacerdocio en ejercicio. Los primeros sacerdotes jesuitas’, *Manresa* 74 (2002) 341-359, with all the references omitted here.

<sup>16</sup> FN I: 118-120. (cf. Simón Rodríguez, *De origine et progressu Societatis Iesu* (Alonso Romo, E., ed.) Mensajero – Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2006,83[60] and Bobadilla, *Autobiographia*, Monumenta Bobadillae, 616)

<sup>17</sup> Formula of the Institute [8], *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and their Complementary Norms*, Institute of Jesuit Sources, Saint Louis 1996, 12. Note that it appears as an explanation, as if trying to clarify something that might seem obvious.

<sup>18</sup> Pedro Arrupe... (La Bella,ed.), cf. note 12.

<sup>19</sup> I maintain this beyond any particular context or cultural situation; power refers to a way of being in the world which is incompatible with the person, the message or the style of Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> Since we know by experience that this is what ‘Lucifer, the mortal enemy of human nature’ [Exx.136] is looking for.

<sup>21</sup> *Sacerdote*: from *sacerdos*, *sacerdotis*, compounded with the Indoeuropean *dhe* – to do, to make; ‘To make sacred, to consecrate’. (cf. Corominas,J./Pascual, J.A, *Diccionario crítico etimológico castellano hispánico*, V. Gredos, Madrid 1991, 127, s.v. *sagrado*)

<sup>22</sup> This is how the *Constitutions* settle the matter: ‘conforming...to the Roman usage, as being more universal, and embraced in a special way by the Holy See.’ [401]

<sup>23</sup> We may remember the ‘great consolation’ which Ignatius felt in Manresa in hearing High Mass, Vespers and Compline, all sung [*Aut. 21*], a sensibility which continued as far as his Roman stage, since still in 1555, L.G. da

<sup>24</sup> *Constitutions* [586-587]

<sup>25</sup> Formula of the Institute [3], *Constitutions...*(1996), 7. The author of the Formula extends as far as possible in his time the missionary outreach and the universal vocation of the Society. The group interpreted the experience of the Spirit in them as a body without frontiers, open, ‘without subterfuge or excuse’, to the demands of the mission.

<sup>26</sup> ‘I am convinced that this brief history of our first Fathers touches every Jesuit’s heart, and arouses something which we have all interiorised as part of our vocation.’ (Nicolás, A., ‘The Jesuit’s universal vocation’ (letter from Fr. General, Rome, 19 February 2009), *SJ Information*, 41/240 (January-March 2009) 11-15,15.

<sup>27</sup> Kolvenbach, P-H.. ‘San Ignacio, testigo de la gratuidad’ (Rome, 30 July, 1987), *Escritos* (I), Curia del Provincial de España, Madrid 1992, 662

<sup>28</sup> In the spirit of the meditation on the Eternal King: ‘It is my will to conquer the whole world and all my enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of my Father.’ (Exx.95)

<sup>29</sup> Paul VI, ‘Address to General Congregation XXXII’, *Documents...*Inst. of Jesuit Sources, Saint Louis,1977, [cf. note 6] 519-536

<sup>30</sup> Paul VI, Address. ...

<sup>31</sup> GC35, D2[2], Way Books, Oxford, 2008, 37

<sup>32</sup> Cf. GC32, D2[1] and *Deliberations of 1539*.

<sup>33</sup> Arrupe, P. 'La misión apostólica...', cf. note 10, 121.

<sup>34</sup> Priestliness which 'comprises in the selfsame company both those willing to share the presbyteral function of being coadjutors of the episcopal order and those willing to give themselves to those aspects of our apostolic mission for which priestly orders are not required.' (GC32, 'Jesuits today', D2[22].

<sup>35</sup> Kolvenbach, P-H, 'On the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary... ' (Loyola, 26 September 1990), cf. note 13. Basically, GC32, D2[22] (Cf. *Constitutions...* cf. note 18)

<sup>36</sup> The Formula of the Institute is unstinting when it comes to suggesting possible ministries for Jesuits on mission. 'So the criterion of the priestly puts a special stamp on the way of carrying out the mission, and, correspondingly, helps what the world can and ought to expect of us, followers of Ignatius and his companions.' (Arrupe, *La misión .....*, 122

<sup>37</sup> 'All, even those who have already completed their formation, should strive constantly to nourish and renew their own spiritual lives from those sources that the Church and the Society give us (biblical study, theological reflection, liturgy, Spiritual Exercises, recollections, spiritual reading,, and the like.) Thus, with the advance of years, each one should experience constant rejuvenation in his spiritual life, and his apostolic activity should increasingly become able to respond more effectively to the needs of the Church and of men and women.' *Constitutions...* Norm 241.

