

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By EDWARD J. MALATESTA

IN TREATING the apostolate of the Spiritual Exercises in the context of the ignatian Symposium, this paper has a triple objective. It seeks 1) to point out some highlights of the current interest in and ministry of the Exercises; 2) to raise questions which, it is hoped, will challenge the apostolic imagination of the participants in the Symposium; 3) to assist those who are interested in learning more about the Exercises by indicating some useful literature regarding them. In view of these objectives, the first part of the paper intends to help us become aware of and evaluate contemporary phenomena regarding the apostolate of the Exercises. The second part proposes questions intended to favour an exchange of information and the eventual undertaking of new initiatives. The documentation, offered in the notes, while not attempting to be exhaustive, is meant to serve the third objective.¹

From the outset it will be helpful to specify that the present author accepts and invites his readers to keep in mind the very useful distinctions expressed by Fr Ganss in his splendid essay, 'The Authentic Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Some Facts of History and Terminology Basic to Their Functional Efficacy Today'.² Following him we distinguish: 1) 'the authentic and integral Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius', that is, the thirty-day retreat which closely follows the structure and directives of the book of the Exercises; 2) 'authentic adapted Spiritual Exercises', that is, retreats of eight days or even less, which skilfully adapt the spirit and content of the Exercises in order 'to obtain whatever fraction of the fruit

¹ I would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr Eduardo Barrios (Antilles Province), student at the Institute of Spirituality of the Gregorian University, for his help in assembling the documentation. For bibliography regarding the discernment of spirits, see the papers of Michael Buckley, Gervais Dumeige and William Spohn, and our note 13.

² Published in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, Vol. 1, no. 2 (November 1969), esp. pp 31-33.

of the complete Exercises is possible in the circumstances'; 3) other exercises, 'adaptations which drew their original inspiration from the ignatian Exercises but have advanced so far from them that now they can scarcely be called authentic Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius'. In this paper when we speak of the Exercises we mean the first two senses, while by exercises we shall refer to the third meaning. When intending to indicate the book of the Exercises, we shall do so explicitly.

We also appreciate Fr Ganss's remarks about the difference between the intense religious experience which is at the basis of the Exercises and the art-form proposed by Ignatius in his book in order to help directors guide others in disposing themselves for a similar experience.³ A profound and characteristic communion with the Lord, joined to the desire to dedicate oneself entirely to doing his will, is the experiential basis of the Exercises and the experience towards which they point.⁴ Everything else is a means to this end.

I. Contemporary interest in the Spiritual Exercises⁵

An impressive and encouraging sign of a renewal both of the spiritual life of the members of the Society and of their dedication to the *verbi Dei ministerium* is offered by the imaginative and generous efforts expended throughout the entire Society in recent years, for

³ *Op. cit.*, p 6. The Exercises were first printed in 1548. The latest critical edition is that of J. Calveras - C. de Dalmases, *Exercitia spiritualia* . . . MHSI 100 (Rome, 1969). For a critical edition of the *Directorios* to the Exercises, see I. Iparraguirre, ed., *Directoria exercitiorum spiritualium* (1540-1599) . . . MHSI 76 (Rome, 1955). The history of the Exercises during specific periods has been admirably documented and narrated by Iparraguirre, *Historia de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio. Práctica de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio Loyola en vida de su Autor (1522-1556)* (Rome, 1946); . . . *Desde la muerte de San Ignacio hasta la promulgación del Directorio oficial (1556-1599)* (Bilbao/Rome, 1955); *Id.*, *Comentarios de los Ejercicios ignacianos (siglos XVI-XVIII) Repertorio crítico* (Rome, 1967).

The most useful editions in english are listed in *Prayer and the Ignatian Exercises: New Directions, Supplement to The Way* 16 (Summer, 1972), p 4. This excellent issue presents the papers read at the Annual Conference of the English Jesuits on the Spiritual Exercises, held January 6-9, 1972 in Liverpool. A handy edition of the spanish text, together with a very useful concordance and other documentation is that of the late José Calveras, *Ejercicios espirituales, Directorio y Documentos de S. Ignacio de Loyola* (Barcelona, Balmes, 1958³).

