

JESUS CHRIST
ICON OF THE INVISIBLE GOD



ST. GASPAR BERTONI:
MODEL OF HOLY ABANDONMENT –

COPY OF SHARED SUFFERING –
A PORTRAIT OF THE INTEGRAL PASCHAL MYSTERY –
AN EXAMPLE OF CRUCIFIED JOY

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On the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, 2017

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The 'CONTEMPORANEITY' of St. Gaspar Louis Denis Bertoni

A MODEL OF HOLY ABANDONMENT¹

Presentation

This is a major theme in St. Gaspar Bertoni's Spirituality. In his own writings, he considered the Church as 'The Model of Holy Abandonment'². The late Fr. Garrigou-Langrange, OP [+ February 24, 1964] in his recently re-printed study on Providence, stated: "We have a perfect Model of this abandonment to divine Providence, in St. Joseph, in the many difficulties that beset him..."³

In recent years, the illustrious Stigmatine – Fr. Cornelio FABRO, CSS [May 1995] – in his brief but brilliant insights into St. Gaspar Bertoni's spirituality, uncovered the theme of 'contemporaneity' from his original studies on the Danish Lutheran philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard – whose dates practically coincide with those of St. Gaspar at the Stimate. Kierkegaard taught the philosophy of images, ideas and models that Fr. Fabro applied somewhat to these same themes in St. Gaspar.

Fr. Fabro's major emphasis in his doctoral thesis, of nearly 80 years ago, was "Participation". Fr. Fabro's concentration was on these aspects of sharing in the very nature of God through Jesus Christ:

- the human soul endowed with God's grace – a participation in God's nature [cf. 2 P 1:4];
- the human soul in heaven endowed with a share in God's glory;
- for all eternity;
- the second person of the Blessed Trinity having assumed a human nature.

This present reflection is a meager attempt to present some of these central ideas, using words sprinkled throughout the Stigmatine tradition, like: - Conformity – Copy- Example – Follow- [St. Ignatius of Loyola] - ICON - Imitate - Mirror – Mode - [manner] – Portrait. These are terms utilized by St. Gaspar and his interpreters in the concerted effort to describe St. Gaspar's Vocation. Throughout all his life he was called to live fully the life of grace; to persevere in this through all his atrocious suffering: all considered to be the Saint's effort to make Portrait in his own life of Jesus Christ.

¹ This is the title of the Doctoral Thesis on the spirituality of St. Gaspar Bertoni, by the Stigmatine, Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove, CSS presented at the ANGELICUM under the thesis director, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, op.

² St. Gaspar Bertoni, *Epistolario* Verona: Stigmatini, p. 99 - Letter 38, to Mother Naudet, October 26, 1813.

³ Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *Providence*. Aeterna Press 2016, pp. 144, f. [For devotion to St. Joseph, cf. John Paul II, Redemptoris Custos].

‘Contemporaneity’ in this context does not mean making the ageless Christian message ‘contemporary’, adapted, suited for these present days – but that our life-style as Christians will not conceal the Face of God, but reveal it, in accord with this ideal of Jesus: whoever sees me, sees the Father. What this demands is union with Christ through a heroic life of grace, as is seen in the message of St. Gaspar Bertoni.

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A. GENERAL BIBLICAL SUPPORT

[I] "In Christ Jesus" ⁴

In the writings of St. Paul there is a long series of unusual words, most of which can be translated into another language only by an unusual expression, or a circumlocution. The Apostle has invented them, or revived them, in order to give a graphic expression to the ineffable union of Christians with Christ and in Christ.

Such are: *to suffer with Him; to be crucified with Him; to die with Him; to be buried with Him; to rise from the dead with Him; to live with Him; to be made alive with Him; to share His form; to share his glory; to sit with Him; to reign with Him; to be conformed with him; united with Him, co-heir with Him.*

To these can be added: co-partner – con-corporate - built together – there are also other verbs designating the intimate union of Christians with one another and with Christ. Here is a list of verbs as found in the Vulgate:

- *compati* [Rm 8:17; 1 Co 12:26];
- *simul crucifigi* [Rm 6:6];
- *configi cruci* [Ga 2:20];
- *commori* [2 Tm1: 2:11;cf. 2 Co 7:3];
- *consepeliri* [Rm 6:4; Col 2:12];
- *conresuscitare* [Ep 2:6; passive: Col 2:12 3:1];
- *simul vivere cum* [Rm 6:8];
- *convivere* [2 Tm 2:11];
- *convivificare* [Ep 2:5; Col 2:13];
- *configurari* [Ph 3:10]
- *conglorificari* [Rm 8:17];
- *consedere facere* [Ep 2:6];
- *conregnare* [2 Tm2:12; cf. 1 Co 4:8];
- *conformus* [Rm 8:29; Ph 3:21];
- *complantatus* [Rm 6:5];
- *coheres* [Rm 8:17; Ep 3:16];

⁴ Ferdinand Prat, SJ, *The Theology of St. Paul*. Tr. By John L. Stoddard. Westminster MD: Newman 1927, Vol. II, pp. 18, ff.

- comparticipes [Ep 3:6; 5:7];
- concorporealis [Ep 3:9];
- coaedificari [Ep 2:22];
- constructus [Ep 2:1; Col 2:19]:.
- compactus [Ep 4:16];
- connexus [Ep 4:16].

[II] A thought from Galatians 2:

19 For I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I may live to God; with Christ I am nailed to the cross. 20 And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me. And that I live now in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and delivered himself for me. 21 I cast not away the grace of God. For if justice be by the law, then Christ died in vain. [Ga 2]

Here the Apostle amplifies the solution given above. First, he explains the solution. Secondly, he concludes to his principal proposition (v. 21).

It should be noted that the Apostle proceeds in a very thorough manner, leaving no doubt unexamined. Hence his words, although they seem involved, nevertheless, if they are carefully considered, say nothing without a purpose. This is plain from the words he uses.

Therefore, he does three things:

First, he manifests the solution; Secondly, he explains his manifestation of the solution; (v. 19): WITH CHRIST I am nailed to the cross; Thirdly, he settles the question (v. 20): That I live now in the flesh...

... hence it was necessary for the precepts of the Law to be given to them in writing, so that by the Law, as by a pedagogue, they might be led by the hand to the point where they might hear the things He commands, according to the words given below: the law was our pedagogue in Christ, that we might be justified by faith (3:24). But after we have access to the Father through Christ, as is said in Romans (5:2), we are not instructed about the commands of God through the Law, but by God Himself. Hence he says: Through the Law leading me by the hand I have died to the written law, in order that I may live unto God, i.e., to the maker of the Law, i.e., to be instructed and directed by Him.