<sup>38</sup> By way of anecdote: 'All the new [companions] arrived on foot [...] and with clothes of little value and books in hand and others in a bundle', and later, when they were not believed when they begged for alms because ' they didn't look too shabby and they were carrying their bags with books' (Polanco J.A., 'Sumario Hispánico' in *Diego Laínez, Primer biógrafo di San Ignacio* (Albuquerque, A.,ed.), Mensajero – Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2005, [63] 184 and [66] 186

<sup>39</sup> 'In the Jesuit's exercise of ministerial priesthood, knowledge is not power, but service of the Kingdom' (GC34, D6 [21]

<sup>40</sup> Benedict XVI, *Allocution to GC35*, [4], 143

<sup>41</sup> Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, Closing Mass of the 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation, 6 March 2008, *Decrees and Documents...* 181-182

<sup>42</sup> '...he saw and understood many things, spiritual as well as those concerning faith and learning. This took place with so great an illumination that these things appeared to be something altogether new.' (*Aut.30*)

<sup>43</sup> Note in the Contemplation to attain the love of God the abundance both of gerunds to express this dynamism (*giving, growing, feeling, doing, being*) and of habitual presents: *live, work, labour, descend*.

<sup>44</sup> Having written these lines I read with surprise and satisfaction the reflection by Arrupe: 'we must not let ourselves be fooled by the facile temptation of an immediate action which perhaps takes away from the effectiveness of our real mission; still less

believe that the only study has to be spontaneous reflection on life. The academic level is not a mere juridical formula, but what is demanded by the service the Society is always called to offer to the Church. (P. Arrupe, ‘To the Jesuits of Spain’ (29/6/1970), *La identidad...*, 351-357, 356

<sup>45</sup> ‘These ministries [...] require for their effectiveness profound and dedicated study... The tradition of learned priestly ministry and intellectual excellence is deeply embedded in our way of proceeding.’ (GC34, D6 [21]. (cf. ‘Poor....and learned’, Kolvenbach, ‘En el 450 aniversario...’, 259-260)

<sup>46</sup> Kolvenbach, P.-H, ‘San Ignacio testigo de la gratuidad. (Rome, 31 July 1987)’ *Escritos...* I, 663

<sup>47</sup> ‘...that all my intentions, actions and operations may be directed purely to the praise and service of his divine majesty.’ [Exx.46].

<sup>48</sup> GC34, D6,[11].

<sup>49</sup> Nadal, quoted in GC34, D6[11]

<sup>50</sup> ‘The Vicar of Christ gave assurance to the Society that its priesthood was integrated into the dynamic of the mission entrusted by Christ to the apostles and their successors. [...] So the particular obedience of the Society of Jesus to the Shepherd of the universal Church must be situated within the virtual universality of all mission in the Church’ Kolvenbach, ‘En el 450 aniversario....’ 261

<sup>51</sup> It may be a help to re-read in this context Ch.1 of Part VII of the Constitutions, ‘Missions from the Supreme Pontiff’, [603-611].

<sup>52</sup> Nadal, J. ‘Tercera plática de Alcalá’, *Comentario de Instituto*, 308

<sup>53</sup> *Working and labouring*. Through the first verb, we toil and, with that, suffer for the world; through the second we involve ourselves qualitatively, carry out acts of ‘craftsmanship’, which work personally, taking care of what we do, as God does with us, and with his world.

<sup>54</sup> The choice of ministries having been discerned – so, whatever ministry. Cf. P.-H. Kolvenbach, ‘Mística y política de Ignacio de Loyola’, *Escritos* II, 512-522

<sup>55</sup> Mary’s humility, which belongs to the fourth week of the Exercises, ‘my soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord....’ is deeper than that of the Roman centurion when he affirms ‘I am not worthy that you should enter my house’. Mary emptied herself, lost awareness of her own interior life, was God in her, and in that way God did great things in her. The centurion was in the first week process, seeing himself clearly as a sinner, but still owner of himself, (‘my house’), keeping God in front of him, not in him.

<sup>56</sup> Melloni, J., *La Mystagogía de los Ejercicios*, Mensajero-Sal Terrae, Bilbao-Santander 2001, 261-262

<sup>57</sup> God has already passed through the world ‘with his imprint’ and left it completely ‘clothed in beauty’. (*Cantico Espiritual A*, verse 5)

<sup>58</sup> ‘God’s action does not begin with what we do; already, in the blessings of creation, God has laid the foundation for what he will accomplish through the graces of redemption.’ (GC34, D6,[20].)

<sup>59</sup> 'Priests of the Society... should bring their priesthood to bear upon all their activity, especially through prayer, through the witness of their lives, and through the Holy Eucharist, which "contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth, that is, Christ himself," and through which human beings and all created reality are brought to the Father.' (GC 31, D23 [12], quoted in *Presbiterorum Ordinis* [5].)

<sup>60</sup> Arrupe, P., 'Sacerdotes para la Iglesia y para los hombres', *La Iglesia de hoy*....516 (Adapted text).