⁴ It is noteworthy that one of the best contemporary studies of the Exercises considers them precisely in terms of religious experience: G. Cusson, *Pédagogie de l'expérience spirituelle personnelle; Essais pour notre temps*, 4. (Bruges-Paris/Montréal, Desclée de Brouwer/Les éditions Bellarmin, 1968). This work was the author's doctoral dissertation presented at the Institute of Spirituality of the Gregorian University.

⁵ A brief overview of the current american scene is presented by Fr Thomas Burke, 'The Contemporary Retreat Movement', in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* 163 (1970), pp 39-45 (reprint by PASE; see note 7).

a better understanding of the Exercises, and consequently for a suitable personal and apostolic adaptation of them. This renewal is taking place in the context of contemporary religious experience and in the light of the best modern studies in exegesis, speculative, moral and pastoral theology, liturgy, psychology and spirituality. During its first years, the journal *Christus*, published by the jesuits of the french assistancy, offered informative and inspirational studies regarding both the Exercises and jesuit spirituality in general which exercised a wide influence.⁶ In 1964, Fr Thomas Burke, of the New York Province, founded a service entitled 'Program for Adapting the Spiritual Exercises'. During the past nine years, his office has distributed thousands of books and articles on the Exercises and organized seven national workshops.⁷ The First International Congress on the Exercises, organized by Fr Clemente Espinosa, was held at Loyola, Spain in August 1966. Some forty specialists gathered to examine the Exercises in the light of the new theological emphases endorsed by Vatican II.⁸

Between 1968 and 1972, four international courses for retreat directors were organized in Rome and frequented by over 200 jesuits, sisters and diocesan and religious priests all engaged in retreat work in some 25 countries.⁹ In February of this year (1973), the course was held in Bogota, Colombia, in order to benefit a larger number of directors of Latin America.

Recent years have witnessed the rediscovery of the individually directed retreat. Such retreats – of 30 days, 15 days, or 8 days – have been presented with excellent results and are requested by ever greater numbers of jesuits, priests, lay persons, and religious,

⁶ See the translation of some of the key articles made by Fr William J. Young, S.J., *Finding God in all Things* (Chicago, 1958).

⁷ The address of the 'Program to Adapt the Spiritual Exercises' (cited here as PASE) is 144 Grand Street, Jersey City, New Jersey, 07302. This flourishing initiative which has accomplished incalculable good is reminiscent of the *Bibliothèque des Exercices* founded by H. Watrigant and which reached 100 issues. See H. Watrigant, 'Four Letters on the Library of the Spiritual Exercises', in *Woodstock Letters* 21 (1892), pp 335–355; 22 (1893), pp 78–101; pp 212–226; C. Plater, 'The Library of the Exercises', in *The Month* 117 (1911), pp 59–65.

⁸ The papers written for and the conclusions formulated at the Loyola Congress were published by C. Espinosa, ed., *Los Ejercicios de San Ignacio de San Ignacia a la Luz del Vaticano II*. Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 280, (Madrid, 1968).

⁹ The outlines or the entire text of the lectures given during the last three of these courses have been published in the following volumes which are available from CIS (see note 10): *II Cursus Internationalis Exercitiorum Spiritualium in Hodierna Luce Ecclesiae* (Rome, 1969: contents in spanish, italian and french); *III Cursus Internationalis Directorum Exercitiorum: Conferentiae, Summaria* (Rome, 1971: contents in spanish and italian); *IV Cursus Internationalis Directorum Exercitiorum* (Rome, 1972: contents in italian).

especially in the english-speaking countries, India, Japan and the Philippines.¹⁰

New methods have been devised for giving the full Exercises or a part of them over several months or a year to persons who either cannot free themselves totally from other occupations for a long period of time, or who prefer to have the experience of making the Exercises while involved in their normal occupations.¹¹

Study sessions have been organized for those preparing to become directors, often as a preparation for and follow-up to making individually directed Exercises.¹² Apprenticeships have been provided, so that future directors may first assist those with more experience and then direct retreats with the benefit of supervision and guidance.

