

# THE IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY OF THE WAY

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THE INSTINCT TO DESCRIBE LIFE AS A 'WAY' or a 'journey' is, of course, universal. We find such expressions both within and beyond contexts we would readily identify as religious. Equally obviously, 'the way' has a special meaning for Christianity. The Fourth Gospel's Jesus understood himself as 'the way and the truth and the life' (John 14:6), a formula enshrined in *The Way's* logo; and the Acts of the Apostles refers to Jesus' disciples as 'followers of the Way' (Acts 9:2).

Yet there are also distinctive reasons why an Ignatian journal of contemporary spirituality should call itself *The Way*. When dealing with new converts, Ignatius was concerned 'to set them better into the way of the Lord'.<sup>1</sup> This way might have begun with the Exercises and with various forms of ascetical practice, but eventually it opens out into a way of unpredictable service, a way of ministry beyond conventional boundaries.

*The Way* therefore needs to draw on resources of two kinds. It must explore the documents of the Ignatian tradition, but not simply for their own sake or in isolation. Rather, it must also follow the invitation the Exercises have always given to anyone who takes them seriously: an invitation to explore how the Spirit is at work in our changing culture and our changing selves.

## ***Rules for Moving Forward***

Ignatius was well aware of the need for good order; his secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco, deserves an honoured place in any history of bureaucracy. At the outset of the *Constitutions* that he wrote for his Society, Ignatius tells us that laws and regulations are necessary: the Pope requires them; the witness of the saints and common sense confirm it. But these laws are only secondary:

<sup>1</sup> *Examen*, c. 4, n. 34 [91]: *enderezarlos mejor in viam Domini*.

... the supreme wisdom and goodness of God our creator and Lord is what must preserve and govern and carry forward in his holy service this very little Society of Jesus, just as he deigned to begin it, and on our part, more than any exterior constitution, the law from within of charity and love which the Holy Spirit writes and impresses upon hearts . . . <sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the purpose of the laws is not to instil a spirit of conformity, but rather to keep people moving:

... we hold it necessary that constitutions be written, that should help us move forward better, in conformity with our Institute, along the way that has been started which is the divine service.

'Institute' here has the connotation of 'beginning': what Christ our Lord has begun must be carried forward with equal creativity. Ignatius has not laid down a blueprint, but rather initiated a 'style of moving forward' (*modo de proceder*).<sup>3</sup>

A similar set of ideas can be found at the outset of the *Spiritual Exercises*. When Ignatius introduces what we call a retreat director, he speaks of 'the person who gives to another the style and structure (*modo y orden*) of meditating and contemplating'. The hope is that the person will take this foundation as a gift to be used creatively, and find for themselves 'something which enables the story to be clarified or felt a little more'. For we can trust that 'the Creator and Lord' will be directly, and in person, with the creature. And this will be 'more appropriate and much better' than if another person had been prescriptive, and thereby inevitably implied that their own form of response to God was normative.<sup>4</sup>

What we do in ministry is pointing us further forward along the way of 'the divine service'—not only the service we perform for God but also God's service to us. The healthy minister is comfortable with an educated ignorance about how things will turn out. Neither in the *Spiritual Exercises* nor in the *Constitutions* does Ignatius attempt a direct description of the encounter that he seeks to foster, the encounter on which, nevertheless, both his masterpieces centre. This is because of his

<sup>2</sup> *Constitutions*, Preamble [134]; see also X.1 [812].

<sup>3</sup> If we insist that *proceder* must be translated etymologically, as 'moving forward', we must play fair, and refuse to translate *modo* as 'way'!

