

Ignatian Spirituality for the 21st Century

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Note: This text is illustrated by the accompanying PowerPoint file, “Illustrations, Ignatian Spirituality 21st C.” The numbers in brackets indicate the placement of the individual slides.



I. Greetings and context [#1]

Greetings! I am so happy to be with you in Rochester on such a fine summer day!

[#2] Today we are going to reflect on the possibilities of and challenges to Ignatian Spirituality in our present place and time. First, though, we should establish the possibility that this particular synthesis of the Western Christian spiritual tradition created more than 400 years ago *can* indeed dialogue with our place and time. Javier Melloni closes his little monograph, *The Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola in the Western Tradition*, with this conclusion: [#3] “Thus the Exercises. . . constitute a way of living in God for the world [#4] and of living for God in the world. Such is Ignatius’ contribution to the spiritual Tradition of the West, and it is the way we [Jesuits] have to offer to our contemporaries who *in their own manner hunger and thirst for God.*”¹ (italics mine) There *is* something here. Ignatian spirituality *is* a unique and viable option for living the Christian life today.

Two working assumptions guide these remarks: **(1) Ignatian spirituality is a gift not only to the Jesuits, but to the entire church and through the church to the world.** Here “church” includes Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians. **(2) All here are all invited, in our own ways and through our own calls, to dialogue with Ignatian spiritual tradition from the perspective of our various vocations, ecclesiologies, theologies and ministries and to partner in the collaborative enterprise of creating a more just and sustainable world.**² You don’t have to be a Jesuit to profit from aspects of this spirituality. I move forward from these two points.

[#5] I should say a word about my context. I, a Roman Catholic religious sister, teach spirituality at a Presbyterian seminary in a large theological consortium that has in its partnership not only mainline Protestants, but also Orthodox Christians, Unitarian Universalists, Jews, Buddhists, and, though still a small presence, Muslims. My primary

constituency, however, is largely Presbyterian MDiv and DMin students. As a rich and vigorous part of our programming we have a fine spiritual direction diploma, which, because we market primarily to Presbyterians and attempt to diversify the theology, ecclesiology and spirituality to fit a Protestant constituency, rarely attracts Roman Catholics. This diverse constituency first meets Ignatius in the form of the Rules for Discernment of Spirits and material for Election (choice) as part of their study of discernment. Last year, a group of them banded together and set up the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life, a return to campus after a hiatus of about six years. These students and directors are internalizing Ignatian spirituality into their respective theological and ecclesiological realities, and nary a Jesuit is around. Even my participation is limited to an occasional consultation with the director. This brief description of my context suggests that we be clear about our terms.

[#6] Ignatian spirituality is that spirituality that finds its origin and guiding inspiration in the life of Ignatius of Loyola. It is articulated in its earliest expressions in the writings of Ignatius, (letters, *Spiritual Exercises*, *Constitutions*, *Autobiography*), but also in the memories of those who knew Ignatius and consciously modeled their lives on him (including early Jesuits, lay collaborators, including women and women's congregations claiming an Ignatian charism). Since the *Spiritual Exercises* is a pedagogy for eliciting a spirituality, pride of place comes to this text. Ignatian spirituality is not a static entity; it continues to develop in its various contexts. An interesting question, one that I am not going to attempt to resolve, has to do with who controls the boundary for what is "in" and what is "out" of Ignatian spirituality. Who articulates the definition? This question arises precisely because being true to Ignatian spirituality, at least as expressed in the *Spiritual Exercises*, *requires* that the one making the retreat develop precisely his/her own spirituality, and not simply become a clone of Ignatius or of the retreat director.³

[#7] Jesuit spirituality, by contrast, is the spirituality of the members of Company of Jesus, starting with Ignatius of Loyola, and which includes as sources, the primary documents, especially the *Constitutions*. But Jesuit spirituality continues to be fed by specifically Jesuit lives, experiences and reflections. Who defines Jesuit spirituality? Jesuits. Obviously, there is a considerable overlap between Ignatian Spirituality and Jesuit Spirituality, with those claiming Ignatian spirituality as the more extensive group. A number of the examples I am going to give today involve Jesuits, but they often extend far beyond them. My point here is that Ignatian spirituality is a particular spirituality that belongs to the whole Church, not just to Jesuits. I believe that it has some particular resources that can help us greatly with the challenges that face us today.