Since the pastoral use of the Exercises and reflection upon them mutually stimulate each other, it is not surprising that in recent years important monographs and articles on the Exercises have been produced.¹³

¹⁰ See the information given *passim* in PS (Press Service), since the beginning of 1972 entitled CIS, and published by the *Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis* in Rome (see note 15). The theme of the Seventh National Workshop on the Spiritual Exercises organized by Fr Thomas Burke and held at Xavier University, Cincinnati, August 23–25, 1972, was 'Directed Retreats'. Already published are the conferences of Fr Dominic Maruca, 'Toward a Theology of the Personalized Retreat', and of Fr William Peters, 'Theology and Exegesis in the Directed Retreat' (both available from PASE); see also Fr Ladislav Örsy, 'Directed versus Preached Retreats', in *Review for Religious* 25 (1966), pp 781–796. (Reprint PASE).

¹¹ At the Loyola Congress in 1966, Fr Ludger Brian of Montreal, Canada, spoke of his experience in giving the Exercises in this fashion. In the Spring of 1972, Fr Gilles Cusson offered a series of lectures in Rome on his theory and method of giving the Exercises 'dans la vie courante'. It is hoped that these lectures will be published in the near future. For other experiences of this method see PS n. 2 (1970, 2), p 17; n. 4 (1971, 1), pp 49–51.

¹² As recent examples can be mentioned the sessions offered at Guelph, Wernersville, Spokane, Chicago. See PS n. 2 (1970, 2) p 16; CIS n. 7 (1972, 1), pp 30–32.

¹³ For recent publications on the Exercises, see PS n. 6 (1971, 3), pp 90–98; CIS n. 7 (1972, 1), pp 43–45; n. 8 (1972, 2), pp 47–50 (complete list of what jesuits published on the Exercises during 1971). See also H. Coathalem, *Ignatian Insights* (Taichung, Taiwan, 1961); J. Calveras, *Práctica de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio* (Barcelona, 1962); L. Gonzalez – I. Iparraguirre, *Ejercicios Espirituales. Commentario pastoral* BAC, 245 (Madrid, 1965); G. Cusson, 'Les Exercices Spirituels', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, Vol. VII, cols. 1306–1318; W. A. M. Peters, *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius* (PASE-1968); C. Bernard, *Elements pour un Directoire des Exercices* (Rome, 1971); A. Chapelle, *Exercices* (Heverlee, Belgium, 1971) lithographed; C. Bernard, *Appunti per aiutare a dare il mese di Esercizi* (Rome, 1972); R. B. Fullam, *Exploring Vatican II, Christian Living Today and Tomorrow* (New York, 1969); E. Pousset, *Notes sur les Exercices* (reflections on the theology of the Exercises in the light of the thought of Père Gaston Fessard): see PS n. 5 (1971, 2), pp 65–67. (This work is available from the author at Maison Pierre Favre, 128 rue Blomet, 75 Paris 15e, France); M. Flick – Z. Alszeghy, *II Mese di Galloro* (Rome, 1972). (This contains reflections upon 19 Long Retreats given by the authors as a team.)

Reflection upon and sharing of experiences concerning the Exercises and every aspect of jesuit spirituality have been encouraged by the creation in Rome of the Ignatian Centre of Spirituality,¹⁴ of the Institute of Jesuit Sources and of the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality in St. Louis, with its widely appreciated series, 'Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits'.¹⁵ Similar centres have been established in Mexico, Argentina, India, and France.

This recent interest in and use of the Exercises causes in the present writer sentiments of admiration and gratitude for them as a most precious charism given to St Ignatius, to the Society of Jesus and to others, and a joy filled with hope, because this gift has been shared with countless others both in the past and in our own times. That both the authentic integral Exercises and the authentic adapted Exercises are being first of all made by so many jesuits young and old the world over, and then given by them to ever greater numbers of persons represents, it seems to this writer, *the most positive and most hopeful sign* of the renewal of the Society and its ministries.