<sup>4</sup> Exx 2, 15.

respect for God's freedom and for the diversity of times, persons and circumstances. The process is a way of continuous growth, of God carrying forward what God has begun.<sup>5</sup>

Ignatius' language often shows how he had internalised this sensitivity to a God ever greater in the lives of others: witness his fondness for a phrase like 'style of moving forward' or 'way of proceeding', or his description of a formed Jesuit as one who is 'running along the way of Christ our Lord'.<sup>6</sup> He does not try to define spiritual consolation through a set of necessary and sufficient conditions; he simply gives us three examples of what 'I call consolation', and thereby leaves open the possibility that we who come after might want or need to supplement them.<sup>7</sup> 'In the Exercises, Ignatius, out of the fifty or so contemplations on the life of Christ, gives no parables at all, only six miracles, and about forty contemplations which involve a journey.'<sup>8</sup>

*Ignatius was sensitive to a God ever greater in the lives of others*

At least in principle, therefore, the Ignatian tradition of spirituality can be of service to anyone serious in their desire for God. Nevertheless, it is perhaps especially suitable for those whose vocations do not lie within the conventional, for those whose experience of life and of God drives them somehow beyond the boundaries, beyond what is normal. The first Jesuits opted out of patterns of ministry centred on local churches, and sought to serve wherever the need was greatest: 'we accept the care of those for whose well-being and salvation either no-one cares at all, or else they care negligently'.<sup>9</sup> The discernment learnt in the school of the Exercises enables us to act with integrity in worlds for which rule books have not been written, or where those that are available are inadequate.

There are thus close links between the spirituality of the Exercises and the margins of church and society, the places where questions are being asked of inherited tradition, the places where images of the self are being renegotiated. The most recent Jesuit General Congregation identified three contemporary sources of such questions: the

<sup>5</sup> *Constitutions* X.12 [825].

<sup>6</sup> *Constitutions* VI.3.1 [582].

<sup>7</sup> Exx 316.

<sup>8</sup> Tad Dunne, 'Models of Discernment', *The Way Supplement*, 23 (Autumn 1974), pp. 18-26, here p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> *MHSJMN Orationis observationes*, n. 281, cited by the 34<sup>th</sup> Jesuit General Congregation in 1995 (GC 34, d. 26, n. 22).

bewildering and diverse cultural changes through which we are living; the historical links between official Christianity and an economic and political order seemingly far different from the justice of God's reign; the need for subtler and more generous accounts of Christian uniqueness amid the richness of the world's religious traditions. This list is surely not exhaustive: the Congregation's own decrees on women and on priesthood show an awareness of deeply problematic issues regarding gender, power and sexuality that may challenge Christian self-understanding to a deep purification. There are questions, too, about ecology and the integrity of creation, questions which the Congregation could only remit to further study.

An Ignatian journal of spirituality is thus interested not just in Ignatius' teaching on discernment, but also in how this wisdom interacts with the questions raised by life today. Thus this first issue of *The Way* in its renewed form quite deliberately brings together two kinds of writing. Some pieces are written professedly within the Ignatian tradition, and focus in particular on the themes of pilgrimage and inculturation. Others concentrate on questions of contemporary experience: on working interculturally, on the pathologies that afflict those who live at the margins, on spirituality and the contemporary culture of the United States. Ignatius would never have wanted us to make an idol of his own writings. The Exercises encourage us to face outwards and onwards, to wherever there is potential for the greater glory of God, for new and creative forms of Christian discipleship.

### *The Way Travelled*

Arriving at this vision has been itself, of course, a matter of process. When *The Way* began in 1961, Fr Johannes Baptist Janssens, then Superior General of the Jesuits, seems to have understood Ignatian spirituality in terms almost exclusively of the Society of Jesus:

The review of spirituality soon to be launched should certainly treat sometimes of Christian spirituality as such and of other, non-Ignatian schools; but a Jesuit review ought *principally*, even if not exclusively, to promote the spirituality of the Society. The lack of such studies in the English language is truly very sad: everything at present available on the Exercises of St Ignatius is a translation from other languages, and I fear that many of Ours have no deep understanding and appreciation of the Exercises. It is highly

desirable that the new review should foster such knowledge and appreciation of the spirituality of the Society among both Ours and others.<sup>10</sup>

*The Way*, or at least its *Supplements*, has certainly done much to help overcome the lack of English-speaking writing on the Exercises that Janssens was here deploring.