II. Some Characteristics of our 21st Century world that Ignatian Spirituality might be particularly suited to address.

[#8] What is it about the 21st Century that evokes and challenges Ignatian spirituality? I suggest six of many possible characteristics that have relevance to Ignatian spirituality—either by way of calling it out or challenging it.

1. Worldwide breakdown of the rule of law and the rise of global terrorism.

Examples these days are, unfortunately, too numerous to need to spell out [#9]; but it is worth noting that many Jesuits and their colleagues have fallen victim to this violence, often for resisting the structures that lead to terrorism. (Paul Mariani notes in *Thirty Days* that 342 Jesuits have been killed in the past one hundred years; this number does not include those they labor with who may also have been killed.⁴) A year ago, I had the opportunity to visit the University of Central America, San Salvador. As I stepped into the rose garden, I was overwhelmed by the presence of those who died there, doing their ordinary ministries at an uncommonly costly price [#10]. Ironically, the housekeeper and her daughter had moved into the guest wing of the Jesuit residence that fateful night precisely because there had been violence on the streets surrounding the University and they were seeking relative quite so that the young woman could study. On other continents, Zimbabwe is in a free fall at the moment, and we are only too aware of Iraq, Afghanistan and Israel/Palestine. At the same time as we see the chaos, however, we also see hints of new kinds order, most notably in the non-bloody revolutions of the past twenty years. Who would have thought that the Apartheid government in South Africa could be dismantled without a violent revolution or that a Truth Commission could focus on understanding and reconciliation, not revenge?

[#11] 2. Economic globalization, including the shift of capital, goods and services across national boundaries in an increasingly rapid and diffuse way.

In the unregulated market-driven economic globalization we are witnessing today, however, wealth is being increasingly accumulated in the hands of a few, while the vast majority of humankind is becoming more deeply mired in poverty. Only one example: Overseas outsourcing of executive positions—not just labor—is moving ahead with increasing speed. You may now have your customer service call taken by a person in Mumbai (aka Bombay), as I did a few weeks ago. I have taken to asking customer service operators where they actually are when they take the call; the most frequent as I have tried to resolve my DSL problems has been Philippines. A particularly insidious expression of globalization is the immense upsurge in the trafficking of women and children, with estimates that suggest between 10-30 thousand trafficked annually just in the US. It has become far more lucrative to traffic women for prostitution than to move drugs, because a woman can earn her owner's investment within a few weeks or months, and then she goes on paying him off nightly. The very week I was preparing these remarks (July 1), the San Francisco police broke up a huge prostitution ring that began in Korea, extended to Canada, and included a travel agency to bring the women to their slavery and the clients to them. My own congregation's Non-Governmental Organization has this issue as its focus because it directly challenges our own charism of working for the full development of the human person, particularly for women. It is a commitment throughout our entire congregation upon which we are working at every level.

[#12] 3. Instantaneous world-wide communications through satellite, telephone, e-mail, fax and internet.

Also, the globalization of the entertainment industry: my Uruguyan Jewish Spanish teacher who has lived in Jerusalem notes that large numbers of Israelis now are learning Spanish by watching Argentinian telenovelas that play all afternoon and evening in Israel! For better or worse, instant communications are breaking

down cultural barriers and walls of every kind, including some that we might like to keep up (against pornography and international terrorism, for example). What the indigenous elders in Guatemala protected from the 400-year legacy of colonization may fall in one or two generations to the influence of radio and television. On the other hand, NGO's can now organize world-wide on behalf of their constituencies, something that became strikingly apparent ten years ago at the Beijing conference on women, when e-mail and the internet first broke through the bamboo curtain.

4. The increasingly insistent claiming of voice and vote of those formerly “voiceless,” dispossessed and marginalized. In North America, the premier example of this phenomenon is the concientization of women, and, as a result, their voices are being heard in numerous theaters from which they were formerly excluded both formally and covertly. Since women are found everywhere there are human beings, then everywhere is where women's voices should be. Alongside them, though, are numerous other groups of silenced and marginalized, including those marginalized by the marginalized themselves. The marginalized, we now cannot avoid seeing with great clarity, are also inside our own church. Positively, many voices have taken their cue from Latin American situation, and have constructed liberation theologies of various stripes, greatly increasing the theological and spiritual pluralism to which we are all exposed.

[#13] 5. Moving to the Church, broadly conceived, we find a breakdown of the old certainties, colliding ecclesiologies, and a crisis of authority.