The Spiritual Exercises form such an essential part of the charism and vocation both of St Ignatius himself and of the members of the Society of Jesus that it is impossible adequately to think either of the founder or of his religious community without reference to the Exercises. Let us recall that, in the *General Examen*, Ignatius himself prescribes for those preparing to enter or who have just entered the Society the making of the Spiritual Exercises as their first experiment,¹⁶ and other spiritual exercises for those who at the end of the novitiate are ready to pronounce their vows.¹⁷ The

¹⁴ May we take this opportunity to clarify the distinction between the Ignatian Centre of Spirituality and the Institute of Spirituality, both located in Rome. The former, *Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis* (CIS) was created after the Thirty-First General Congregation to serve as a centre for communicating news and promoting reflection regarding jesuit spirituality as lived today throughout the Order. It is located at the Society's Curia, and is directed by the energetic Fr Luis González (Toledo Province), who is ably assisted by Fr Daniel Meenan (New York Province). The centre publishes a quarterly bulletin, in english and spanish editions, at first called PS (Press Service) and now entitled CIS. The address of CIS is: Casella Postale 9048, 00100 Rome.

The Institute of Spirituality, created in 1958 at the Gregorian University, and directed by Fr Gervais Dumeige (Province of Northern France), is an academic institute which offers, both to jesuits and others, programmes of studies in spirituality leading to the academic degrees of licentiate and doctorate. Currently some 140 students are enrolled from 25 countries.

¹⁵ Fr George Ganss is the founder and director of the Institute of Jesuit Sources, Chairman of the Assistancy Seminar, and Editor of its *Studies*. The address of the Institute and the Seminar is Fusz Memorial, 3700 West Pine, St. Louis, Missouri 63108.

¹⁶ *Examen Generale* (64-65).

¹⁷ *Ibid.* (98).

Constitutions, which themselves represent one possible incarnation of their spirit,¹⁸ contain directives regarding the Exercises.¹⁹ St Ignatius himself attached such value to the Exercises that he could say: '... the Spiritual Exercises are the best means I can think of in this life both to help a man benefit himself and to bring help, profit, and advantage to many others'.²⁰

Since the Exercises are so intimately related to the life and mission of the Society, it can be affirmed with reason that their use both within the Society and in our apostolate provides an accurate and privileged criterion for judging the spiritual health of the Order.²¹ Ideally, every Jesuit should be proficient not only in making the Exercises but also, due account being taken of differences of temperament and of natural and spiritual gifts, proficient in giving them at least to some persons.²² Indeed, not only should every ministry of the Society flow from the personal experience of its members in making the Exercises, but in a very real way every apostolic activity of Jesuits should tend, in a certain sense, towards the Exercises, inasmuch as it should be our aim to aid non-believers towards the discovery of Jesus Christ, and believers towards a deeper communion with the Lord in prayer, and both to a more generous love and service of others.

II *A challenge to apostolic imagination*

From what has already been said above, it should be clear that it is our contention that the Exercises are proving themselves an extraordinary apostolic instrument in our own day. Objections that may be expressed regarding their apostolic efficacy point up rather misunderstanding on the part of those who give or make them, poor adaptations of them, or lack of the necessary dispositions in those who approach them.²³

In this second part of our paper we should like to propose for the reflection and discussion of the members of the Symposium – and

¹⁸ See M. Ruiz Jurado, 'Ejercicios y Constituciones', in *Manresa* 43 (1971), pp 149–166.

¹⁹ *Constitutiones* Part IV, ch. 8, 5 and E (408–409); ch. 8, 10 (437); Part VII, ch. 4, 8 and F (648–649).

²⁰ Letter of Nov. 16, 1536, to Manuel Miona, who was Ignatius's confessor at Alcalá and Paris, in *Letters of St Ignatius of Loyola*. Selected and translated by W. J. Young (Chicago, 1959), pp 27–28.

²¹ See 'How do the Jesuits Make the Exercises?' CIS n. 8 (1972, 2) pp 14–20; 'How to Assist Jesuits Make the Exercises', *ibid.*, pp 35–39.

²² *Constitutiones* Pt IV, ch 8, 5 (408).

(Note 23 is printed on p 131).

of any other readers – some questions regarding 1) the potential of the Exercises towards solving urgent modern problems; 2) categories of persons to whom the Exercises are given or could be given; 3) wide adaptation of the Exercises in particular circumstances; 4) media of giving the Exercises; 5) areas of research. These questions are intended to apply to the contemporary context of the USA and are addressed by the writer to himself as well as to his readers.

