

THE SINGLE AIM OF THE APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE

This article is, in large part, an abridgement of the scholarly paper on the single end of the Society of Jesus, by François Courel S.J.¹

AMONG THE MANY religious congregations in which 'charitable and apostolic activity is of the essence of religious life',² there are few whose end and purpose, as expressed in their constitutions, is primarily and manifestly apostolic. Typical formulations are: 'The *principal* end of the congregation of X is the sanctification of its own members . . . As a *special* end, the congregation takes charge of . . .' (there follows a catalogue of the congregation's works); 'The *general* purpose of the congregation is the striving towards perfection . . . Its *special* purpose is the winning of souls to God through . . .' (the Institute's special apostolate is named).³

In their reflection on their own spirit and aim for the purposes of renewal, most of these congregations have admitted the allegations of narcissism, and have striven to establish their 'apostolic' identity in new formulae. But the dichotomy between the 'two ends' is so strong and traditional⁴ that many have simply reversed the order and importance, and have avoided phrases like 'the pursuit of perfection'. Such an approach does of course invite the charge of horizontalism, and is causing distress and confusion to many older religious. It is important to see exactly why, historically, the end and purpose of the apostolic Institute suffered this 'vicious bifurcation': that, in fact, a religious body can have only one end – the glory of God, identified in christian endeavour with the 'salvation of the neighbour'; and that all else, including principally and indispensably the attainment of personal perfection or holiness, are means to that end.

¹ 'La fin unique de la compagnie de Jésus', published in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* (AHSI) XXXV (1966), pp 186–211. We are grateful to *Archivum* for allowing us the use of this material.

² *Perfectae Caritatis*, 8.

³ These are exact quotations from the Constitutions of two such congregations. Italics ours.

⁴ As Fr Beyer remarks, even *Perfectae Caritatis* 'still gives expression to the dichotomy which it sets out to destroy'. Cf *infra*, p 93.

As is remarked elsewhere in this issue, the Society of Jesus has had the heavy responsibility, in the history of religious life, of helping to shape the constitutions of a vast number of apostolic congregations founded since the end of the sixteenth century. It was the jesuits' own failure over the years, and particularly since their restoration at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to interpret aright their original Constitutions and the declarations of their founder and his first companions, which has caused the schizophrenia in so many apostolic congregations, and has made of their apostolate a mere appendix or accessory of what was very largely a monastic existence. The rest of this article will be devoted to getting the historical record straight concerning the one unique end of the Society of Jesus.

There are several aspects of this question of the 'end' of the apostolic Institute. First, there is the relation of its formulation to those of earlier or contemporary Institutes. Secondly, one can consider the connection between the traditional (and still necessary!) pursuit of christian perfection on the personal level and an essentially apostolic aim and purpose. Thirdly, in the texts themselves which deal directly or indirectly with the end of the Society (for brevity's sake we shall call them 'ignatian' texts⁵), it is noticeable that the oneness is not always in evidence. The explicit definition nearly always appears under a double form, in which two terms are linked by the conjunction 'and': the sole aim to be pursued becomes 'the glory (or the service) of God *and* the help of our neighbour'. We shall consider each of these aspects in turn, in the hope of shedding a clear light on the apostolic significance and spiritual richness of the single end of the Society.

The double end and the single end

We have spoken above of 'ignatian' texts so as to emphasize that the creation of the Society was not the work of Ignatius alone, but of a group of companions who lived and prayed, deliberated and acted in consort. So one of them writes:

In the year 1538, these fathers were still in Rome, and saw increasing opportunities opening up to them every day for *the service of God and*

⁵ That is, the *Constitutions* and other texts drawn up by St Ignatius Loyola and his closest collaborators between 1539 and 1556, along with the corresponding papal texts. It was at this time, during the first years of her existence, that her own needs and organization, as well as the questions put to her from outside, obliged the Society to define what she is.

the help of their neighbour, according to the vocation which they had all experienced in themselves from the beginning . . .⁶

In speaking of the vocation of himself and his companions, Polanco is referring to their early experience of a 'call in general'; they have not yet found the means of its concrete realization. The point is, however, that even at this early stage in the development of vocation, the single end, which is at once the service of God and the help of the neighbour, is presupposed.