Then when the Apostle says, with Christ I am nailed to the cross, he amplifies what he said. Now he had said that he died to the Law and lives unto God. Hence he explains these two things: First, that he died to the Law, he explains by saying that

with Christ I am nailed to the cross; Secondly, that he lives unto God, when he says (v. 20): I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me.

The first point can be explained in two ways. In one way, as in a Gloss, thus: every man according to carnal origin is born a child of wrath: “By nature we were children of wrath, even as the rest, (Eph 2:3). He is also born in the oldness of sin: “Thou art grown ‘old’ in a strange country” (Bar. 3:11). This ‘oldness of sin’ is removed by the cross of Christ, and the newness of spiritual life is conferred. Therefore the Apostle says, with Christ I am nailed to the cross, i.e., concupiscence or the inclination to sin, and all such have been put to death in me through the cross of Christ: “Our ‘old man’ is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed” (Rom 6:6).

Also from the fact that I am crucified with Christ and have died to sin; and because Christ rose again, I, too, have risen with Him rising: “Who was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification” (Rom 4:25). Thus, therefore, does Christ beget a new life in us, after the ‘oldness of sin’ has been destroyed. Hence he says, And I live, i.e., because I am nailed to the cross of Christ, I have the strength to act well, now not I according to the flesh, because I no longer have the oldness which I formerly had, but Christ liveth in me, i.e., the newness which has been given to us through Christ. Or, in another way: a man is said to live according to that in which he chiefly puts his affection and in which he is mainly delighted. Hence those who take their greatest pleasure in study or in hunting say that this is their life. However, each man has his own private interest by which he seeks that which is his own.

Therefore, when someone lives seeking only what is his own, he lives only unto himself; but when he seeks the good of others, he is said to live for them. Accordingly, because the Apostle had set aside his love of self, he said that he was dead so far as love of self was concerned, declaring that with Christ I am nailed to the cross, i.e., through the cross of Christ my own private love has been removed from me.

Hence the Apostle says God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (6:14): “If one died for all, then all were dead. And Christ died for all, that they also who live may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them” (2 Cor 5:14). And I live, now not I, i.e., I no longer live as though having any interest in my own good, but Christ lives in me, i.e., I have Christ alone in my affection and Christ Himself is my life: “To me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21).

Then when he says, And that I live now in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, he answers a twofold difficulty that might arise from his words. One is how he lives and yet it is not he who lives; the second is how he is nailed to the cross. Therefore he clears up these two points.

First of all, the first one, namely, how he lives and yet it is not he who lives. He answers this when he says: And that I live now in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son of God. Here it should be noted that, strictly speaking, those are said to live which are moved by an inner principle.

Now the soul of Paul was set between his body and God; the body, indeed, was vivified and moved by the soul of Paul, but his soul by Christ. Hence as to the life of the flesh, Paul himself lived and this is what he says, namely, and that I live now in the flesh, i.e., by the life of the flesh; but as to his relation to God, Christ lived in Paul. Therefore he says, I live in the faith of the Son of God through which He dwells in me and moves me: “But the just shall live in his faith” (Hab. 2:4). ...

Secondly, he shows that he is nailed to the cross, saying: Because the love of Christ, which He showed to me in dying on the cross for me, brings it about that I am always nailed with Him. And this is what he says, who loved me: “He first loved us” (1 Jn 4:10). And He loved me to the extent of giving himself and not some other sacrifice for me: “He loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev 1:5); “As Christ loved the church and delivered himself up for her, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life” (Eph 5:25).

But it should be noted that the Son delivered Himself, and the Father His Son: “He spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us” (Rom 8:32). Judas, too, delivered Him up, as is said in Matthew (26:48). It is all one event, but the intention is not the same, because the Father did so out of love, the Son out of obedience along with love, but Judas out of avarice and treachery.

Then when he says, I cast not away the grace of God, he draws the principal conclusion. First, he draws the conclusion; secondly, he explains it.

He says, therefore: Because I have received from God so great a grace that He delivered Himself, and I live in the faith of the Son of God, I cast not away the grace of God, i.e., I do not repudiate it or show myself ungrateful: “The grace of God in me has not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they” (1 Cor 15:10). Hence another version has, I am not ungrateful for the grace of God.” “Looking diligently lest any man be wanting to the grace of God” (Heb 12:15), i.e., by showing myself unworthy because of ingratitude.

A form of repudiation and of ingratitude would exist, if I were to say that the Law is necessary in order to be justified. Hence he says, For if justice be by the law, then Christ died in vain, i.e., if the Law is sufficient, i.e., if the works of the Law suffice to justify a man, Christ died to no purpose and in vain, because He died in order to make us just: “Christ also died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might offer us to God” (1 Pet. 3:18). Now if this could have been done through the Law, the

death of Christ would have been superfluous. But He did not die in vain or labor to no purpose, as it is said in Isaiah (49:4); because through Him alone came justifying grace and truth, as it is said in John (1:17). Therefore, if any were just before the passion of Christ, this too was through the faith of Christ to come "[through His foreseen merits], in Whom they believed and in Whose faith they were saved.

[III] In Hebrews, we are like Christ –in all things – save sin:

HEBREWS 2:9-18

[Vulgate]

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that, through the grace of God, he might taste death for all. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, who had brought many children into glory, to perfect the author of their salvation, by his passion.

11 For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, ARE ALL OF ONE. For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: 12 I will declare thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the church will I praise thee. 13 And again: I will put my trust in him. And again: Behold I and my children, whom God hath given me.

14 Therefore because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner hath been partaker of the same: that, through death, he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil: 15 And might deliver them, who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to servitude. 16 For nowhere doth he take hold of the angels: but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold. 17 Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful priest before God, that he might be a propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that, wherein he himself hath suffered and been tempted, he is able to help them also that are tempted.

COMMENTARY OF ST. THOMAS

121. – Above, the Apostle, desiring to prove Christ's eminence over the angels, relied on the authority of a prophet who said something pertaining to Christ's dignity, such as, 'you put everything in subjection under his feet', and something pertaining to His Passion, namely, 'you have made him a little less than the angels'. But this seems to militate against his chief intention, which is to prefer Christ over the angels. Consequently, he explains this more fully in this section, where he does three things: first, he shows in what sense that lessening is to be understood; secondly, he describes the suitability of the Passion (v. 10) In regard to the first he does two

things: first, he explains a statement he made; secondly, he describes the Passion (v. 9b).

122. – He said therefore: What is man that you are mindful of him? You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have subjected all things under his feet. You have made him a little lower than the angels. These are the things the prophet predicted of Christ, and already we see many of them fulfilled. Hence, it is certain that the rest will be fulfilled, namely, that all things will be subjected under his feet. ‘The accomplishments of the past give assurance for the future’ (Gregory). Then he continues, but we see Jesus, who for a little while, was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor for suffering death, which was the cause of His exaltation: ‘For which cause God also exalted him’ (Phil. 2:9). He says, of death, because He did not endure just any death, but the bitterest and most shameful: ‘Let us condemn him to a most shameful death’ (Wis. 2:20).