Roman Catholics are all too familiar with the struggle over the *Mandatum*, the call by some priests to re-open the discussion of married/celebrate clergy, the tensions over liturgical translations and who has the appropriate say over them, the gutting of the power of national bishop's conferences, and of course, the on-going pain of the sexual abuse scandal and its costly fallout. Protestants hover on the brink of schism over differences in theology and pastoral practice with respect to homosexuality and its expression. This last week the Church of England struggled to hold itself together in light of the vote to ordain women bishops. But we have also seen great moves towards ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, and an increasing call for transparency in church structure and governance. The road is bumpy right now, as we might expect when the underlying ecclesiologies are in tension, but we cannot go back to the old certainties.

6. The Rise of the Laity

This ascent has been already more than a generation in duration. It took impetus in the Second Vatican Council, which assigned a place to the whole People of God and a specific place for the laity. The church, for better or worse, now belongs largely to the laity. As Bernard Sesboüé says in a recent essay,⁵ [#14] “What is actually happening [with the laity] is providing an opportunity for Church renewal and for giving the Church the new ministerial focus that it needs.” Within the next generation the ministerial face of the church will radically change—the demographics all but guarantee it. But what positive new things will spring up? That reality is not so easy to pinpoint.

That's my "quick and dirty" analysis of our contemporary context. Undoubtedly there are other characteristics that could be noted, but these seem particularly pervasive and far-reaching.

[#15] III. What, then, do I see as the lively contributions of Ignatian spirituality to this culture? I offer six points. For each, I suggest historical touchstones, contemporary examples and some challenges. though these are not direct parallels to the characteristics of our era, I hope you will see a fit between the signs of the times in the 21st Century and the possibilities inherent in Ignatian spirituality. I believe these possibilities are calling out to us.

[#16] 1. Spirituality of active engagement with the culture based on clear-sighted contemplation and discernment. Contemplation, says Walter Burghardt, is a "long, loving look at the real."⁶ Contemplation allows us to see what there, and discernment assists us in choosing an appropriate response. With the grounding of contemplation and discernment, Ignatian spirituality can go everywhere; it can be employed by many people; it can coexist with other spiritualities in creative ways.

[#17] History: I think immediately of Ignatius's self understanding as a pilgrim, first quite literally to the Holy Land. Pilgrims return from their journeys forever changed by their experiences of going out into the world, having sought an experience of God and been changed by it. Even after Ignatius arrived in Rome, he still maintained a self-understanding as a pilgrim, letting himself interact with cultural milieu he found in Rome. These early Rome years brought an explosion of ministries in response to the city's situation—most of which we would call "social services," feeding the hungry, getting prostitutes off the street and into safe houses where they could re-organize and regroup their lives, housing and educating boy and girl orphans. If it needed doing in those early years, Ignatius was likely to have found some lay people to work with and dug right in. Getting into the educational apostolate a few years later **[#18]** was a pragmatic response to a serious need in his time and place; out of that response was created a whole system of schools and a consistent approach that eventually extended across several continents. The school apostolate also threw the Jesuits into the middle of culture in an entirely new way for religious orders⁷ and forged a path down which many other congregations and individuals have followed. Unlike their monastic predecessors, Jesuits were trained in secular professions—no human learning was arbitrarily ruled out of bounds—all had the potential to give greater glory to God. **[#19]** I think also of Ignatius's penchant for settling Jesuits at the heart of urban areas, the centers of both population and ideas in his day. He built the Gesù, the "mother church" of the Society, on one of the busiest corners of Rome precisely because, sooner or later, everybody who came to the city passed by that intersection. A spirituality of active engagement with the world based on clear-sighted contemplation and discernment—this is the new definition of ministry that Ignatius pioneered.

Contemporary examples: There are many: **[#20]** I think of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and post-JVC communities of people with the motto "ruined for life." The JVC requires simplicity of life from its volunteers precisely so that they will be more able to

experience the reality of those with whom they are ministering. [#21] The Institute for Spirituality and Organizational Leadership at Leavy School of Business, Santa Clara University, though it has fallen on hard economic times of late, has begun some promising work on the spirituality of the corporate leader. Its goal is to affect the whole life style and value system of those who in turn have so much power to affect the lives of so many workers.[#22] Seattle University Law School Journal is entitled *The Seattle Journal for Social Justice* and contains articles on the situation of women, environmental law, water rights and Native peoples, and so on. [#23] Mercy Housing has leveraged hundreds of low-income living units precisely when such housing is drying up.