In the traditional language of the time, in the case of every Institute except the Society, religious life is defined by a double end.⁷ In the official texts approving or confirming religious congregations,⁸ a number of expressions and images are used which recur in ignatian texts, but which are also common currency, like 'to serve God in the Church militant', 'to yield a good harvest in the Lord's field'.⁹

Many of these congregations are very similar in their life-style and their work, as the pontifical texts of approbation indicate. Here we find catalogues which are practically a repetition of one another: education of children and the humble, hospital nursing, and especially the administration of the sacraments, preaching and other priestly work.¹⁰ Though a detailed study of these various documents would reveal many differences of details and points of emphasis, yet their general resemblance serves to illustrate that, if in its origins the Society differs from several contemporary congregations, the difference does not concern specific ministries; and this is important for isolating what is characteristic of Ignatius' vision.

As has been said, it is common to find religious life defined in terms of a twofold end, even if the two elements that comprise the

⁶ From the *Chronicon* of Fr Juan de Polanco: cf *Monumenta Ignatiana* (MI), *Fontes narrativi* II, 504. The expression we have italicized has several equivalents.

⁷ Even the fourteenth century carmelite life is spoken of as having a double end. Cf P. Bruno de Jésus-Marie, *Saint-Jean de la Croix* (Paris, 1929), pp 25-26.

⁸ The years immediately preceding or following the birth of the Society saw the foundation or reform of several other religious congregations, especially of clerks regular: in 1524 the *Theatines* were founded; in 1525 the *Capuchin* branch of the franciscan order; in 1533 St Antony-Mary Zaccaria founded the clerks regular of St Paul, or *Barnabites*; in 1532, the clerks regular, the 'servants of the poor', were founded by St Jerome Emilian.

⁹ So Pope Clement VII writes to the hermits of St Romuald: 'It gives us great consolation to see how your order bears greater and greater fruit in the harvest-field of the Lord . . . so that you may serve God . . . and fight under the lead of St Benedict'. *Bullarium Romanum* VI, 1522-1559 (Turin, 1860), p 117.

¹⁰ A good example occurs in the Bull of Clement VII concerning the apostolate of the theatines: 'To live the life of clerics in preaching the word of God and hearing confessions, in the study of theology and the sacred canons'. *Bull. Rom.* VI, p 161.

definition have varied somewhat over the centuries. Now in the group of texts which in many respects offer close parallels to the documents of the Society, this reference to the twofold end is a recurrent feature. Whenever the apostolic Institutes which arise or are reformed in this first half of the sixteenth century attempt to define themselves, they generally distinguish two goals (though not, of course, with the implication that they are opposed): religious life summons them on the one hand to work for the salvation and perfection of their own soul, and on the other hand for the salvation of their neighbour.¹¹

The resemblance of the texts on this point cannot be accounted for on the ground that they are official documents, drawn up by the same officials of the same chancery. For when it is a case of the approbation of texts prepared and submitted by St Ignatius, the essential difference remains: the phrase *vestrarum et aliorum animarum*, 'your own souls and those of others', disappears. To define the end of the Society (*finis*, always in the singular), mention is made only of the glory of God and the salvation of souls or of the neighbour. This is the case with all the ignatian or roman documents in which the nature of the Society's purpose becomes progressively more pronounced. Thus in the *Summa* of 1539, approval is given to the project of writing Constitutions: '... which you judge to be for the end of your Society and the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord and the advantage of your neighbour'.¹² This formula also occurs in the first official approbation of the Society, the bull *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae*: '... Constitutions which they judge to be consonant with the end of this Society, and the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord and the advantage of the neighbour'.¹³ In fact, the entire series of documents approving the Society¹⁴ assigns to it one single end – the glory of God and the salvation of souls, without explicit mention of the spiritual welfare and perfection of the members themselves.¹⁵

¹¹ In approving the capuchins in 1528, Clement VII underlines the double aspect of their vocation: 'Your religious zeal, your upright life and behaviour impel us to grant your requests, especially those which tend towards the salvation of souls and the advancement of religion . . . You desire to observe the rule of the blessed Francis for the salvation of your own souls and the glory of God'. *Ibid.*, p 113. Similarly in the approbation of the clerks regular of St Paul: 'We willingly grant your requests . . . for the salvation of your own souls and those of others'. *Ibid.*, p 160.