Or, another way: We see Jesus, and when asked Who He is, answers: He Who by suffering death was made a little lower than the angels and then crowned with honor and glory. This lessening was due only to His suffering of death. Nor is this strange, because in this respect He is not only lower than the angels, but lower than men: ‘Despised and the most abject of men’ (Is. 53:2). A Gloss of Augustine against Maximus says that Christ was made a little lower than the angels, not because of a condition of His nature but because of the Passion. For as to the nature of the human mind, which Christ assumed without sin, nothing is greater but the Trinity alone. In body He is less than the angels, because He suffered in his body. But this seems to be contrary to Dionysius, who says that angels are greater than men by reason of their natural participation in light.

The answer is that we can speak two ways about the nature of the human mind and the angelic mind: in one way, according to what is natural, and then the angelic mind is more excellent and more noble than the nature of the human mind, because an angel receives knowledge of divine truth in a more excellent and fuller intellectual light, but man from creatures.

In another way, we can consider the nature of each without sin in relation to happiness; they are then equal: ‘They will be as the angels in heaven’ (Mt. 22:30). Yet by reason of His excellent grace Christ in His human nature is greater than the angels. Consequently, His lessening is not in relation to the nature of His divinity nor absolutely according to His human nature, but in the sense that He suffered according to it. But we can say that Christ was crowned with a triple glory, namely, with the glory of holiness, which He had in the first instant of His conception; secondly, with the glory of the beatific vision, because from the first instant of His

conception He possessed it; thirdly, with the glory of incorruptibility, which He merited after the Passion.

123. – Then (v. 9b) he describes Christ's Passion from three viewpoints: first, from its cause; secondly, from its utility; thirdly from the manner.

124. – Only God's grace was the cause, for that alone led Him to give His only begotten Son: 'God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son' (Jn. 3:16); 'But God commends his charity toward us, when as yet we were sinners according to the time Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8). Or, according to a Gloss of Augustine, that the grace of God, i.e., Christ Himself, Who is the grace of God, might taste death for all. Here grace is in the nominative case. But Christ is called grace because He is the author of grace: 'Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ' (Jn. 1:17). Or, because He is given freely: 'A son has been given to us' (Is. 9:6). Then the sense is this: He was made a little lower in order that He Who is the grace of God might taste death for all.

125. – For all: behold the usefulness. But for all can be understood in two ways: first, as applying to all the predestined, since it is only in the predestined that it is efficacious. Secondly, as applying absolutely to all so far as sufficiency is concerned; for of itself it is sufficient for all: 'Who is the savior of all, but especially of the faithful' (1 Tim. 4:10); 'He died for all in general, because the price was sufficient for all'. And if all do not believe, he nevertheless fulfilled His part' (Chrysostom).

126. – Might taste: behold the manner. For a person who has not eaten or drunk much is said to have tasted. Therefore, because Christ did not continue in death but rose at once, He tasted death: 'He shall drink of the torrent in the way' (Ps. 109:7). One who is on the way hurries. Furthermore, taste is a discerner of flavor; hence one who tastes discerns more than one who drinks. Therefore, to indicate that He tasted death and pain, and that His death was not imaginary, as Mani and Apollinaris claim, he says, that he might taste death: 'O, all you that pass by the way, attend and see, if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow' (Lam. 1:12).

But the manner is mentioned when he says, taste. Matthew (26:39) says the same thing: 'If it be possible, let this chalice pass from me.' He says this for two reasons: first, to express the bitterness of death, which is experienced by taste: 'O, all you that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow' (Lam 1:12); 'The drink shall be bitter to them that drink it' (Is. 24:9); secondly, because just as tasting or not tasting lie in the power of the taster, so also the Passion of Christ was voluntary: 'I have the power to lay down my life' (Jn. 10:18).

127. – Then (v. 10) he shows the suitability from its usefulness. For God the Father is the cause of Christ's death, since He is the One by whom all things exist as by an efficient cause, and for whom all things exist, as for a final cause. All things are for

Him, because they are for communicating His goodness: and this was the cause inducing Him to produce things, and thus all things are finally for God: 'The Lord has made all things for himself' (Pr. 16:4).

But effectively, all things are by Him: 'Who made heaven and the sea and all things in it' (Ps. 145:6); 'I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end' (Rev. 1:8). 'Of him and by him and in him are all things' (Rom. 11:36). Therefore, it became Him as the author of all things to provide for all: 'He has equally cared for all' (Wis. 6:8).

Secondly, it was fitting on the part of the cause, which, as has been stated, was the grace of God. But grace is ordained to glory: 'The grace of God, life everlasting' (Rom. 6:23). But God from all eternity predestined those whom He would lead to glory, i.e., all those who are adopted sons of God, because 'if sons, heirs also' (Rom. 8:17). Therefore, he says, who had brought many sons to glory. As if to say: 'Therefore, having yet one son most dear to him' (Mk 12:6); He has one perfect Son naturally but the others are adopted and, therefore, must be brought into glory. Hence, he says: who had brought, i.e., foreordained them to be brought.

128. – And what was fitting for Him? This, namely, that he should make perfect the pioneer of their salvation, which consists in two things, namely, that they become sons and be brought into their inheritance. That they are sons they owe to the natural Son: 'Whom he foreknew he also predestined to be made conformable to the image of his son' (Rom. 8:29).

But they obtain glory and the inheritance only through Him Whose inheritance it is by right and Who is the brightness of glory. Therefore, because we obtain those two things through the Son, He is fittingly called the pioneer of salvation: 'He will save his people from their sins' (Mt. 1:21); 'Looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith' (Heb. 12:12).

Therefore it was fitting that the Father sends the author of salvation, namely, His Son, Who had brought many sons into glory. To be perfected through suffering, i.e., by merit. For He, as the natural Son, is altogether perfect, but because He was lessened in the Passion He had to be made perfect by the merit of the Passion: 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into his glory' (Lk 24:26)? [He also tasted, since he was to lead his sons to glory, as a doctor tastes medicine, lest the patient turn it down, but that he might have more confidence to drink it. So he tasted death, so that no one would run away from death, which is a necessity for salvation.]

129. – Then (v. 11) he proves what he had said. Here he does two things: first, he proves his conclusion on the part of the Father sanctifying; secondly, on the part of

the Son sanctified (v. 14). In regard to the first he does two things: first, he states his conclusion; secondly, he proves it by an authority (v. 11b).