It is difficult to avoid the impression that, for many, the Exercises are being given and made in this age of social and religious crisis characterized by atheism and secularization, principally as an experience of strengthening and deepening the faith-commitment of those who already believe. By far the majority of persons making the 30 days or personalized retreats are jesuits and religious women, who in the course of them rediscover or deepen some methods of christian prayer and perhaps learn others, renew their commitment to Christ, and live their religious lives with renewed hope, greater serenity, and more generosity.

This is no meagre harvest for the Church of God. A reform of life of this kind is certainly a legitimate goal of the Exercises and something to be grateful for. But we must not forget that the Exercises are intended primarily for those from whom extraordinary achievements can be expected. Considering now not such persons but the areas which clearly call for urgent action of an extraordinary kind, we might ask: What contribution is the contemporary retreat movement in our country making to social justice, to the liberation of individuals and whole nations from so many forms of slavery? How many persons have ended their retreat totally dedicated to foster peace in effective ways? Are the Exercises providing the occasion for men and women, individually and in groups, to give authentic witness to the poverty and humility of the Christ who was crucified yesterday on Golgotha and who is suffering today in his poor in our own country and throughout the world? Are the Exercises being given and made, are the directors and exercitants being prepared, in such a way that the retreat becomes an authentic, 'right-on' encounter with the holy Spirit, who clearly wishes to stir up the people of God to an active love that will be an obvious sign to all men of the presence of the compassionate Christ? How many men and women have terminated the Exercises after an election to devote part of all of their lives to the service of people in other lands? Throughout the world millions of persons of good will long for

peace, unity and brotherhood among nations. What have the Exercises contributed toward the realization of these ideals?²⁴

2. *Who should make the Exercises?* This question has already been alluded to in the preceding section. Let us attempt to face it now more directly. Ignatius, and the best spiritual masters after him, insist that the authentic, integral Exercises are meant for a comparatively limited number of persons. It is not inconceivable that some persons who today dedicate themselves to thirty days of prayer are not really making the complete Exercises of Ignatius. He intended clearly that the entire Exercises be given only to 'outstanding persons' or 'those who desire to decide upon their state of life', to 'those of such a character that from their progress notable fruit is expected for the glory of God'.²⁵ The criteria given in the Constitutions for the choice of ministries in general could be applied to the case of the Exercises in particular.²⁶

To how many men and women with high positions in government, industry, science, finance and advertising have extended Exercises been given? How many leading authors, entertainers, artists, and educators have made the thirty days retreat? Have the Exercises had an appreciable effect on those responsible for mass media: the press, television, cinema, radio? Obviously, the most influential persons are not the most accessible, nor do they have the most free time; they are not necessarily strongly inclined to spiritual exercises! But perhaps the art of persuasion joined to a creative imagina-

²³ See the articles of G. Ganss and T. Burke cited in notes 2 and 5; and I. Iparraguirre, 'El problema de la práctica de los ejercicios hoy', in *Manresa* 42 (1970), pp 169-178; *Id.*, *Guida pratica di esercizi per l'uomo di oggi* (Torino, 1972). The book of Raymund Schwager, a swiss jesuit, *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola* (Zurich, 1970), is a doctoral dissertation presented at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, as an historical and pastoral-theological study on the place of the Church in the Exercises and in the life of St Ignatius. See the comments on the book by I. Iparraguirre, 'Requiem por los Ejercicios?' in *Manresa*, 43 (1971), pp 245-254; and J. Granero, 'San Ignacio y su posición ante la iglesia', *ibid.*, pp 303-320.

²⁴ See the discussion held on 'The Exercises and the Formation to Justice', CIS n. 8 (1972, 2), pp 40-45. Some recent studies have explored the role of the Exercises in the life of Teilhard: C. Cuenot, 'Teilhard and the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius', in the *Teilhard Review* 4 (1969/1970), pp 50-59 (Reprint PASE); C. Valverde, 'Contemplación para alcanzar amor y Medio Divino', in *Manresa*, 42 (1970), pp 157-168; J. Laberge, *Teilhard de Chardin et les Exercices spirituels de saint Ignace*. This is a doctoral thesis presented at the Institut Catholique de Paris, in February, 1971.

In his discourse to directors of the Exercises in February 1971, Fr General Arrupe spoke about the Exercises and their relation to the Third World and development, liberation, the prophetic function, signs of the times, secularization, community discernment. See note 33.