¹² *MI Constitutiones* I, pp 20–21.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p 31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp 83, 373, 375, 380, 381.

¹⁵ For a detailed textual proof of this statement, see the article of Fr Courel, pp 192–195.

Personal holiness: its position in the order of means to end

It would be foolhardy as well as superficial to conclude from what has been said that this apparent silence about personal sanctification means that Ignatius and the first members of his Society, with the approval of the holy See, relegated the 'striving after perfection' to a secondary place. Such a conclusion would be in flat contradiction to literally hundreds of ignatian texts.

First of all, we have the insistence of Ignatius himself on the quest for personal perfection and salvation, for example in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The emphasis is so marked that the accusation of individualism and 'verticalism' has often been made. The salvation of 'my' soul runs like a refrain through the *Exercises*: 'to ask for grace to choose what may be more to the glory of his divine Majesty and the salvation of my soul'.¹⁶ The same concern with personal perfection is at the heart of the Constitutions themselves:

... that everyone of us strives with all our hearts to ensure that no point of perfection escapes us, in so far as with his divine grace we might achieve it in the observance of the Constitutions and our way of making progress in our Lord.¹⁷

The point is clearly not the disappearance pure and simple of the element of personal sanctification, but the shift of perspective: the particular and characteristic insistence on the apostolic viewpoint of the Society. The interior life remains not merely useful but indispensable: one cannot bring to one's neighbour what one does not possess oneself. The point is made with some emphasis by Polanco in a passage of his *Industriae*, which must have provided a first draft for the definitive edition of the Constitutions:

In order to be of real help to one's neighbour it is necessary for everyone to be of real help to himself: for just as God wills, in the natural world, that an animal be perfect in order to beget its like ... so in the spiritual sphere, in order to strengthen men in faith, hope and charity, and all the virtues, he desires that his instrument, who is the immediate cause, should be full of all these virtues.¹⁸

It will help to clarify the problem if we make a distinction, as one does in discussing questions of poverty, between the texts intended for the 'formed' Jesuit, 'in the Lord's vineyard', and those addressed to candidates or to religious still in formation. It is in the

¹⁶ *Exercises*, 152.

¹⁷ *Constitutions*, Part VI, ch 1.

¹⁸ MHSI *Pol. compl.* II, p 763.

latter case that the obligation to aim at perfection is most insistently emphasized as an absolute necessity for the future apostolate. The most typical example is probably the *General Examen*, which might at first appear an exception to the rule, in that it uses the language of the 'double end'. The spirit of this text only becomes apparent when it is remembered that it envisages the 'candidate', one who does not yet know the Society. Here Ignatius' intention is to make it clear what is expected of the candidate:

The end of this Society is not simply to devote its energies to the salvation and perfection of its own members (*animas*) with the help of divine grace, but also, with the same grace, to work strenuously in giving help to the salvation and perfection of their fellowmen.¹⁹

The statement of the traditional double end would seem to be a sort of precautionary measure, intended to bring home to the candidate that the life he envisages is indeed the religious life in the full sense of the term (and the following paragraph goes on to declare that the jesuit makes the traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience). But what is important to notice for our purposes is the evident insistence on the apostolic character of this new form of religious life: *not simply* for personal salvation, *but also* for the salvation of our neighbour; the emphasis is clearly brought out by the use of the adverb *intensamente* (strenuously), which had already been used in the first edition of the *Examen* in 1546.

It is this emphasis ('not only, but also . . . strenuously') which constitutes the difference and originality. It sets this text apart from similar, non-ignatian, roman documents. It reveals the basic orientation of Ignatius' thought: the Society has indeed only one end, which is the glory of God and the service of one's neighbour.