130. – He says, therefore: FOR BOTH HE THAT SANCTIFIES AND THEY THAT ARE SANCTIFIED HAVE ONE ORIGIN. But it should be noted that the Apostle had said three things above: first, that Christ is the cause of salvation, in which he shows that we depend on Him as on a Savior; secondly, he shows that the Father is the finisher of Christ by the merit of the Passion, so that in this, Christ depends on the Father; thirdly, that the Father brings us into glory, which also shows that we depend on God. Accordingly, the Apostle does three things here: first he shows that we depend on Christ, for THE ONE SANCTIFIED DEPENDS ON THE SANCTIFIER: 'Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate' (Heb. 13:12).

Therefore, it has been well said that because He is the author and sanctifier, we depend on him; but He depends on the Father, from Whom He has power to sanctify; which is the second. But all, namely, He that sanctifies and we who are sanctified, HAVE ONE ORIGIN, NAMELY, OF THE FATHER; this is the third: 'Heirs of God; co-heirs with Christ' (Rom. 8:17).

131. – Then he proves these points with three authorities: first, that Christ, as the mediator and author of salvation, brings God's gifts to us; hence, he says, that is why, namely, because He and we depend on the Father, HE IS NOT ASHAMED TO CALL THEM BRETHREN, BECAUSE ALL ARE OF THE SAME FATHER: 'HAVE WE NOT ALL ONE FATHER' (Mal 2:10); 'That he might be the firstborn among many brethren' (Rom. 8:29). Therefore, it is stated in Ps. 21 (v. 23): 'I will declare your name to my brethren;' 'Go to my brethren' (Jn. 20:17). But note that he says, he is not ashamed to call them brethren, because some born of an ignoble race are ashamed to recognize their brethren, if they are promoted: 'The brethren of a poor man hate him' (Pr. 19:7). But not Christ, for He says, I will proclaim your name to my brethren: 'Father, I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me' (Jn. 17:6); 'The only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him' (Jn. 1:18).

132. – Then he shows the fruit of this manifestation when he says, in the midst of the congregation will I praise you. As if to say: This forms a great Church in the midst of which I will praise you. He says, in the midst, because just as a pillar in the midst of a house supports it and a lamp in the midst of a house gives light and the heart in the midst of the body gives life, so Christ is in the midst of the Church.

Furthermore, in the midst, because He was not sent to one people, as Moses was: 'In Judea God is known; his name is great in Israel' (Ps. 75:2), but He was sent for the salvation of all: 'He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth' (Ps. 73:12). Therefore, it is stated in Lk (24:36) that Jesus stood in the midst of His disciples.

On this point it should be noted that before the Law it was the custom that all the firstborn were priests, and this pertained to the right of primogeniture. But Christ is a brother and firstborn; therefore, He is a priest. But a priest who sanctifies the people is a mediator between God and the people: ‘I was the mediator and stood between the Lord and you at that time’ (Dt. 5:5). Therefore, it pertains to him to announce the things of God to the people and to bring the things of the people to God. He does the first by preaching; hence, he says, I will proclaim your name to my brethren, i.e., I will bring them to know you, and this to sanctify them: ‘Sanctify them in the truth’ (Jn. 17:17). The second He accomplishes by doing, when He makes men burst forth in praise of God. Hence, he says, in the midst of the congregation will I praise you.

133. – Then when he says, and again, he shows that Christ Himself depends on the Father by the fact that He says, I will put my trust in him: ‘In you, Lord, have I hoped; let me never be confounded’ (Ps. 30:2). But he shows the kind of hope He has, namely, firm hope, which is called trust: for hope, even though it is not concerned with the impossible, sometimes has fear joined to it, and then it is properly called hope. But sometimes hope is firm and without fear; then it is called trust. This is the hope Christ had.

134. – He says, therefore, I will put my trust in him, i.e., I will have confidence in His help. But the saints say that in Christ there is neither faith nor hope, but only charity. I answer that hope is one thing and trust another: for hope is the expectation of future happiness; and this was not in Christ, because He was happy from the instant of His conception. But trust is the expectation of help, and in regard to this there was hope in Christ, inasmuch as He awaited help from the Father during His Passion. Therefore, whenever we read that Christ had hope, this is not to be understood as referring to its principal, which is happiness, but as referring to the glory of the resurrection and of the glory conferred on His body

135. – Then when he repeats, and again, he shows that we depend on the Father: Here am I and the children whom God has given me: ‘Yours they were and to me you gave them’ (Jn. 17:6); ‘Children, have you any fish’ (Jn. 21:5)? They are called children on account of their purity: ‘If the young men be clean especially from women’ (1 Sam. 21:4); and a bit later he continues: ‘The vessels of the young men were holy.’ They are called children because of their purity: ‘Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts’ (Is. 8:18). Also on account of their simplicity: ‘Brethren do not become children in sense: but in malice be children’ (1 Cor. 14:20); also because of their humility: ‘unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven’ (Mt. 18:3). He shows that not only is He from God, but also the children; hence he continues, whom God has given me. THIS SHOWS THAT BOTH HE THAT SANCTIFIES

AND THEY THAT ARE SANCTIFIED HAVE ALL ONE ORIGIN, because it says in Jn (6:44): 'No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draw him.'

136. – Having shown the suitableness of Christ's death from the standpoint of the Father causing it, the Apostle now shows the same thing from the standpoint of Christ enduring it. Therefore, he intends to show how He was made the author of salvation by his Passion: first, he shows the condition of the nature through which He could suffer and die; secondly, the benefits He obtained by dying (v. 14b); thirdly, he proves what he had proposed (v. 16).

137. – He says, therefore, I HAVE SAID THAT HE AND THE CHILDREN HAVE ALL ONE ORIGIN AND THAT HE CALLED THEM BRETHREN. CONSEQUENTLY, IT WAS FITTING THAT HE BE LIKE THEM, NOT ONLY BECAUSE HE CONFERS ON THEM A PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINE NATURE, WHICH IS FROM GRACE, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE ASSUMED THEIR NATURE. HENCE, HE SAYS, THEREFORE, BECAUSE THE CHILDREN SHARE IN FLESH AND BLOOD, HE HIMSELF LIKEWISE PARTOOK OF THE SAME NATURE.

138. – Here it should be noted that by the name flesh and blood is sometimes understood the nature of flesh and blood: 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh' (Gen. 2:23); then by flesh is understood the body: 'You have clothed me with skin and flesh' (Jb. 10:11) and by blood the soul: not as though the soul were blood, but because it is not preserved in the body without blood.

Sometimes by flesh and blood are understood the vices of flesh and blood: 'Flesh and blood have not revealed it to you' (Mt. 16:17). But sometimes they signify the corruptibility of flesh and blood: 'Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God, not corruption incorruption' (1 Cor. 15:50).