Even at the outset, however, the vision informing *The Way* was broader. James Walsh, its principal, and often sole, Editor till 1982, was a specialist in the spirituality of the high Middle Ages as well as a promoter of the Ignatian renewal. The first issue, in January 1961, contained three interesting pieces, under the heading 'The Acceptable Time'. These sought to assess 'the spiritual needs of our world and . . . the ways in which these needs are to be fulfilled'.<sup>11</sup> Read with hindsight, these pieces show something of what was afoot in the Roman Catholic Church in the early 1960s. Both the Australian and the British author sense that the expansion of educational opportunities for Roman Catholics in their countries following World War II was raising questions that the Church culture of the time would be unable to answer; for his part, the author from the United States, while lamenting that 'too many lay people feel it is the priest's job to devise and supervise everything', nevertheless stoutly declares, 'paternalism is dead, by Pontifical decree'.

The unconscious irony in that last quotation evinces a tension running through the early numbers of *The Way*. There is a sense of change in Catholic experience (the journal is not yet ecumenical); there is a sense that studying the Church's spiritual traditions will somehow foster that change. But spirituality is still seen as a deductive application of dogmatic principle, as the execution of directives. The first editors of *The Way* did not follow Fr Janssens' orientations literally, and Ignatius receives rather little mention in the first number. The most prominent exception, however, is revealing. It comes in the brief Editorial at the outset:

<sup>10</sup> Johannes Baptist Janssens to Philip Caraman, 1 January 1960, cited and translated in John Coventry, 'The Way 1981-1986', *Letters and Notices* (a private publication of the British Jesuit province), 87/3 (Easter 1986), pp. 117-128, here p. 128.

<sup>11</sup> *The Way*, 1 (1961), pp. 9-26: Paul Crane wrote on Great Britain (pp. 9-13), Walter M. Abbott on the USA (pp. 14-20), and J. Philip Gleeson on Australia (pp. 21-26). The quotation comes from the Editorial (no page number).

In his *Rules for Thinking with the Church*, St Ignatius begins by saying that ‘we must keep our minds and hearts ready to obey promptly, at every turn, the true bride of Christ our Lord, our Holy Mother the Hierarchical Church’. The task, then, which we set ourselves, in offering this new Review of Spirituality to English-speaking Catholics, is to understand and interpret as faithfully as possible the Church’s spiritual message to her children at the present moment. We hope that *The Way* will help its readers to think, will, and live with Christ in His Church today; to recognise Him and to give Him to each other in the way in which the Church is now presenting Him to us.

More significant than the choice of Ignatian text, more significant even than the restriction of the journal’s appeal to ‘Catholics’, is the unreflective assumption that spirituality is uncomplicatedly dependent on the Church’s authority: a journal of spirituality ‘interprets the Church’s spiritual message to her children’. The idea that the Church’s authority might need to learn from human experience, even within—let alone beyond—the Church’s formal membership, has not yet entered the editors’ consciousnesses. The early numbers of *The Way* took biblical themes, and treated them in largely expository fashion.

In 1969—when of course the Second Vatican Council had intervened—the editors announced that ‘the time has come to change our formula’. They announced the inauguration of ‘the New Way’.<sup>12</sup> For them (in ways that of course the neo-traditionalists of today would dispute), liturgical and biblical renewal had given a salutary shock to Christian complacency,

. . . and nowhere more thoroughly than in the naive belief that all that was needed were certain running repairs. Frequently, the removal of the cracked paintwork has revealed that the woodwork underneath was rotten. What was called for was renewal, not restoration. We still have to fight against the traditionalism of the last century which precisely confused restoration with renewal, and preferred to backdate rather than to update. . . . The nefarious consequence is that inner renewal is so channelled as to ensure the preservation of the very exterior it is meant to re - create.

<sup>12</sup> *The Way*, 9 (1969), pp. 259-266. I am grateful to Fr Michael Ivens, who contributed to the process informing this Editorial, for drawing it to my attention, and for reminding me that the present re-launch of *The Way* is not the first of its kind. Ironically, the final article prior to the 1970 re-launch, by James Walsh, was entitled ‘Nothing New Under the Sun’.