²⁵ *Constitutiones* Pt VII, ch 4 (649).

²⁶ *Ibid.* ch 2 (621-6).

tion would find ways of introducing such persons to the experience of the Exercises.

The various experiences of the Christian Life Communities should be instructive in this regard. Not only do these communities count among their members some outstanding men and women, but they can be a privileged training-ground for preparing lay persons who eventually could draw their most promising colleagues in diverse fields to the Exercises, and in some cases actually give them to such persons.²⁷

A high priority should be given to important professional persons, as well as to persons with much authority and influence in the hierarchy of the Church.

In his address to the participants of the Fourth International Course for Directors of the Exercises, Pope Paul VI, on February 9, 1971, urged these directors to 'specialize in the Exercises, adapting them to children, young people, women, mothers of families, seminarians, the elderly, the sick, etc. . . .'²⁸

Surely the holy Father was not thinking of the entirety of the Exercises for each of these categories, or for everyone in any of them. Yet he expressed an important challenge: an immense amount of good could be accomplished for each of these classes of persons by an imaginative and authentic adaptation of the Exercises. Children, for example, have the possibility today of lengthy educative, cultural and recreational experiences. Is it inconceivable that some of them be offered an extended religious experience, for example of several days designed according to child psychology and expressed in suitable media?

As for young people, that is, of high school and college age, truly sensitive educators are aware of their need of and capacity for religious experience and an honest challenge. While in some cases 'pre-christian' or 're-christianizing' exercises are more appropriate, other young people are capable of authentic Exercises even of six or eight days.²⁹

The growing number of sisters and lay women prepared to give the Exercises offers the possibility for the ignatian experience to be

²⁷ See L. Brien, 'Los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio, instrumento privilegiado de pastoral para laicos adultos', in *Los Ejercicios . . .* (see note 8), pp 774-783; 'The Spiritual Exercises - Christian Life Communities' Charism', in F. Drolet, *New Communities for Christians* (Staten Island, 1972) ch. 6, pp 85-102; PS n. 6 (1971, 3) pp 37-39; CIS n. 7 (1972, 1) pp 25-28.

²⁸ See CIS n. 7 (1972, 1), p 34.

²⁹ See M. Kirchen, *Directed Retreats Adapted for High School and College* (PASE).

articulated in a feminine key for the benefit of men and women alike.³⁰

In some places, the Cenacle Sisters have been giving the Exercises in the homes of mothers of families. This method, which benefits the entire family in a particular way, suggests adaptations for the elderly and the sick.

These last two classes of persons to be mentioned explicitly by the holy Father could occupy a large number of generous apostles. Such persons have the time and often the dispositions to devote themselves to prolonged spiritual exercises, and could be helped significantly to carry their crosses with greater love for the Lord and for others.

Fr General, in his talk on the occasion of the Fourth International Course, broadened the horizon of the Exercises to include another class of persons, suggesting that non-believers of good will could be helped by an application of the human and psychological teachings of the Exercises in the search for true liberation.³¹ This is a suggestion which merits study and experimentation.

3. *Wide adaptation of the Exercises.* As Fr Ganss has said so well, when for various reasons the authentic Exercises cannot be given, we should not fear to adapt imaginatively and widely.³² Cursillos, Better World retreats,³³ Marriage Encounters, other kinds of retreats, days of recollection, etc. to individuals, small groups and large groups, can all be an appropriate and very efficacious means of ministry in various circumstances. Apostles who are sensitive, docile and generous servants of the Lord will be ready to serve in those ways which best help the persons to whom they are sent. For example, various kinds of exercises can be given to certain student groups which can greatly help them to encounter Christ, or even to large groups of clergy and religious, which can favour mutual understanding and cooperation in a religious community or a diocese. None of these means should be underestimated or disdained. The retreat director should however be clearly aware of the kind of good that is possible and desirable in each ministry, and not confuse the value and limits of the various objectives that can be achieved in different circumstances.

³⁰ See J. F. Gallen, 'Femininity and Spirituality', in *Review for Religious*, 70 (1961), pp 237-256 (Reprint PASE).

³¹ 'Gli Esercizi nel momento storico attuale', in *Dossier Arrupe 1965-1972* (Rome, CIS, 1972), pp 321-342.