For another example, by way of corroboration, we may turn to the long letter sent from Rome to Coimbra in May, 1547. The theme of the letter, reflected in the title by which it is generally known, is 'perfection'. Here again it will be well to recall that we are concerned with an exhortation addressed to young religious still in their studies. The question it deals with is essentially that of their preparation for the apostolate; and, by a shift of viewpoint perfectly natural in a document regarding students, the main emphasis is

¹⁹ *MI Constitutiones*, 11, pp 4-6. The text is that of 1556, but is identical in construction with that of 1550. Both texts begin by drawing attention to the various papal approbations, as if to emphasize the ecclesial character of what the candidate is proposing to undertake.

brought to bear on the subject of personal perfection. This gives particular significance to the way the thought of the letter develops. After exhorting its readers to fervour, it goes on to dwell at some length on the discernment necessary to prevent this fervour from turning in on itself (the danger, as we know, was not imaginary) and becoming an obstacle to the final purpose of their studies, the future apostolate. Finally, in the concluding pages, the letter sets out to show how, even here and now, the study undertaken for God is highly effective in the service of others. The 'end' is already present and effective, as a grace and a call, in the task of preparation, in the effort of present mortification and the labour involved:

And during this time whilst your studies last, do not imagine that you are of no use to your neighbour. Apart from the fact that you are doing a service to yourselves, as well-ordered charity demands – 'Have mercy on your own soul if you fear God', you are giving honour and glory to God in many ways.²⁰

The expression is redolent of the beginning of the *General Examen*: and the resemblance is hardly surprising when we consider the people to whom the letter was written. However, at the beginning of this same letter, there is a far more characteristic passage, where we have a distinction between three 'ends', each more specific than the last: the vocation of every christian, the religious vocation in general, the vocation or end proper to the Society:

Consider your own vocation and the manner of it . . . ; for not only has God called you out of darkness into his wonderful light . . . as he has done with all the faithful . . .

That is to say, you are called, as is every christian, to live as children of God in his kingdom of light.

However . . . he had willingly drawn you out of the perilous abyss of the world . . . And much more than this, in order that you might employ yourselves entirely with that for which God created you, which is his honour and glory, and your salvation, and help to your fellow men.

Here we are concerned with the religious vocation in general, with its twofold end of personal salvation and assistance to one's neighbour. This however is linked directly to a further specification, which defined more exactly the particular end of the Society. It is on this

²⁰ MI *Epistolae* 1, p 508.

that the scholastic must concentrate, even during the time of his studies:

Although all the institutions of the christian life are directed towards these *ends* [in the plural], God has called you to this one, which is not the general orientation; but since he has set you down in this one [your own proper vocation] you have to make of yourselves a continual sacrifice for the glory of God and the salvation of your neighbour.²¹

I have quoted somewhat at length from this passage because there are few instances where the distinction between the double end and the single end appears with such clarity and emphasis.²²

In the Constitutions themselves, it is sometimes necessary to draw a similar distinction between what is said to candidates or scholastics, and what is intended for the use of formed members active in the ministry.²³ In the passages which deal directly with scholastics, according to the principle already stated in connection with the *General Examen*, we find the language of the 'double end'. Instances also occur here and there in the fourth part, which is about studies:

The target at which the Society directs its aim is its members' souls and those of its neighbours, to obtain the final end for which they are created . . .²⁴

It should be noticed, however, that the 'Declaration', whose purpose is to relate this text to that of the Society in general, returns to the terminology of the single end, since it is concerned with the 'professed and the formed coadjutors':

Since the end and aim of this Society is . . . to preach the word, to hear confessions, and to use other means . . . for helping souls, it seems necessary that those who enter it to become professed or formed coadjutors, should be good-living men.²⁵

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp 497-8.

²² The concluding sentence of the paragraph provides us with a lovely formula which expresses in brief the jesuit vocation and the end of the Society: 'With all your powers to glorify your creator and to bring all his creatures back to him'. *Ibid.*, p 498.

²³ It is one of the drawbacks of the 'Summary of the Constitutions' - a series of excerpts drawn from the *General Examen* and the Constitutions, that it draws far too heavily on the *Examen* (intended for candidates) and from the third part of the Constitutions (which deals with the formation of novices). Cf *Supra*, pp 35-7.

²⁴ MI, *Constitutiones* II, p 382, the proemium to part IV.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p 384. The words 'professed and formed coadjutors', which explain the change of language here, were suppressed by the 1st General Congregation in 1558, so that they do not appear in the official latin translation.