But here it does not refer to vices, for Christ assumed a nature without sin, but with the possibility of suffering, because He assumed a flesh similar to the sinner: 'In the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3). Therefore, LIKE THE CHILDREN, HE IS PARTAKER OF FLESH AND BLOOD, AND ALL IN THE SAME WAY: FOR IT WAS NOT IMAGINARY FLESH, AS THE MANICHEANS SAY, NOT WAS IT ASSUMED IN THE ACCIDENTAL WAY, AS NESTORIUS SAID. BUT TRUE FLESH AND BLOOD, SUCH AS CHILDREN HAVE, WERE ASSUMED INTO THE UNITY OF THE PERSON.

139. – That Christ is a partaker of flesh and blood is not to be understood as referring to the vices of flesh and blood, because He did not take on sin or commit any; but as referring to the very substance of animated flesh, because He assumed flesh and soul. IT ALSO INCLUDED THE POSSIBILITY OF SUFFERING, BECAUSE HE ASSUMED OUR NATURE CAPABLE OF SUFFERING.

Therefore, the sense is: BECAUSE THE CHILDREN, i.e., THE FAITHFUL, HAS A NATURE CAPABLE OF SUFFERING, CHRIST HIMSELF PARTOOK OF THE SAME, I.E., OF FLESH AND BLOOD. BUT WE PARTAKE OF THEM THROUGH OUR PERSON; AND CHRIST IN LIKE MANNER ASSUMED THEM TO HIS PERSON: 'The Word was made flesh' (Jn. 1:14). By flesh and blood can also be understood the flesh and blood of Christ according to the statement: 'He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood' (Jn. 6:55), of which the children, i.e., the apostles, partook at the last supper and of which Christ partook: 'He drank His own blood', as Chrysostom says:

140. – Then (v. 14b) he shows the benefits His death brought. In regard to this he does two things: first, he shows its usefulness on the part of the devil, who had the power; secondly, on our part who were held (v. 15).

141. – He says, therefore: He partook of flesh and blood, i.e., HE ASSUMED A NATURE IN WHICH HE COULD SUFFER AND DIE, WHICH HE COULD NOT DO IN THE DIVINE NATURE, THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM WHO HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, I.E., THE DEVIL. But how does the devil have the power of death? For this is God's prerogative: 'The Lord kills and makes alive' (1 Sam. 2:6); 'I will kill and I will make to live' (Dt. 32:39). I answer that a judge has the power of death in one way, because he inflicts death, when he punishes with death; but a thief has it another way in the sense of deserving death because of demerit.

God has the power of death in the first way: For in what day you shall eat of it, you shall die the death' (Gen. 2:17). But the devil in the second way, because by persuading men to sin, he yielded him over to death: 'by the envy of the devil, death came into the world' (Wis. 2:24). But he says, that he might destroy him, not as to his substance, which is indestructible, nor as to his malice, so that the devil would become good at some time, but as to his power: 'Despoiling the principalities and powers' (Col. 2:15).

142. – This was accomplished by the death of Christ in three ways: first, on the part of Christ, for the true nature of justice is that the victor subject the vanquished to himself: 'For by whom a man is overcome, of the same is he the slave' (2 Pt. 2:19). But Christ overcame the devil: 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed' (Rev. 5:5). Therefore, it is just that the devil be subject to Him: 'When a strong man armed keeps his court, those things are in peace which he possesses (Lk. 11:21).

Secondly, on the part of the devil: for justice requires that a person who unjustly uses power granted him should lose it. But the devil has been given power over the sinners he seduced, but not over the good. Therefore, because he presumed to extend this power even to Christ, Who did not sin: 'The prince of this world comes, and in me he has nothing' (Jn. 14:30), he deserved to lose it. The third reason is on our part: for it is just that the vanquished be the servants of the victor. But man by sin

was the servant of the devil: 'Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin' (Jn. 8:34); consequently, he was subject to the devil and liable to sin. But Christ paid the price for our sin: 'Then did I pay that which I took not away' (Ps. 68:5). Therefore, when the cause of servitude was taken away, man was set free by Christ.

143. – But it should be noted that another satisfaction was suitable. For man was in debt; but one man can satisfy for another out of charity, although no one can satisfy for the entire human race, because he does not have power over it, nor could the entire human race satisfy sufficiently, because it was entirely subject to sin; nor could an angel, because this satisfaction was unto glory, which exceeds the power of an angel. Therefore, it was necessary that the one who satisfied be man and God, Who alone has power over the whole human race. By the death of God and man, therefore, He destroyed him who had the empire of death.

144. – Then (v. 15) another advantage on our part is mentioned. In regard to this it should be noted that a man is a servant of sin to the extent that he is induced to sin. But the most effective inducements to sin are the love of transitory goods and the fear of present punishments: 'Things set on fire, as to the first and dug down as to the second, shall perish at the rebuke of your countenance' (Ps. 79:17).

But these two amount to the same thing, because the more a person loves something, the more he fears its evil contrary. Hence, we see that savage beasts are kept from the greatest pleasures through fear of punishment; thus fear makes cowards of us all. Hence, if a man overcomes his fears, he overcomes everything; and when fear is overcome, all disordered love of the world is overcome. Thus Christ by His death broke this fear, because He removed the fear of death, and, consequently the love of the present life. For when a person considers that the Son of God, the Lord of death, willed to die, he no longer fears death. That is why before the death of Christ, it was said: 'O death, how bitter is the remembrance of you' (Sir. 41:1); but after Christ's death the Apostle expresses a desire to be dissolved and be with Christ: Hence, we are told: 'Fear not them that kill the body' (Mt. 10:28). He says, therefore, and deliver all those who through the fear of death were subject to lifelong service, namely, the servitude of sin.

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146. – But why did He not free us at once from death but only from the fear of death? I answer that He freed us immediately from the cause of death, but not from death itself, although He freed us from the fear of death. The reason for this was that if he had freed us from bodily death, men would serve Christ only for their bodily good, and then the merit of faith and hope would be destroyed.

Furthermore, bodily evils enable us to merit eternal life: 'Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God' (Ac. 14:21). It should be noted that He freed us from the fear of death, first of all, by showing the immortality that awaited us. As a result, man could scorn temporal death: Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep' (1 Cor. 15:20); secondly, by giving us a foretaste of death He made us more ready to undergo death for Christ: 'Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example' (1 Pt. 2:2). Thirdly, by opening the gate to glory, which was closed before His death; as a result, we not only do not fear death, but we desire it: 'Having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is much better' (Phil. 1:23).

147. – Then (v. 16) the Apostle proves the benefits which Christ's death obtained. In regard to this he does three things: first, he shows that by His death Christ freed us by reason of the condition of the nature he assumed; secondly, he concludes a likeness (v. 17); thirdly, he shows the benefit of the likeness (v 17b).

148. – He says, therefore: So I have stated that Christ by His death freed us from sin and death. Nor is there any doubt that in regard to the condition of its nature an angel is greater than man; but because the angels were not subject to servitude or deserving of death, He did not assume an angel. But if he had, this would have been on account of the dignity of its nature.