³² G. Ganss, *op. cit.*, pp 24-28.

³³ See Fr Riccardo Lombardi, *Esortazioni per un mondo migliore* (Rome, 1958) (english adaptation: *Towards a New World* [New York, 1958]); *Per vivere il Concilio* (Milano, 1968); and especially the defence of his method, *Esercizi spirituali comunitari* (Bari, 1972).

4. *The media of giving the Exercises.* For four hundred years, practically the only way known of giving the Exercises has been by the conversations or conferences of a director who meets periodically with the individual or the group. Modern means of communication have opened up new possibilities: printed meditations, records, tapes, films, filmstrips, television, radio, exchange of letters. An essential part of ignatian Exercises is contact with the director, so that he can propose subjects and methods of prayer that suit the retreatant at each stage of his retreat. Today such contact can be possible by means of cassettes or letters, at least for those Exercises given over a long period of time. Even though personal contact is not possible in the case of a short retreat given by radio, record, tape or television, a great amount of good can be accomplished by such means, which are able to reach vast numbers of people, and perhaps remotely prepare them for more personalized retreats.³⁴ The potentiality of these media for use in giving the Exercises are still adequately to be explored.

One of the most traditional means used by the Society in giving the Exercises has been the retreat houses. The origin of retreat houses is explained by Fr Ganss.³⁵ Today for various reasons many retreat houses are in a state of crisis. Others, however, through apostolic imagination have become spiritual centres with an influence perhaps even surpassing that of bygone days. The possibilities are many and merit serious investigation and confident experimentation.³⁶

5. *Areas of research.* The Exercises have been and can still be studied from many points of view: linguistic, historical, theological, etc. In view of the apostolate of the Exercises in the present moment and in the immediate future, it would seem that the following areas of research merit prime consideration: most important of all, the biblical basis for the key meditations and for the contemplation of the mysteries of Christ – this point could be studied in relation to the christian tradition of the spiritual sense of sacred scripture, to the great benefit of both retreat directors and scripture schol-

³⁴ The only example of a retreat given on TV known to the present writer is that of which Fr James J. McCann (Philippines Province) spoke at the 1972 Workshop on the Spiritual Exercises. He succeeded in obtaining several hours of prime time a day during holy week on Philippine television.

³⁵ G. Ganss, *op. cit.*, pp 15–16.

³⁶ On contemporary efforts in various retreat houses throughout the Society, see PS n. 4 (1971, 1), pp 52–53; n. 6 (1971, 3), pp 35–37; CIS n. 8 (1972, 2), pp 21–33.

ars;³⁷ the Exercises in the light of contemporary psychology and psychiatry; comparison of methods of prayer proposed in the Exercises and non-christian meditation techniques; the Exercises and formation to the service of liberation and development, justice and peace.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Exercises, from the time of St Ignatius to our own day, have been and in the future always will be before all else the work of the holy Spirit. Docility to that interior anointing – the imprint of the living, active, penetrating and discerning word of God which the Spirit of Love causes within us³⁸ – is the first condition on our side for the effectiveness of the Spiritual Exercises in our own lives and in the lives of those we serve. Attentiveness to the same Spirit in a reading of the signs of the times, openness to his inspirations in ourselves and in others, and generous obedience to the suggestions and decision of our superiors regarding the apostolate of the Exercises, are also indispensable conditions of their use for the more universal good of our neighbour, for the greater glory of God.

At this privileged and challenging moment of the history of the world, of the Church and of our Society, it is the sincere hope of the present writer that the ignatian Symposium will be an occasion for the participants to reflect prayerfully and fraternally, as individuals and as a group, upon these three questions: What have we done, what are we doing, what shall we do with the Exercises for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

³⁷ See D. Stanley, *A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises* (Chicago, 1967), and his outstanding article, 'Contemplation of the Gospels, Ignatius Loyola and the Contemporary Christian', in *Theological Studies* 29 (1968), pp 417–443 (Reprint PASE); the work of G. Cusson (cited note 4), and the works of Père Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit* (Paris, 1950) and *Exégèse Médiévale*, 4 Vols (Paris, 1959–1964).

³⁸ Cf 1 Jn 2, 20, 27; Heb 4, 12.