Again, there is something to smile at in the way the new style of writing on spirituality is announced:

Beginning with the first issue for 1970, our readers will notice a shift of emphasis and approach. Instead of a biblical theme we shall choose an area of concern. The first will be—Man.

Within a few years, feminist awareness would make a sentence like that embarrassing. Nevertheless, a major shift has occurred:

A new Church is emerging slowly. It is a new Church, because there are new Christians. Now, more than ever before, we are compelled to remember that when we are talking of the Church or of the world we are talking about people. There was a time when we were less conscious of this basic fact, when we thought and spoke institutionally. . . .

It is easy to define religious experience at the price of delimiting a particular area of life and proclaiming that within those limits religious experience may take place. But what of the rest, often the major part of life? Today people are seeking for religious experience in a wider field, and the Church must be there searching with them.

It is Vatican II which immediately provoked these reflections,<sup>13</sup> and indeed Ignatius is not mentioned in this programmatic piece. Nevertheless, the authors have retrieved a key Ignatian insight: that the truth of God resides not just in the teaching of authority, but rather in an interplay between tradition and human experience at large. It is through journeys into the unknown and uncharted that we discover God. Though *The Way* of course continued to change after 1970, the shift articulated here was decisive. If Christian authority resided exclusively in tradition, then 'spirituality' could only refer to some part of that tradition, and arguably only a minor part: that enshrined in the religious orders. If, however, human experience was also a locus of religious insight, then 'spirituality' could become a matter both of major theological significance and of broader relevance and appeal.

<sup>13</sup> See the various essays in John W. O'Malley, *Tradition and Transition: Historical Perspectives on Vatican II* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989), notably his classic piece first published in *Theological Studies*, 32 (1971), pp. 573-601: 'Reform, Historical Consciousness, and Vatican II's *Aggiornamento*'.

*An ecumenical,  
inter-faith  
enterprise*

Of course, it has not been just in *The Way* that the understanding of ‘spirituality’ has changed over the last forty years. In 1960, ‘spirituality’ was a subject taught only in faculties and seminaries of a Catholic bent. It dealt primarily with the ways of life and prayer characteristic of various forms of consecrated life. At least in some parts of the world, this vision of spirituality has broadened.<sup>14</sup> Spirituality is a human phenomenon, not confined to believers, still less to those in consecrated life or priesthood. Inclusiveness and holism are watchwords. The study of spirituality is thus essentially an ecumenical, inter-faith enterprise—although much Christian writing on ‘other religions’ is marred by an unconsciously colonialist naïveté. For obvious reasons, students of spirituality typically focus on forms of religious commitment or expression that conventional theology and or religious authority tend to marginalise: ‘believing without belonging’, ‘I’m spiritual but I’m not religious’.<sup>15</sup> Spirituality offers a basis for conversation between Christianity and other religions; it can also make bridges with secular academic disciplines as they recognise the need for religious categories of interpretation.

There is, of course, a continuity here with the great religious orders: these too fostered patterns of human living going somehow beyond the conventional. The important point here concerns the uses to which the wisdom developed in consecrated life is put. At the end of his groundbreaking study of ethics, *After Virtue*, Alasdair Macintyre expresses his hope for,

. . . the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us.

And he concludes:

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Sandra M. Schneiders, ‘Spirituality in the Academy’, *Theological Studies*, 50 (1989), pp. 676-697; and the gradual development of the United States based Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality, with its journal, first the *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, now *Spiritus*.

<sup>15</sup> Compare the claim made by GC 34: ‘People’s spiritual lives have not died; they are simply taking place outside the Church’ (C 34, d. 4, n. 21).