But we have never read that he assumed an angel, but only of the seed of Abraham, i.e., a human nature, not in the abstract but in an individual, and from the seed of Abraham. He adds this in order that the Jews, who glory in being of the seed of Abraham, might venerate Christ more. But he says significantly [take hold of],

because that is properly said to be taken hold of, which flees. But not only the human nature fled from God, but also the children of Abraham: 'But they would not hearken, and they turned away the shoulder to depart; and they stopped their ears not to hear' (Zech. 7:11). This taking hold of human nature unto the unity of the person of the Son of God exalts our nature beyond measure. Hence, Chrysostom says: 'It is a great and marvelous thing for our flesh to be seated above and to be adorned by angels and archangels. As I turn this over in my mind, I experience excessive joy, imagining great things about the human race.'

149. – But it would have seemed better to assume an angelic nature than a human nature. For likeness is the reason making the Incarnation of a divine person becoming. But a more express likeness of God is found in the angelic nature than in the human, because the former is the seal of resemblance. Therefore, it would seem more fitting to take hold of an angel than of the seed of Abraham. Furthermore, sin is found in the angelic nature as in the human nature. Therefore, if he took hold of human nature to free it from sin, it seems there was more reason to take hold of the angelic. I answer that a nature is assumable by the Son of God depending on its fitness to be united to the person of the Word. But this fitness depends on the dignity, so that the nature is assumable which is likely to attain to the Word Himself by knowing and loving Him; and also depending on the need, in the sense that it is subject to a reparable sin, although the first is found in the angelic nature, the second is not found. But the first and second are found in human nature, which is capable of knowing and loving God, and which has a reparable sin; consequently, it is assumable.

But although the first is found in an angelic nature, it lacks the second: for a sin is irreparable not by reason of its gravity, but by reason of the condition of the nature. But what death was to men, the fall was to the angels. But it is clear that all the sins of man, whether they be small or great, are reparable before death; after death they are irreparable and remain forever. Therefore, the angelic nature is not assumable.

150. – Then (v. 17) he concludes to a likeness. As if to say: Therefore, because HE DID NOT ASSUME AN ANGEL BUT THE SEED OF ABRAHAM, IT BEHOVED HIM IN ALL THINGS TO BECOME LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN. In all things, I say, in which they are brethren, not in guilt but in punishment. Therefore, IT BEHOVED HIM TO HAVE A NATURE THAT COULD SUFFER; HENCE 'ONE TEMPTED IN ALL THINGS AS WE ARE, WITHOUT SIN' (Heb. 4:15). LIKEWISE, THEY ARE BRETHREN AS TO GRACE: 'Behold, what love God showed to us: that we should be called and be sons of God' (1 Jn. 3:1); 'Those whom he foreknew and predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son' (Rom. 8:29).

151. – Then he shows the usefulness of that resemblance when he says, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest. Here he does two things: First, he mentions the likeness; secondly, he explains it (v. 18).

152. – Christ as mediator has two functions: one sets Him over the whole human race as judge: ‘He gave him power to do judgment, because He is the Son of man’ (Jn. 5:27); the other is in relation to God, before Whom He intercedes for us as our advocate. In a judge mercy is desired particularly by the guilty; but in an advocate fidelity. Now both of these qualities were exhibited by Christ during His Passion. Hence, IN REGARD TO THE FIRST, HE SAYS THAT BY HIS PASSION HE WAS MADE LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN, THAT HE MIGHT BECOME MERCIFUL.

153. – But wasn’t He merciful from all eternity? It seems so, because ‘his mercies are above all his works’ (Ps. 144:9). For mercy consists in having a heart grieved at another’s misfortune: in one way, by merely recognizing the misfortune, which is the way God recognized our wretchedness without suffering; in another way, by experiencing our misfortune, which is how Christ experienced our misery, especially during the Passion. In addition He is a faithful advocate; hence, he is called a faithful high priest. ‘But Christ, being come a high priest of the good things to come’ (Heb. 9:11); and it is required that He be faithful: ‘Here now it is required among the dispensers that a man be found faithful’ (1 Cor. 4:2): and all this that He might be a propitiation for the sins of the people, for whom He willed to die.

154. – Then when he says, For in that wherein he himself has suffered and been tempted, he shows its utility. As if to say: I do not speak of Christ as God, but as man. Therefore, in that, i.e., in that nature which He assumed, in order to experience in Himself that our cause is His own. Hence he says, he suffered and was tempted; therefore, he is able to succor them also that are tempted. Or, another way: He became merciful and faithful, because in suffering and being tempted He has a kinship to mercy. He says, tempted, not by the flesh but by the enemy: ‘Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil’ (Mt. 4:1). For in Christ there was no rebellion of the lower powers against the higher, but He suffered for us in the flesh: ‘Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps’ (1 Pt. 2:21); ‘Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought’ (1 Pt. 4:1).

[IV] The New FAMILY of JESUS in Mark's Gospel:

DISCIPLESHIP IN MARK

and 'HOUSE' CHURCHES

a. The Call

[1] That Mk is Christological in orientation is clear from its opening line: The Good News of Jesus, Messiah, Son of God! While Jesus' sayings and deeds are in first place, Discipleship is a close second. The models of Christology in Mk are not new, as all might be noted in Paul who preceded him. Discipleship, though, is much developed: Mk tells us what it means to be involved with Him. The initial proclamation of the Mission is: The kingdom of God is at hand – repent, and believe in the Gospel! He calls two sets of blood brothers to share His mission [1:16-20] – every major section opens with a story of discipleship. The major section of Mk [8:27-10:52] presents Mk's major theological concerns through a dialogue with disciples. They respond enthusiastically – then, misunderstand His works & teaching – they run away in denial of Him. For Mk, Christians are a community of Disciples.

[2] Mk does present the earliest portrait of Gospel disciples. The Gospel does not clarify the specific background to 'discipleship – there is the enigma of the negative picture of the Disciples – as well as the relation of the 12 to the Disciples is not clear. Mt speaks of those with little faith [6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8] – while Mk is more drastic: either faith, or the lack of it. [Mk 4:40; 6:6]. Most who meet Jesus express either wonder or surprise – he presents an urgent tone. Jesus dies with these words on His lips: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me??? [15:34]. There is no resurrection appearance and in his short ending, the final words are: they were afraid! Discipleship is a serious business – it involves standing before the mystery of God – that is both awe inspiring, and powerfully inviting.