I teach a course, in slightly different forms, to those preparing for ordained ministry and those preparing for the ministry of spiritual direction that we call Discernment of Systems and Structures. This course employs a simple process based on the Pastoral Circle, [#24] in which we pay attention in turn to our concrete experience in a particular structure, the institutional links and interconnections through social analysis. This analysis is followed by contemplative prayer in which we ask for greater inner freedom, and, out of that newly converted heart, each selects a single contemplative action that engages the structure, and then carries out the action. The process is stunningly transformative of the individual students and often of the institutions they are discerning. They learn to bring their prayer into the structures that carry injustice and find a way to “join what God is already about” in that same institution. It is profoundly Ignatian, though I never use his name the entire semester. But we are actualizing the Ignatian value “Contemplation also in the midst of action,”⁸ believing, as Ignatius proposes at the conclusion of the Spiritual Exercises, that God dwells in all things is laboring on our behalf all through the world⁹—including particular institutions that have caused us or others to suffer injustice. Active engagement with the world and the vulnerable in the prevailing structures: this is the first characteristic of Ignatian spirituality for mission in today’s world.

Challenge: The Ignatian strategy of trying to reach those most likely to reach others has great merit now, as it did in Ignatius’s time. It will also draw criticism now, as then, particularly the criticism of elitism. It is easy to look at Ignatius and conclude that he only worked with the rich and powerful. He did work with the rich and powerful if he thought he could affect greater good by so doing. For our part, we don’t abandon direct service to the poor, but we also seek ways to increase their power and challenge the systems that keep them impoverished. Thus, I challenge you to come alongside and accompany CEO’s, ethicists, union leaders, military personnel, teachers, writers, artists, communications professionals, entertainers and parents, all of whom will, in turn, impact others. I challenge you not to abandon the church, either, at this time in which it is wounded and vulnerable. You will unleash great creative energy in the contemporary world and church as you go out to meet these challenges with an eye to being a contemplative also in action. **I challenge you to your own expression of a spirituality of active engagement with the culture based on clear-sighted contemplation and discernment.**

[#25] 2. Spirituality of apostolic collaboration: For all the stereotypes about the individualism of Jesuits, the ministries that best exemplify the heart of the Ignatian tradition are characterized by apostolic collaboration.

History: [#26] Ignatius's early intuition about collaboration began with the women at Manresa immediately after his conversion, but came to wonderful fruition in Rome in the early days of the Society. I am struck by the variety of Ignatius's collaborators in during the Rome years. Sometimes the collaboration was initiated by others. [#27] For example, Juana of Spain, the only woman ever to die a member of the Jesuits, initiated her connection to the Society. The request to start the first college came from Leonora Osorio. Sometimes the collaboration was initiated by Ignatius or the first Jesuits. Ignatius put Isabel Roser to work in the House of Martha after she arrived at his door in Rome. [#28] Marguerite of Austria is an example of mobilizing the rich and powerful in these works of mercy and justice. Ignatius founded confraternities (associations of lay persons) to collaborate in all these early ministries. He was not afraid to turn the administration of the works over to others. He believed laity quite capable of managing these works, and prohibited Jesuits from holding office in them.¹⁰

Contemporary examples: How does this collaboration show up today? A few examples that I know of personally include: [#29] The creative collaborations between Jesuits and women religious in the Northwest is well exemplified as the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in Seattle, a joint project of seven women's communities and the Oregon Province Jesuits. [#30] Seattle University's Institute of Theological Studies, born of a unique collaboration of the Archdiocese and the University, has grown into a truly ecumenical effort in theological education in the state of Washington. I have already mentioned Mercy Housing, a pragmatic collaboration with whoever can help to make new low income housing stock a reality—and help enhance the quality of life of the residents.