Even when they insist on the necessity of the scholastics striving after their own perfection with a view to helping others later, the Constitutions keep in sight the fact that the final and single end of the Society remains the service of one's neighbour. It will be sufficient to call to mind two passages which successively designate and distinguish the 'end' of the studies and the 'end' of the Society itself:

The purpose of the teaching which one receives in this Society is with the divine favour to help its members' souls and those of its neighbours.

In order that the scholastics may make solid progress in acquiring these skills, they must first of all strive to maintain purity of soul and a right intention in their studies, seeking nothing else in the knowledge of letters than the *glory of God and the good of souls*; and in prayer they must repeatedly ask for grace that they might make progress in learning for this end.²⁶

The final end, both during the time of studies and beyond them, remains the same: the glory of God and the service of the neighbour.²⁷

This final end is always the same; it is only the emphasis and general tone which change, in those cases where the text refers directly to jesuits whose formation is complete. Here, there is no element of fluidity in the terms used. The Constitutions treat only of one end, embracing in a single forward vision the glory of God and the service of neighbour. On this subject nothing could be more typical than the opening lines of the sixth part, which sets out to consider in its entirety the 'personal lives of the subjects admitted or incorporated into the Society':

In order that those who are already professed or formed coadjutors might devote themselves more fruitfully, according to our Institute, in the divine service and the help of their neighbour, certain observances will be necessary for them . . .²⁸

The beginning of the seventh part, whose contents are introduced as 'the relations of those admitted into the body of the Society with their neighbour and their distribution in the vineyard of Christ our Lord', emphasizes the same point with equal insistence:

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 416, 422. Part IV ch V, 1 and ch VI, 1.

²⁷ 'The end of the Society is to help our neighbours . . .'; 'The greater glory and service of God our Lord and the universal good which is the sole end for which one must strive in this and in all things'. *Ibid.*, pp 468, 490; Part IV, ch XII, 1 and ch XVII, 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp 518, 520: Part VI, ch 1, 1.

Just as in the sixth part, we spoke of these things which every member of the Society ought to observe with regard to himself, so in this seventh part we must deal with obligations with regard to one's neighbour – an aim and object which is our Institute's very own . . .²⁹

To pass from the Constitutions as such to a general consideration of the other ignatian writings, the general drift of the texts is exactly the same. The problem is to avoid being overwhelmed by the abundance of material. The letters, for example, return continually to the theme of the single end, to which all must be ordered. Witness the following letter to Peter Faber in which Ignatius explains how apostolic work will sometimes prevent the jesuit even from finding the time to enjoy God in peace; 'Often it happens that we have no time for it, not even for mass'. And yet the aim is always quite clear: 'So in all things to experience what is for the greater glory and service of his divine goodness'.³⁰ The most decisive text, however, is certainly the letter to Father Miro, who wanted to refuse the position of confessor to John III of Portugal. Ignatius reminds him that those who take for their end the glory of God must be ready to take on risky jobs:

Turning, however, to your motives which would have led you to refuse the position. My opinion is that not even your own safety is relevant. In fact, if, according to our profession, we are looking merely for a safe path, and if we have to put aside the good which should be done in order to keep ourselves out of trouble, we could not live and deal with our neighbours. But, according to our vocation, we are obliged to deal with them.³¹

On this point, the disciples were to show themselves as fearless as their master. We may recall, for instance, how Nadal summed up the spirit and end of the Society, on the basis of the grace of La Storta, in terms of 'the special grace granted to the Society':

What else did Christ have or wish to have on earth besides toil,

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p 560: Part VII ch 1, 1. One could cite many other texts. Cf Courel, *art. cit.*, p 203, note 48.

³⁰ *MI Epistolae* I, p 338. For a similar grouping of ideas, cf *ibid.*, I, pp 659–63; II, pp 481–3; IV, pp 127, 456; VI, p 91. In the same way Fr Araoz at Barcelona and Lainez at Plaisance write to Ignatius that there are days when they don't have the time to say mass.