We are waiting not for a Godot, but for another—doubtless very different—St Benedict.<sup>16</sup>

The Benedictine tradition is valuable, not only because of what it says about how to run a monastery, but also because of how it can nurture human possibilities in a situation of threat. Similarly, Constance FitzGerald can draw on Carmelite traditions about the Dark Night to interpret, constructively and hopefully, the situation of impasse that she finds in contemporary US American culture:

We stand helpless, confused and guilty before the insurmountable problems of our world. . . . We cannot bear to let ourselves be totally challenged by the poor, the elderly, the unemployed, refugees, the oppressed; by the unjust, unequal situation of women in a patriarchal, sexist culture; by those tortured and imprisoned and murdered in the name of national security; by the possibility of the destruction of humanity. . . . The experience of God in impasse is the crucible in which our God images and language will be transformed, and a feminine value system and social fabric generated.<sup>17</sup>

As *The Way* enters a new phase of its history, it is committed to bringing the Ignatian tradition of spirituality, in particular its understandings of discernment and mission, to the new questions being raised for Christians in the twenty-first century. What is the Spirit saying to us through our discoveries in the human and natural sciences, through our enriched experiences of gender and sexuality, through our encounters with other great traditions of faith and culture? How is the divine wisdom preserving us and governing us and carrying us forward as these changes occur? How can we be constantly sensing God's most holy will, and perfectly fulfilling it in new situations? These are the perennial questions facing the Ignatian family; they are also close to the questions which animate and inspire the contemporary study of spirituality.

<sup>16</sup> Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981), p. 245.

<sup>17</sup> Constance FitzGerald, 'Impasse and Dark Night', in *Women's Spirituality: Resources for Christian Development* (New York: Paulist, 1996 [1986]), edited by Joann Wolski Conn, pp. 410-435, here pp. 423, 429.

### *Reform, Tensions and Identity*

‘But what do you *mean* by “spirituality”?’ The question will be familiar to anyone who has worked in this field in recent years. Those of us who teach spirituality put it to ourselves every time we wonder if a student project or a new course syllabus belongs in a spirituality programme; others may put it to us with some hostility, as they question spirituality’s credentials as a serious field of study.

Sandra Schneiders has claimed that spirituality is at a stage typical of nascent disciplines. As psychology and sociology were developing,

. . . there were scholars who were interested in studying phenomena they intuitively knew existed, but which were not the object of any recognised discipline, namely, relationships as such, and the human psychic structure and function.

Students of spirituality—of ‘religious experience itself’—must live with similar ambiguity:

It is going to take some time to delineate precisely the new field and to distinguish it adequately from that of other fields, but we know we are interested in studying something that exists and that does not fit precisely into any of the existing fields of study.<sup>18</sup>

Specialists differ regarding the relationship between spirituality and theology: about whether the perceived gap between the two indicates an essential difference between them, or alternatively some dysfunction in one or both. This point, however, is in the end of only secondary importance: in either case, the study called ‘spirituality’ is asking questions about human experience and about God that conventional approaches disallow or avoid. It is concerned with realities that are elusive, nascent, easily ignored: realities that are in continuity with what is known as good and true, but in ways that are not yet apparent. By calling *The Way* a journal of spirituality—rather than of theology or of catechetics or of pastoral care—we are indicating a special commitment to explore these life-giving, if still fragile, realities.

The tensions arising in the contemporary expansion of spirituality are similar to those intrinsic to the Ignatian and Jesuit traditions.

<sup>18</sup> Sandra M. Schneiders, ‘Spirituality as an Academic Discipline: Reflections from Experience’, *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, 1/2 (Fall 1993), pp. 10-15, here p. 15.

Towards the end of his life, Karl Rahner imagined Ignatius speaking to a contemporary Jesuit of his desire to communicate God's Word:

I wanted to say this just as it had always been said in the Church, and yet I thought—and this opinion was true—that I could say what was old in a new way.<sup>19</sup>

The early Jesuits were caught up in a tension between their distinctive 'style of moving forward'—its internationality, its independence of local structures, its lack of structures such as choral office—and their commitment to the Church as a whole, a commitment which of course was the *raison d'être* for their distinctiveness. One early Dominican critic, Tomás de Pedroche, objected strongly to the title, 'Society of Jesus':