1. The Role of the '12'

a. Mk speaks of 'the 12' a good 15 times – and 'the Disciples' 45 x. The 'companions' of Jesus were those who followed Him – this involves active engagement in the life, teaching, work of a leader. The '12' seem to find their origin in the 12 Tribe Symbolism so important is Israel – those who followed Jesus will sit on Thrones judging the 12 Tribes of Israel. The disciples are like the nucleus of the New People of God, heirs to the 12 Tribes of Israel.

b. Another theory would draw on the resurrection text of 1 Co 15:3-7 – this indicates the appearance of the Risen Jesus to Peter and to the 12. Hence, ‘the 12’ here are not so much those involved in the historical ministry of Jesus, but in the consciousness of the community that the Resurrection is the beginning of the New Age, as the Final Times – the resurrection forms the nucleus of the New Community.

c. Mk prescind from such exegetical finery. In fact, when Jesus speaks in response to the request of John and James to sit at the right and left hand of Jesus in glory [10:37], Jesus makes no mention of their judging the 12 Tribes. Mk has no resurrection appearance to the 12 – a further remarkable point is the charge of the messenger is to go and tell His disciples and Peter – and not the 12 and Peter.

d. Scholars note that ‘the 12 and the disciples’ are so often interchangeable in Mk. No distinction is made in important texts: as the parable of the sower to the large crowd [4:1-9] then there is instruction on the mystery of the Kingdom of God [v. 10] to those about Him, with the 12. These latter seem rather mixed in with the crowd. IN 10:32, Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem with the disciples, those who followed Him and the 12: all mixed in together.

e. Nonetheless, there is a clear indication repeatedly of the Call of the 12 and their commissioning [cf. 3:13-19; 66-13] – yet at important episodes, as the Transfiguration [9:2-8], the eschatological Discourse [c. 13] and Gethsemane [14”32-42], it is not the 12, but a select number from them. In all of this, Peter does receive fuller treatment – as the friend of Mark [?].

f. Modern readers of Mk try to emphasize even more that there are places in Mk where people, once called either ‘the 12’, or ‘the disciples’ are called to teach, to proclaim and do mighty deeds. The Healed Leper is invited to proclaim [1:45]. The Gerasene demoniac begins to proclaim [5:20 – the blind Bartimaeus follows along the way] [1:52] after the disciples have not understood the role of suffering. A woman anoints Jesus for burial [14:1-9] and women accompany His body to the tomb [15{47] – a Jewish council member performs His burial rites which John the Baptist’s disciples do for him [16:1-8].

g. Since Mk’s emphasis is clearly Christological suggests a theological progression that is meant to be part of growth in personal relationship with Him.

2. The Call to Discipleship

a. Mk clarifies what it means to be a ‘Disciple’: after the Prologue, the first public act of Jesus’ ministry is the call of the disciples [1:16-20]. The confession of Peter [8:27-30] initiates the middle section of the Gospel – the beginning of the Jerusalem ministry [cc. 11-13] is marked by dialogue between Jesus and the Disciples.

The Passion narrative begins with a dual discipleship fullness: the woman anointing Him for His death [14:1-9] – then the false disciple, Judas [14:10, f.] – and those disciples called to prepare the Upper Room [vv. 12-16].

b. In all phases of His public life, the Disciples are there, constant companions of Jesus. He summons and commissions them, shares His Power of Service with them [2:10; cf. 3:15; 6:7; 13:34]. They constantly learn from Him, also with much private instruction [4:10-13, 33-34; 7:17, ff.; 13:3, ff.]. He asks them to distribute the loaves to the people [6:41; 8:7]. The disciples prepare the colt for entry into Jerusalem, and they alone are with Him for their Final Meal [14:50] – He promises to meet them in the resurrection [14:28; 16:7].

3. Narratives of Calling and Mission

a. Paradigmatic Call [1:16-20]

16* And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him.

The appointed time has come: repent and believe! This is the *kairos*, Jesus is the eschatological herald of God's reign in history. This is the time of *metanoia*, conversion, change of heart, and FAITH. There is here a combination of Gift [the time has come – the Kingdom is Here] and Response [conversion & belief].

The language is reminiscent of the call of Elisha and Elijah – Jesus finds people as they are – His call is spontaneous to what they still can be. There are three elements:

- they must leave their former occupation and family;
- they follow the One Who calls them – by imitating the pattern of His life, and not just walking after Him;
- they will be engaged in HIS word & work from now on.

Jesus is One Who offers a new teaching in power [1:28] – the Cross is ever present and is hinted at in the immediate controversies, and the apostles under attack: He eats with tax collectors and sinners [2:16, f.]; a dispute over fasting [2:18-22]; dispute over plucking grain on the Sabbath [23-28] – Jesus defends His Disciples.

b. The Call of the 12 [3:13-19]

13* And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. 14* And he appointed twelve, * to be with him, and to be sent out to preach 15 and have authority to cast out demons: 16* Simon whom he surnamed Peter; 17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Bo-anerges, that is, sons of thunder; 18 Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19* and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. Then he went home...

The location on the mountain and the withdrawal from the crowds are important. The call is simple: He summoned those He wished! The call is gratuitous, unmediated – and their response is simple: they came to Him. The Mission of those called is, they are summoned to be with Him. Subsequently, this is so that He might send them out to preach and have power to serve. The Mission originates with Jesus and being with Him is preparation for being sent out. Thus, discipleship has a double focus: being with Jesus & doing His work. The 12 obtain a new identity, new names are given – Peter and the Sons of Thunder!

c. The Mission of the 12 [6:6-13]

And he went about among the villages teaching. 7* * And he called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. 10 And he said to them, "Where you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11* And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them." 12* So they went out and preached that men should repent. 13* And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

Their missionary role is emphasized. The teaching and works of Jesus will cause and culminate in the rejection of Jesus – he will wonder at the lack of faith. The 12 are meant to be Models of the Faith – they form a new family around Jesus. They are to live as itinerant preachers.

4. Meaning of the Call Narratives

a. This is not a complete theology of Discipleship, but just its basic elements. Jesus lived in community, not in isolation – His first public act is to summon disciples, to follow Him and to share His Mission. Jesus empowers and instructs those who follow Him. Discipleship for Mk is not just hearing Jesus' summons, but

engagement with others, to embody with them a response to it through their lives. To be with Jesus is not only eschatological – but it is now ‘Church’.

b. Yet, community is not a namely face in a crowd. Thus, the call is not according to man, or from man – but, it comes through a revelation of Jesus Christ, an inner inspiration [cf. Ga 1:11, f.]. This eventually is called the grace of vocation [cf. 1 Co 15:10, by the grace of God I am what I am!] Every individual stands before the mystery of God – and the workings of God in each are unique.

c. Both the individual and social dimensions of the call have an apostolic, missionary dimension. No one is called, or summoned, to some ‘mystical’ interior spiritual quest totally separated from that conflict and confrontation which the proclamation of the Gospel will always involve. Right away after the call, Jesus confronts the power of evil [1:21-28] – when He commissions the 12, immediately Jesus is judged to be out of His mind, and is accused of blasphemy [3:20-30] – the Mission of the 12 is immediately followed by the execution of John the Baptist, who was handed over as Jesus will be [6:17-29].

d. For every Disciple, being with Jesus and cooperating in His Mission, involves confrontation with the power of evil, false understanding and the possible loss of life, preparing the way for Jesus.

b. The Community of Disciples in Mark

Introduction: This is Mk’s Ecclesiology. This is a challenge as the 2nd gospel has no ‘ecclesial language’. While he lacks the terms, Mk does speak more of household and family. This helps immensely understand both the theology and the social setting of an important early Christian community. This is a gospel that is set in house churches. There are at least 4 passages where household language provides a prism to denote shades of Mk’s Discipleship:

1 The ‘True Family’ of Jesus [Mk 3:20-35]

20* and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. 21* And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, “He is beside himself.” 22* * And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Be-elzebul, and by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” 23 And he called them to him, and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. 27* But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may plunder his house. 28* “Truly, I say to

you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—30 for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." 31* And his mother and his brethren came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him. 32 And a crowd was sitting about him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brethren * are outside, asking for you." 33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brethren?" 34 And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brethren! 35 Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother."