³¹ *MI Epistolae* IV, p 627. Cf *MI Fontes Narrativi* III, pp 430–31, where Fr Oliver Manares tells how Ignatius consoled one of the fathers who feared that his conversations with and visits to others would distract him from God: 'If you do not feel that you are as close to God as you were before, in solitude, do not be anxious about it. No distraction can harm you which is undertaken for the glory of God'.

persecution and the cross, for the glory of God the Father and the salvation of us all? Let us therefore desire the same, putting our lives at risk, if need be, for the salvation of the brethren.³²

But for all this, it is abundantly clear that if the quest for individual perfection is passed over practically in silence when it is a question of defining the end of the Society, this in no sense implies a neglect or contempt for prayer, the interior life in general, or the values of personal holiness. It should not be forgotten how Ignatius himself was at such pains to impress upon St Francis Xavier, 'in season and out of season', the words of the gospel: 'What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?'

Among the constitutive elements of religious life, pride of place is accorded to prayer, abnegation, the acquisition of the 'solid and perfect virtues', poverty, obedience etc. But what is striking is that their place is always in the order of the *means*, and it is this point which concerns us for the moment. There is an order among the means and a constant subordination of means to the end: this is the typical ignatian view of things.

Thus the whole of the tenth part of the Constitutions is constructed around the inter-relationships between the *end*, which is the service of God and the aid rendered to souls, and the *means*, which are of various kinds and which must take their appointed place in a hierarchy of values:

For the preservation and increase . . . of the Society . . . and for achieving the end at which it aims, which is to help souls to attain to their last and supernatural end, the means which join the instrument to God are more efficacious.³³

On the 'foundation' of the 'supernatural means' an elaborate hierarchy is constructed, in which, along with virtue, prayer and charity, a wide variety of 'natural means' also have their part to play: doctrine, eloquence, diplomatic ability, health of mind – the range extends even to the quality of the climate. It is with considerations such as these that the Constitutions close: nothing may be neglected; everything down to the last detail can and must become a means and a help, *medio y ayuda*, in view of the end desired. In all this there is nothing prosaic or petty, but simply a concern to achieve the fullest effectiveness 'for the glory of God'.

³² MHSI, Nadal V, p 52. Cf Rom 9, 3, and the *Imitation of Christ*, 2, 12, 7 and 2, 12, 10.

³³ MI *Constitutiones*, 11, p 714. Par X, 2.

In the *Industriae* of Polanco, a recurrent idea is already apparent which is easily misunderstood and is liable at first sight to raise eyebrows: prayer is always presented as the first 'means' to attain what one is looking for, together with humility, the sacraments and also good relationships, one's studies or the 'universal mean', which consists in 'taking hold of all that is advantageous and avoiding what is detrimental'. Not all the natural or supernatural 'means' are, however, on the same level; each retains its own place and value. But they are always considered in relation to an 'end', which is the service of neighbour, and which we would be inclined to translate into contemporary language as 'apostolate'. Again (and this is another idea which appears frequently), they may be seen as the 'presuppositions' of a life given over to the service of the brethren:

First of all it is presupposed that the letter without the spirit is useless, and that, both parts being necessary, the part of the spirit is especially so, even for all our neighbours, to draw them up from the fleshly to the spiritual, it is necessary that it be spiritual.³⁴

The sentence is cumbersome, but the idea behind it is perfectly clear: the means are not secondary or negligible but indispensable to the final end, which is perfectly defined at the close of the *Industriae*: 'to seek sincerely his glory and the good of our neighbours'.³⁵

One final citation will take us a step further; it will enable us to affirm that, as might have been expected, the means and the end compensate one another:

The first and most important thing which our blessed Father recommended to those of the Society who were going on the missions or engaging in contacts with their neighbour in order to help them in spiritual things, was to understand that the greatest and most important duty in helping others to make progress was to make progress oneself and to grow daily in virtue with the favour of the Lord.³⁶

There is no question, then, of opposition between the apostolate and personal holiness; and if the single end remains the glory of God and the service of neighbour, personal progress is a means which already has its place within that end; it is at once the condition and the fruit of all effort. The point is of considerable importance, for it governs the entire apostolic spirituality of St Ignatius, and is a defining characteristic of his mysticism of service, in which

³⁴ MHSJ *Pol. compl.* II, 752.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p 775.