Certainly this title and name is proud and schismatic, and not a little insulting to the Christian people as a whole. For, since—as the Gospel bears witness—there cannot be but two societies, one the Society of Jesus, the other the Society of the Devil, then if these people and only these are called, and in fact are, the Society of Jesus, then it follows that all the rest both are called, and in fact are, the Society of the Devil.<sup>20</sup>

An unsympathetic critic can mount an exactly analogous argument against the claim that the discipline of spirituality is concerned with 'religious experience in itself': what, then, is left for the rest of theology to do? And just as the early Jesuits had to negotiate their way through frequent charges of heresy and illuminism, so too the contemporary study of spirituality is beset by accusations of irresponsibility. Part of the pain of a prophetic vocation consists in having to live with the sense that such accusations will always sound plausible and may even be partially justified. Yet lack of conceptual clarity about what is occurring is no conclusive ground for doubting our authenticity as we move forward along the way into God's truth; nor is uncertainty about the rightness of our intentions or the soundness of our position conclusive grounds for abandoning the journey. Living with such ambiguity is part of the prophetic, mystical vocation.

<sup>19</sup> Karl Rahner, 'Ignatius of Loyola Speaks to a Modern Jesuit', in *Ignatius of Loyola*, translated by Rosaleen Ockenden (London: Collins, 1979), pp. 11-38, here p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> *MHSJ* FN 1, pp. 319-320.

Perhaps, indeed, any renewal movement in any idealistic organisation can attract such a reaction from the wider body. The call to integrity, to an ever greater appropriation of the Gospel message, leads us forward into territory that is not only unknown but also conflictive. In Luke's gospel, Jesus begins his public ministry by entering the synagogue and presenting himself as the fulfilment of Third Isaiah's prophecy:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. . . . Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’<sup>21</sup>

Luke brings out how this message creates division among and within the hearers: on the one hand, all ‘spoke well’ of Jesus; on the other, all were ‘filled with rage’. Growth into gospel truth engages people at their vulnerable points; it calls forth both positive and negative reactions. If this sounds bleak, we can remember Ignatius' teaching about suffering. In certain carefully specified circumstances, ‘injuries, false accusations and affronts’ can be a source of ‘spiritual profit’, indeed something to be desired.<sup>22</sup> As with Jesus we engage what is dark, violent and unconverted, resurrection life can come into being, not only for ourselves but for the many.

### *Pedro Arrupe in Thailand*

On his last working day as General Superior of the Jesuits, August 6 1981, Pedro Arrupe was in Thailand. He gave an impromptu speech to Jesuits involved with what was then the new Jesuit Refugee Service there. A few years later, members of that group were to write eloquently of the message that refugees held for the Church in general and for the Ignatian movement in particular:

Beware, they are saying to us, of immobility, of fixed institutions, of set patterns of behaviour and modes of operation that bind the Spirit; be bold, be adventurous, for to gain all one must be ready to lose all—as we have. For the Church, the refugees are a constant

<sup>21</sup> Luke 4:18-19, 21; see Isaiah 61:1-3

<sup>22</sup> *Examen* 4.44 [101]; see Exx 147, 167.

reminder that the people of God is essentially a pilgrim people, never settled, always on the move, always searching.<sup>23</sup>

Arrupe's speech begins sensitively. He has noticed the stresses of refugee work, initially as these come out indirectly:

I can see that you are happy. But I can also see that your work is burdensome. Sometimes when you speak from the heart some feelings come out, not bitter feelings exactly, but ones that result from the burden of hard work—really hard work. And perhaps this is not always recognised by others.<sup>24</sup>

He touches on shortage of resources; on difficult relations with the local Church; on the permanent sense of uncertainty and risk as his hearers are working with the unknown; on differences of opinion in the group. Nevertheless, there are also exhilarating possibilities:

. . . how terrific it would be for the Society to have non-Christians coming to work for the poor in the villages, coming motivated by philanthropy. . . . Then we would be collaborating with people to much greater effect than we can through those few Catholics that we are in the Orient. And through the mass media we can present matters in a human way, and so multiply the work and its effects. . . . This would amount to pre-evangelization done by non-Christians. . . . I see an opening within refugee work for such an apostolate.