Challenge: To continue to work against the pull of our postmodern capitalist and driven “looking out for number one,” be it person or group or ministry. Here I propose the broad use of Ignatian principles of spiritual conversation as way of creating the necessary relationships that ground apostolic collaboration. Because I believe that spiritual conversation is such a powerful way to create a context for collaboration, I will speak at length about it in the next lecture. But let me say this here:

[#31] Spiritual conversation means to speak “familiarily” with people—that is, personally and informally—so as to draw them into greater service of God. Ignatius used a metaphor for spiritual conversation that he borrowed from his own Spiritual Exercises: “Whenever we wish to win someone over and engage him in the greater service of God our Lord, we should use the same strategy for good which the enemy employs to draw a good soul to evil. He enters through the other's door and comes out through his own.”¹¹ That is, we should put ourselves inside the other's experience as far as possible so that we can see, and communicate that we see, the value in the other's position. Only then do we invite the other to move, little by little, to a stance or action more pleasing to God. The goal of spiritual conversation is always apostolic, but it need not be limited to one to one

relationships. The same dynamic of active, empathetic listening serves well in face to face groups such as families, staffs and neighborhood associations, but also in such exchanges as inter-religious dialogue, conflict mediation and political advocacy. That is, spiritual conversation is a style of apostolic relating. [#32] What would happen, I ask, if we taught spiritual conversation as a viable method of group dynamics? If we practiced the principles of spiritual conversation in advocacy and justice work to help mitigate the risk of running roughshod over the opposition? The very cultures of our institutions would be invited to undergo conversion!

[#33] 3. Pedagogy for the inner life for the sake of mission. This point is probably not at all surprising. We expect Ignatian spirituality to provide a pedagogy for the inner life—but we may not be persuaded that it is useful in this day and age or that it is oriented to mission.

History: The best example here, of course, is the Spiritual Exercises themselves [#34]. There existed many early variations in giving Spiritual Exercises, which were given to a wide range of persons in a variety of forms. The diversity of forms arose precisely because of the different situations and needs of those to whom the Exercises were given. The basic premise of the Spiritual Exercises: the Creator deals directly with the creature and the creature deals directly with the Creator. Upon this principle, buried in Introductory note 15, are built other characteristic themes of this spiritual pedagogy: “indifference” (which I prefer to call “spiritual freedom”), spiritual discernment and inner devotion, or “consolation.” John O’Malley speaks of Ignatius’s ministry of the Exercises as “catechesis through spiritual practice.”¹² The Spiritual Exercises are intended to propel those who make them into mission.

Contemporary examples: The Exercises no longer look like you might have experienced them in the past! They are thriving in a whole variety of new and renewed forms. They are being offered in several parishes in the Oakland diocese without ever having had the assistance of Jesuits. Protestants in increasing numbers are asking to make the Spiritual Exercises. Three examples of this rich variety: In Guatemala last year, I heard of a successful program of giving a shortened form of the Spiritual Exercises to couples engaged to be married, as a way to anchor their married life in an active spirituality of service. Holy Names sister Barbara Williams woke up one day last spring with a vision of a new way to package the Spiritual Exercises for busy working people in her parish through a series of weeklong evening retreats, rather like the old “mission.” [#35] You may be familiar with the Spiritual Exercises for the Corporate Person. In a welcome move, [#36] Dean Brackley’s new book *The Call to Discernment in Troubled Times: New Perspectives on the Transformative Wisdom of Ignatius of Loyola*,¹³ challenges first world Christians to move from their individualistic spiritualities to a spirituality of solidarity and inner freedom.

Challenge: The Spiritual Exercises, with its twin emphases on apostolic prayer and adaptability, can have an immense effect today. There are many permutations of the Exercises possible; weekends, Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life, even Exercises via the Internet.¹⁴ If the Spiritual Exercises are not available or are not for you, learn and practice

spiritual practices that grow out of the Spiritual Exercises and contribute to their apostolic efficacy. Examen can lead you over time to great inner freedom; discernment of spirits to intentionality in all your actions. There are books readily accessible that can lead you into these practices.¹⁵ Get a small group together to learn them and to support each other as you practice these spiritual disciplines. Like plants that escape their garden patch by floating their seeds on the breeze, the Spiritual Exercises have escaped the confines of Jesuit spirituality and belong to the patrimony of the whole church—they are ours and they are powerful aids for undergirding our ministries.

[#37] 4. Spirituality of critical loyalty to the Church. These days, such a spirituality of critical loyalty to the Church may be very hard to come by. The church seems to be fractured over many issues and many people quietly walking away because they are depressed, discouraged, or just see (or feel) no life and hope. How do we keep going with hope, faithfulness, and at the same time with a focused and loyal critical orientation?