³⁶ MI, *Fontes Narrativi*, III, pp 624-5.

the existence of souls to be saved is not only a call to apostolic labour, but forms an integral part of the relationship of close familiarity with God. The glory of God pursued in the widest possible framework is also the meeting-point of that intimacy in which man adores and loves his Lord. The world, still darkened by sin, is no longer an obstacle between God and ourselves; it provides the milieu, transfigured already by love, in which the total self-giving and the divinization of the apostle reach fulfilment.

The spiritual import of the 'single aim'

It remains to consider the final aspect of the subject. As has been said, the definition of a single end has the somewhat odd characteristic of being couched in a formula normally containing at least two terms: the glory and service of God *and* the salvation of one's neighbour. Hence we cannot rest content with a comparative study of texts; the single end needs to be considered 'from inside', in order to grasp its spiritual unity and to recognize the ultimate meaning of this glory, which is to be sought in the interaction of all our energies and all the means at our disposal for the service of souls.

The close bond, so frequently affirmed by Ignatius, between the glory of God and the salvation of souls,³⁷ is of course no exclusive privilege of the jesuit vocation, but at least it is one of its characteristic features. It shows, in the first place, that the glory of God is, so to speak, a unifying goal: in other words, one which draws together in a single vision the widely varied elements of jesuit enterprise for the greater service of God and of others. It is unifying because it is a principle of purification, demanding as it does rigorous selection in the order of means. The apostolic end of the Society involves not only the sacrifice of the monastic habit, but also of choral office and many elements of the liturgical life which Ignatius loved and which he had attended with such devotion at Montserrat and Manresa.³⁸ At a more interior level, the striving for God's glory is purifying, in that it presupposes and calls for the total rejection of our own glory. True, this is a negative principle, yet it is one

³⁷ Notice that Catherine of Siena employs the same expression (attributing the words to our Lord): '... seeking the salvation of souls, the honour and glory of my name', as does Bl Paul Giustiniani, speaking of the eremitical life: 'All Christ's servants must seek the salvation of the neighbour and the glory of God, but in different ways. Every man, according to his own proper activity and function, must seek the glory of God, and the salvation of the neighbour for the sake of God's glory'.

³⁸ Cf *MI Fontes Narrativi*, I, p 390.

which will serve to explain and illuminate a number of texts on abnegation and obedience. It is of very great importance; and if it is only touched on here, this is because the point has already been emphasized above. Again, the search for the glory of God, or more precisely 'the greater glory' (*mayor gloria*),³⁹ is purifying because, positively, it is a principle of ever-increasing action and energy in the discernment of what God wants of us. For he alone knows what will redound more to his glory and the universal good.

Hence, as purifying our desire to serve, and encompassing the desire to help in the salvation of *everyone*, the search for God's glory has the effect of endlessly widening our spiritual horizon, leading us to refuse every limitation and to extend our concern to every creature.

The *Spiritual Journal* of St Ignatius contains a significant passage on this subject, where he sees how the grace of 'respect', very close in this context to the desire for God's glory, needs ceaselessly to extend itself:

During this period of time, it seemed to me that humility, reverence and respect ought not to be fearful but loving . . . Afterwards, during that day, it gave me great joy to remember this; it seemed to me that I should not stop there. But that the same thing should be so with creatures, that is to say loving humility, etc.⁴⁰

The single end likewise unifies prayer and action. Apostolic activity does not mean to descend to a lower, less sublime level than that of contemplative reality. It is at the very heart of his contemplation of the Trinity that Ignatius is raised to an activity, for the greater glory of God, which admits no boundaries and is as transforming and unifying as the highest contemplation.⁴¹ It is for the disciples to follow their master along such ways, and they are not easy. What, at this level, establishes a profound unity between the striving for perfection and the element of service (or of work under-

³⁹ Though the word 'greater' does not appear in every formulation, it is always implied. As Nadal says, wherever the word glory appears in the Constitutions, we are to understand 'greater glory', even if the word 'greater' does not appear. Cf AHSI 34 (1965), pp 253-57.

⁴⁰ *Spiritual Diary* for 30 March, 1544: MI *Constitutiones*, I, p 131.

