

Scholarly Work and Research

1.a) Jesuits should have a high regard for scholarly activity, especially scientific research properly so called, and they are to view this as one of the most necessary works of the Society. It is a very effective apostolate, entirely in accord with the age-old tradition of the Society from its earliest times.¹ It is a generous response to recommendations that the popes have often repeated, especially during the past hundred years.² It is most suited to the needs of the men of our times and an excellent means for opening up and carrying on dialogue with them, including nonbelievers, for establishing confidence in the Church, and for elaborating and teaching a synthesis of faith and life.

b) All of this applies first of all to the sacred sciences and those connected with them, which have the first claim on the scholarly potential of the Society. It applies also to those sciences which are called positive, both those which look to man and society and the mathematical-natural sciences, as well as the technical sciences proceeding from them, which profoundly affect the mentality of our times.

2. Those Jesuits, therefore, who are assigned to this work by superiors are to give themselves entirely and with a strong and self-denying spirit to this work, which, in one way or another, makes demands upon the whole man. They are to be on guard against the illusion that they will serve God better in other occupations which can seem more pastoral, and they are to offer their whole life as a holocaust to God. At the same time they should do this in such a way that they do not lose touch with the other apostolic activities of the Society. Finally they are to strive earnestly to show themselves truly religious and priestly men. They should remember that in undertaking this work, they are enlisted in the cause of Christian truth and are serving the people of God either by showing forth the presence of the Church among the men of the scientific community or by enriching the understanding of revelation itself through the progress of human knowledge.

3. Provincials, for their part, must not be deterred by the demands of other works of the province from applying to this work in the sciences, definitively and in good time, men whom they find inclined and in the judgment of experts truly suited, yet well proven in the spiritual life. Once assigned to this work, they are not to be taken away from it without grave reason, especially when they have finished their studies, even post-doctoral work, and have begun to produce. Since many of the positive sciences often require youthfulness for their study if one is to become really outstanding in them, provincials are not to hesitate to propose suitable changes in the ordinary course of study to Father General, as need may dictate, according to the Decree on the Training of Scholastics Especially in Studies. Priests who are applied to these studies are to be mindful that, the more advanced they are in any science, the more careful they should be that their knowledge of theology is broad and sound, in order that they may be able to exercise their scientific apostolate with greater authority and profit.

4. Superiors, especially higher superiors, are to take care that those applied to work in the sciences give themselves primarily to the work of research, study, and writing, and that the necessary leisure and helps are provided for this work. They are to acknowledge that scholars have "a lawful freedom of inquiry and thought and the freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence."³ Superiors are to permit them to join national and international professional organizations and to attend their meetings when it seems expedient. Finally they are to encourage Jesuits to work not only in our own centers but also in public universities and scientific institutions according to the various opportunities and necessities of the region. In this way they will cooperate more closely with laymen in penetrating the whole human culture with the Christian spirit and better ordering the world to God, its ultimate end.

5. Small periodic meetings of Jesuits who are expert in the different sciences, especially those closely related, are recommended to provincials. These should promote interdisciplinary communication from time to time and, after careful study of the condition of the scientific apostolate in each region, procure among themselves greater collaboration of all who are working in the sciences. They should also help superiors with their advice in planning, ,coordinating, preparing, promoting, and also abandoning scientific works, in such a way that the effort expended in this apostolate may be directed more efficiently to its end.

¹ *Ordination on Training Mathematics Teachers*, by Father Robert Bellarmine, promulgated in 1593 by the authority of Father Claudius Aquaviva. (Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, *Epp. NN.* 113, fol. 184); *Ordination of Father Carafa of Aug. 17, 1647 to the Province of Austria* (Bernhard Dühr, *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Ländern deutscher Zunge in der ersten Hälfte der XVII Jahrhundert* [1913] II, 556); *Discourse of Father Christopher Clavius* (“De modo et via quo Societas Iesu ad maiorem Dei honorem, et animarum profectum augere hominum de se opinionem, omnemque Haereticorum in litteris aestimationem, qua illi multum nituntur, convellere brevissime et facillime possit”), in Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, *Hist. Saec.* 5c. fol. 185-87; etc.

² Cf., e.g., Leo XII, *Quod Divina Sapientia* (1824); Leo XIII, *Motu Proprio Ut Mysticam Sponsam* (March 14, 1891); Pius XI, Allocution in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Pontifical Biblical Institute (*ActRSJ* 7, 648-51); Pius XI, Allocution at the inauguration of the new Vatican Observatory at Castel Gandolfo (*ActRSJ* 8, 84-86); etc.

³ GS 62.