History: One of the best examples of Ignatius’s critical loyalty is the way he responded to the possibility of Francis Borgia being named a Cardinal **[#38]**. In 1522, Charles V requested that the pope make Borgia, by then a Jesuit, a cardinal. Borgia himself was inclined to accept in order to obey the pope’s desires. After discussing the situation with several cardinals, Ignatius paused as he usually did to pray before coming to a decision about the matter. By the third day of his prayer, he became convinced that it would not be for the greater glory of God that Borgia become a cardinal. He then spoke to the pope personally and pointed out the disadvantages which would follow and the advantages of leaving things as they were. He admitted, however, that others, both Borgia and the pope—also under divine influence, might discern that the offer should be accepted. After consulting with Borgia himself, he left the matter in God’s hands, and Borgia free to make his own discernment. Borgia did not receive the red hat. Another example: Ignatius wrote the Rules for Thinking with the Church for 16th C Jesuits who would have some public ministry. While the specific content of these points is now dated, the goal is still valid: to foster a spirituality where both clergy and laity are accountable to each other, loyal, but not mute and speechless in the face of truth.

Contemporary examples: Two stories: **[#39]** A few years ago, Jesuit Superior General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach was asked, while visiting with the faculty of the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, about the high profile cases of Jesuits then being investigated by the Church around some point of dogma. He noted, somewhat wryly, that no one at JSTB was being investigated, and that kind of worried him! I have a good friend who is in charge of the Office of Religious Education for a large diocese where the Bishop has a reputation for being a micromanager and, to put it colloquially, a bit of a ‘pill’ to work for. She has developed a stunning way of being her own person, moving with grace inside a structure that, for me, would continually elicit enormous frustration. I have often looked at her and said to myself “How do she do that?” I have come to realize that she always acts out of spiritual freedom. She knows who she is and what she believes, and she respects the office of the bishop while inviting the person who holds the office toward more and more collaboration. She says that the day that she cannot live her convictions and work in constructively with the person in the office of bishop is the day

she will resign and move to another ministry. This freedom makes her prudent *and* fearless.

Challenge: In this day of struggles with the church, we need to update, teach and embody the “Rules for Thinking with the Church”¹⁶ from the back of the Spiritual Exercises—a part no one ever reads any more, and for good reason. Yet there exists a critical need for ways to come to feel with (*sentir, sentido*) and love the fullness of the mystery of Church precisely because we experience and participate in so much disillusionment with the institutional church right now. Also, there exists a great need to participate with the hierarchy in developing ways of exercising power collaboratively. Some of you are uniquely poised to help this process. I certainly do not mean creating a list of do’s and don’t’s, but discerning a way of approaching the pastorally and doctrinally sensitive issues of today in a manner that calls forth and deepens our love and critical loyalty to the church. All of us need to be invited to deepen this love and loyalty in these days.

[#40] 5. Spirituality of the visual

We live in a visual culture, but seldom do we avert to the spiritual aspects of imagination and the visual, something our culture desperately needs.

History: The Spiritual Exercises are a bridge to imagination and visualization. Ignatius embeds imaginal prayer deep in the Spiritual Exercises so that when one completes them, the imagination has become a privileged entry into prayer. Toward the end of his life, Ignatius asked Jerónimo Nadal to prepare illustrations for the Spiritual Exercises, a task not completed until some years after Nadal’s own death. This innovation led to a new genre of devotional book, in which illustrations were used as a way to stimulate imagination in service of affective prayer. [#41] The preface to 1595 edition of the *Adnotationes*, written by Nadal’s secretary, Diego Jiménez, offers the following advice to those about to embark on using this new kind of book:

A word to the wise. Expect no spiritual growth (which Christ effects abundantly in souls open to Him in contemplation of His sacred life) from a mere glance at the pictures or wonder at their artistic beauty. Spend a whole day, even several days, with each image. Read the Annotation and Meditation points slowly. Meditate, contemplate, pray over the whole exercise. And, as the Apostle says, “In all things make your requests known to God in prayer and petition and thanksgiving.”¹⁷

[#42] In this 1673 illustration of the General Examen, it is easy to see the catechetical usefulness of such illustrations. Once the movements of the Examen are associated with the parts of the hand, it is sufficient to look at one’s had to recall how to practice the Examen. John O’Malley sees the visual as a complement to the ministry of discourse.¹⁸ He also tells of a 1563 catechism for the illiterate consisting almost entirely of illustrations, prepared by one Giovanni Battista Eliano, SJ, a converso. [#43] You may not know that the Baroque style so characteristic of Jesuit churches was a deliberate

evangelization strategy, intended to challenge the iconoclasm of some of the Reformed churches.