⁴¹ Frequent misunderstandings arise here when 'infused' contemplation is set over against purely natural activity (even when this is good and directed by a right intention). The activity to which this text (and others like it) refers, has for Ignatius as much supernatural value as mystical contemplation. The latter is always shot through with human and natural elements - inadequacies, imperfections - of the natural and psychological order, as is action. Cf *Spiritual Exercises*, 336.

taken with service in view) is precisely that everything is directed to the glory of God, the final goal of our searching, the luminous focal point of love and action. Called to the service of his neighbour, man is taken up ('Where do you want to take me, Lord?') into the movement of God's service, which is also the service of his glory. For glory is the goal and, in a certain sense, the present context of our service. It is through the desire for God's glory that service is stripped of its too human elements, so as to receive in exchange its true religious character.

Why, then, the bi-polar form in which the end of the Society is so often expressed? A clue to the answer is provided by a characteristic feature of the ignatian texts which might seem at first sight unimportant. Many of the sentences in which it occurs would still make sense if the mention of the glory of God were left out. To all appearances it is an insertion, almost a redundancy of style. There are many cases where the glory of God is actually added, in Ignatius' own hand, to a first draft in which it was not included. Yet the care of St Ignatius to revise and correct his texts, and this without any concern for purely literary considerations, is well known. One can only conclude, then, that these repeated additions are not details of style but a quite deliberate insistence on something close to his heart, which is bound up with the particular end, the single goal, of the entire work. In the light of what we have seen in the foregoing pages, the precise meaning of this often re-iterated link between the glory of God and the element of universal service is fairly clear.

It is indeed the service of neighbour, work for his salvation and perfection (in the fullest sense of these words), which is the single end of the Society. If the notion of divine glory can either be added to it or, on the contrary, sometimes left out, the reason is that it belongs on another plane. It is the *transcendent* end of all the others, embracing, directing and informing every effort, and marking out its ultimate goal and religious meaning.

In the order of ends, therefore, the glory of God is not an addition to the service of the neighbour – the other formula which defines the end of the Society. In the profound vision of Ignatius the two are the same thing: the glory of God pursued to its fulness is the salvation of all men, and in relation to this single end all the rest is in the order of means to be adapted or directed. Nevertheless, this occurs only at the end and term, in an accomplishment which is not yet possible, where the service of the neighbour would really be a

service of all men, one in which glory and service would be perfectly one. So it is that in the formulations of the end to be pursued, the element of personal perfection can be omitted. This in no way implies that this perfection may be consigned to oblivion or relegated to second place. On the contrary, it is present everywhere in its most radical form and with its absolute demands: equally, it contains no room for self-seeking, presents no danger of turning in on self. If necessary, the apostle will go to the lengths of dying for the salvation of his brothers, and he will pursue to the utmost of his power the effort of interior purification, in order to possess within himself, together with Christ, the desire for the salvation of all men.

The glory of God, pursued 'in all things', is the interior well-spring which is alike the source of the grandest undertakings and the humblest of our everyday labours. It is the final expression of Ignatius' apostolic dynamism, the guiding inspiration which brought his Institute into being and governs to the last detail its essentially apostolic character. It is the principle on which all depends: the absence of choir and of the monastic habit, the manifestation of conscience and the form of prayer. It underlies, too, a conception of the vows which sees them not only as a break with the world and a personal ascesis, but as witness to an attachment to the Lord in a poverty that looks beyond any earthly goods, in a chastity which extends to all men in spiritual fatherhood, in an obedience which consists in an entire availability to the whole work of the Church.

Thus, we come back in the end to the first formula which already contained the essential: the definition of an apostolic Institute whose end is one, in conformity with the gospel-call, 'the glory of God and the salvation of neighbour'. We may conclude by noting how profoundly faithful it is to the gospel, and to scripture as a whole, to see a single end in this double call. In the first instance, it is the God of the Covenant whose glory is in saving and lifting up his people and putting them to the service of that glory.⁴² To work for the glory of God or the service of neighbour will be, to the end of time, one and the same task. The Church, says St Paul, is that '*People* whom God has taken for his own, to make his glory praised'.⁴³

⁴² Lev 9, 6.

⁴³ Eph 1, 14.