The idea of 'pre-evangelization' done by non-Christians' may seem strange. But life with the displaced leads us to question, discerningly, our sense of identity, and the political and religious constructions which we might otherwise take for granted. Arrupe's struggle to express himself in a second language comes powerfully to reinforce the sense of a man exploring frontier issues:

I will tell you something I ask myself very often. Should we give spiritual help to the guerrillas in Latin America? No, you say? Well, I cannot say no. Perhaps in the past I have. But they are men, souls, suffering. If you have a wounded person, even if he is a guerrilla you

<sup>23</sup> 'A Vision for JRS' (1985), in *Everybody's Challenge: Essential Documents of Jesuit Refugee Service 1980-2000* (Rome: Jesuit Refugee Service, 2000), edited by Danielle Vella, pp. 70-72, here p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> Pedro Arrupe, 'Final Address to Jesuits Working with Refugees in Thailand', in *Everybody's Challenge*, pp. 33-37.

have to help him. . . . We cannot be naïve and allow ourselves to be used politically by other people. But on the other hand we need a real Christian commitment. . . . Charity is one thing, principle another, and casuistry is a third. Actual cases can be very difficult to resolve.

Surely with a twinkle in his eye, Arrupe muses that the Pope had told him to send Jesuits to a Communist university in Ethiopia, and reminds himself of Paul VI's radical teaching on private property.<sup>25</sup> Then he becomes more serious: 'situations such as these are very difficult and complicated. Everything must be done with great discernment.'

It is in *this* context that Arrupe talks about prayer, in words that have become famous:

I will say one more thing, and please don't forget it. Pray. Pray much. Problems like these are not solved by human efforts. . . . We pray at the beginning and at the end of meetings—we are good Christians! But in our three-day meetings, if we spend half a day in prayer . . . we will have very different 'lights'. And we will come to quite different syntheses—in spite of different points of view—ones we could never find in books nor arrive at through discussion. Right here we have a classic case: If we are indeed in the front line of a new apostolate in the Society, we have to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. These are not the pious words of a novice master. What I am saying is 100 per cent from St Ignatius.

There are deep connections between the forms of prayer promoted by the Exercises, and the prophetic character of Ignatian ministry. If the spiritual life is being lived authentically and well, it will be permanently questioning us, stretching us, subverting our self-understanding. If there are no movements, if the spirits are not stirring us, something is wrong.<sup>26</sup> Arrupe's Ignatian spirituality and sensitivity to his own experience leads him to question the orthodoxies of Cold War politics. Authentic Ignatian prayer sets off a change in the construction of the

<sup>25</sup> *Populorum progressio* (1967), n. 23: 'the right to private property is not absolute and unconditional. No one may appropriate surplus goods solely for his own private use when others lack the bare necessities of life. In short, "as the Fathers of the Church and other eminent theologians tell us, the right of private property may never be exercised to the detriment of the common good".' (Paul VI was quoting one of his own earlier statements).

<sup>26</sup> Exx 6.

self, a divine dissatisfaction with the conventional, a quest for the *magis*. The expression of this growth may be indirect and tentative, but it leads, if authentic, to a Gospel inclusiveness, calling forth unpredictable and conflicting reactions even within individuals, let alone in groups. In multiple ways, subsequent narratives tend to smooth over the conflict and ambiguity of such situations, and thus simplified myths—often using the rhetoric of ‘obedience’—establish themselves. The hagiography that is already surrounding Arrupe obscures how his leadership was controversial, how he had influential detractors, and how the questions raised by his witness remain provocative, divisive. The hagiography has an important function: it contains the tensions, both within the self and among members of the Church, raised by an authentically spiritual life, and thus holds us together so that we can continue the journey in good order and in communion. But our primary commitment is to the way itself, to the questions that arise as we journey into the mystery of God and of God’s reign, to a conflictive process of growth—growth into One always greater than whatever we can hope or imagine.

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