It's not a far move from the visual, to notion of beauty as an entry to God, to the arts as sources of beauty and humanization. Ignatian spirituality has long fostered the arts (think of Jesuits that way??). Only one example will bring this home. [#44] When the Jesuits began to stand with and serve the indigenous peoples in the vast region we today call Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, with slices of Brazil and Bolivia (the Jesuit province of Paraguay in the 17th century), they became the protectors of the Guaraní tribe. As the *encomienda* system in this region degenerated into little more than enforced slavery, the Jesuits decided to end *encomienda* on their lands and rehire the indigenous people. This strategy angered those whose get-rich schemes depended on the *encomienda* system, and eventually caused the Jesuits to repair with the Guaraní to the *reductions*, far removed from the Europeans. Antonio Sepp, a Vienna trained Jesuit who became the maestro of a reduction conservatory says this about his Guaraní students: "The characteristic of their genius is general music. There is no instrument whatsoever that they cannot learn to play in a short time. And they do it with the skill and delicacy that one admires in the most gifted masters."¹⁹ The sound track of the movie *Mission* is accurate in this regard.

Contemporary examples: [#45] I have already made reference to the Creighton University On-line version of the Spiritual Exercises. Such visually reinforced ways of making the Exercises will make increasing sense for those people who spend their lives in front of a computer screen; furthermore, these same images can be viewed from where ever there is a phone line and a computer hook-up.²⁰ Some other creative ways that the Internet is being used include [#46] (1) timely resources (such as the discussion on Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* on Boston College's web page), and (2) for fostering the arts,²¹ in direct connection to the long heritage of early Jesuit patronage of the arts. [#47] Tom Lucas's work at USF is but one example of the latter. These examples focus on the internet because of its recent arrival as a visual medium, but other disciplines that rely on the visual (architecture, plastic arts, etc.) could provide equally rich examples. The new chapel at Seattle University [#48], with its creative use of space and its original art, has proven a meeting point between the students, faculty and broader community. A final example elides from the visual to the arts in general: in my congregation's "home mission" in one of the poorest (and least Catholic) counties of the country, in rural Mississippi, children take piano lessons, lining up to practice on the one piano in town.

Challenge: How are persons imbued with Ignatian spirit present in Communications media? Drama? Arts? Are Ignatian-oriented persons engaged in creating a theology of the visual? A theology of the arts? How are those in communications evangelized? What could be offered that stimulates rather than dulls the religious imagination? There's another level to this challenge: how do we bring the humanizing effect of the beautiful to those without access to resources for music and art and who are most likely to live in squalor and ugliness? Ignatian spirituality believes that art and imagination are privileged ways God meets us and ways that human beings fulfill their potential. How are we rising to this challenge?

[#49] 6. Spirituality of justice The double Ignatian stress on the Incarnation and on finding God in all created things provides the theological rationale for a spirituality of compassion and justice-making for the least of God's creation among us.

History: We see structural examples of a spirituality of justice in the early Jesuit support for the Franciscan-inspired low interest banks that were springing up in Ignatius's time.²² Early Jesuits preached against the slave trading of Portuguese and their colonies—recall the numbers on the trafficking of women and children today? Jesuits were involved alongside women in the rehabilitation of prostitutes, helping them to find appropriate and meaningful ways to re-enter society; in its time, Casa Santa Marta represented an innovation in the ministry to prostitutes, and became widely copied. **[#50]** A final example: Ignatius did not bow to pressure to deny former Jews entrance to the Society, as was common practice at the time. Diego Laínez, the second general superior, is the most public example of Ignatius' inclusivity in this regard.

Contemporary examples **[#51]** include Homeboy Industries, which places street kids into jobs as a practical way of setting them free from their gang relationships for productive life in society—but it asks as much from the potential employers as from those placed. **[#52]** Nativity Schools focus resources upon inner city middle school children, with the goal of making higher education both desirable and possible. **[#53]** The Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment uses shareholder resolutions to call corporations to greater responsibility and justice in their practices. **[#54]** The Jesuit Family tent at SOA Watch offers a curriculum and a gathering point for those from the Jesuit-sponsored institutions and others of like mind to gather, pray together and learn about the role of the military in Central America.

Challenge: Our challenges here are multiple: To continue to create and support vitally necessary communities of justice and restoration of right relationships. To develop the concept of structural sin and embody resistance to it personally and institutionally. To offer moral voices insisting on moral accountability. To run institutions collaboratively and transparently. To provide a training ground for future national and international leaders. To create the next generation of social justice activists! There's more than enough here for all of our lifetimes!

[#55] So here are six characteristics of Ignatian spirituality that can challenge and aid us in our ministries today: active engagement with the culture based on clear-sighted contemplation and discernment; apostolic collaboration; spiritual conversation as an apostolic strategy; pedagogy of the inner life for the sake of mission; critical loyalty to the Church; the imagination and the arts as agents of human transformation; all focused on justice. Ignatian spirituality is not just for Jesuits. In the 21st Century, it has much to offer us as we seek to complete the ministries to which we have been called.

IV. Now it is your turn! We are going to shift to a more contemplative mode. We'll adapt the Linn's simple method for Examen found the little book *Sleeping With Bread*.²³

I will lead us in a brief opening prayer, followed by a few minutes of quiet to reflect on two questions: [#56]

Where do I find myself stirred and energized?
Where do I find my resistance rising?
What questions do I find forming inside me?

Then we will share a bit of the fruit of this short examen first with a neighbor and then with the larger group. Offer only what you feel free to share.

(2-3 minutes quiet, 5 minutes sharing with a partner, followed by open comments/questions.)

V. Transition:

The second lecture will take a more practical turn. I will propose that there is a characteristic Ignatian way of relating and propose that the principles of spiritual conversation as Ignatius practiced and taught are a simple but powerful practice of apostolic spirituality that can empower our various ministries. After all, we all carry on conversations, don't we?

Notes

¹ (Herefordshire: GraceWing, 2000), 54.

² See Christian Grondin, "Ignatian Identity in Transition" *The Way*, 42, 4 (October 2003): 32-43.

³ By defining, I am claiming to work from within; see Ann Taves, "Detachment and Engagement in the Study of "Lived Experience" *Spiritus* 3 (2003): 186-208.

⁴ Paul Mariani, *Thirty Days: On Retreat with the Exercises of St. Ignatius* (New York: Penguin Compass, 2002), 47.

⁵ *The Way* 42, 4 (October 2003): 69.

⁶ Walter Burghardt, "Contemplation," *Church* (Winter 1989): 14-18.

⁷ John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 374.

⁸ Joseph F. Conwell, *Walking in the Spirit: A Reflection on Jeronimo Nadal's Phrase "Contemplative Likewise in Action,"* St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2003).

⁹ Spiritual Exercises, #235, #236, tr. George E. Ganss, *Ignatius of Loyola: Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991).

¹⁰ On Confraternities, see O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 166ff.

¹¹ Letter to Salmeron and Broet, September, 1541. Cited in *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola*. Trans. William J. Young (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 51.

¹² O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 373

¹³ Crossroads, 2004.

¹⁴ Creighton University Collaborative Ministry at <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/com-retreat.html>.

¹⁵ For Examen see the classic article by George Aschenbrenner, SJ, "Consciousness Examen" reprinted in *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola: The Best of the Review*, ed. David L. Fleming, SJ (St. Louis: Review for Religious, 1981): 175-185 and Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn and Matthew Linn, *Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995). For straightforward treatments of discernment see Pierre Wolff, *Discernment: The Art of Choosing Well* (Ligouri MO, Triumph Books, 2003), Stefan Kiechle, *The Art of Discernment: Making Good Decisions in*

Your World of Choices (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 2005) and Gordon T. Smith, *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will* (Downers Grove, IN: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

¹⁶ One attempt at re-writing these rules can be found in Katherine Dyckman, Mary Garvin and Elizabeth Liebert, *The Spiritual Exercises Reclaimed: Uncovering Liberating Possibilities for Women* (New York: Paulist, 2001): 324-326.

¹⁷ Jerome Nadal, SJ. *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels. Volume I: The Infancy Narratives*. Translated by Frederic A. Homann, SJ. Introductory study by Walter Melion (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2003), 102.

¹⁸ O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 365.

¹⁹ Chris Lowney, *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company that Changed the World* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2003): 186.

²⁰ J.R Quinn, "The Internet and the Church of the Future" *The Way* 42, 4 (October 2003): 21-31.

²¹ Richard Blake, "Listen with your Eyes" *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 32 (2) Mar 2002.

²² O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 168.

²³ Dennis Linn, Mathew Linn and Sheila Fabricant Linn, *Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995).

Citations to PowerPoint slides: [#57, 58, 59, 60]

(Citations given by slide number unless citation is already given on the slide)

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