1 This complex text accepts easy division:

- an attempt to restrain Jesus, He is 'beside Himself';
- Jesus is accused of being 'possessed'; leading to the divided Kingdom, house principle; the sin against the Holy Spirit [despair?]
- His true Family.

b. All unfolds in the house leading to the use of household-family imagery. The passage shows Mk's 'intercalation' where a narrative is begun – interrupted by another – and then resumed and the two narratives interpret each other. His family thinks He is out of His mind His enemies think He is possessed – but Jesus comes across as the stronger of both groups – as He came across in the earlier temptation scene. Due to the earlier exorcisms Jesus despoils the Kingdom of Satan. As Master of an Undivided Household, Jesus will determine who is a member of His family – the intercalation functions in the service of Christology and Discipleship. A real challenge here is on knowing just who constitutes His True Family.

c. There is already an ominous hint of the brewing mortal opposition to Jesus. The whole section will culminate in the rejection of Jesus among His 'own', in His own house – where a prophet is never accepted. Jesus has called those whom He has chosen, those He explicitly calls – this is His Family. This will be made up of those who gather around Him to hear His teaching and are summoned to do the will of God.

d. Jesus does not indicate immediately what in the concrete doing the will of God means. The concept of God's Will [as in the Our Father in Mt] does not figure prominently in Mk. However, there is one key place where the 2nd Gospel sheds some light on it, and why doing God's will make one a Genuine Family Member with Jesus: it is Gethsemane, just prior to where the divisions Jesus has caused seem to come to a head in his final rejection. In His agony, Jesus prays: Abba, all things are possible to

you; remove this cup from Me; yet, not what I will, but what You will [14:36]. Here Jesus fulfills the conditions of Discipleship. The Authentic Disciple needs to pray to God with a Faith that believes that God will bring about what is sought [11:23, f.]. Here, Jesus uses familial language with Abba, and prays to One for Whom all things are possible.

e. AN immediate conclusion from all this is: doing the will of God and becoming a member of Jesus' True Family radically means being willing like Jesus to accept even suffering and rejection as being willed by God. Peter fails in this [8:2] – he does not think God's thoughts [8:33]. Suffering makes one a brother, sister, mother to Jesus = praying in faith and trust before the Cross. This solidarity implies membership in a new family.

2. The New Family [10:29-31]

... 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30* who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31* But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

a. There are then the following qualities: the intercalation, inter-relationship of household and family language; discipleship; suffering and prayer that bring us to this second text. Contextually, this second text is in the transition between the Galilean Ministry and the Jerusalem Passion [8:22-10:52]. In this section, Jesus is on the way [8:27; 9:33; 10:32]. This, then suggests both the way of Jesus to suffering and death – and the way of discipleship, being taught along the way to Jerusalem.

b. In this over-all context the reader notes the healing of the blind men [8:22-26; 10:46-52] and these episodes denote that Jesus constantly gives insight to blind disciples. There are 3 Passion predictions, beginning right after the 'check' put on Him at Caesarea Philippi – and the disciples do not understand, and this evokes further instruction by Jesus. Many commentators hold that the main theme here is the failure of the disciples to understand the true message of the Cross – however, only after the first passion prediction does Jesus give any extended instruction on the necessity of taking up one's cross to become His follower.

c. In this over-all context, Jesus offers the same precious insight into discipleship, twice in different words: If anyone wants to be first, let him become last – whoever wishes to be great, let him become the servant of all [9:35; 10:43, f.]. This is the image of household service [diakonia] to characterize the way of discipleship.

d. Mk does provide a Manual of Discipleship and a kind of community rule [c. 10]. One prime example is the rich young man. He comes seeking knowledge on eternal life. Jesus responds citing the Torah and the seeker has already done that! Jesus then suggests the next step: radical poverty! Jesus is turned down, leading to the saying on the difficulty for the rich to be saved. Peter then shows he has not understood Christ integrally: we have left everything and followed You! . Mt adds the uncomplimentary: What then shall we have?

e. Mk is alone in joining the command to leave one's family, the promise of a New family, described as the hundred-fold now in this life. All three Synoptics promise eternal life: only Mk emphasizes the fact that the family left behind will be replaced by the New Family. The 'hundred-fold' that is promised [4:20] is the result of hearing and doing the word of God – this is the New Family based on the power of God. Family language is frequent in the NT.

f. In the second part of the description of the New Family, it parallels the first part in every detail except one significant omission: while it is clearly said that the disciple must leave mother or father – in the reward the disciple will receive brothers, sisters, mothers and children – but no father! [Christ's human situation?]. More simply, this might be an implicit emphasis on God, the Father often noted in Markan prayer [11:25; 14:36; cf. Mt 23:9]. Some would read this as having no Father in the egalitarian nature of Mk's 'community' – all are called to be last of all, servants of all. Wealth and social divisions lessen the possibility of the 'Kingdom'. The New Family is noted by renunciation of worldly goods and power and by mutual service.

g. A final note: the specter of persecutions is added like in the final Beatitude. Mk seems to want to convey the idea that one who leaves family for Jesus' sake, for the sake of the Gospel, of necessity will be enveloped in following the way of the Cross. Whatever is the explanation, the conjunction of the New Family and persecution is part of Mk's 'style': Jesus' natural family misunderstands Him [3:20-35] – the new Family requisite is doing God's Will. In the eschatological sermon [Mk 13, brother will deliver up brother, the father his child, the children against the parents. There will be persecution.

h. Family Language also reflects the internal strength and coherence given to the Community. Strong family bonds at the time were much supported by the society and its laws of the time. The patria potestas was a powerful law – in the Church, for discipleship, doing the will of God is more important than loyalty to natural family. Leaving home, abandoning other occupations, and the any pursuit of wealth, the acceptance of Jesus' teaching on divorce, family morality, consideration

for the lowly, children – all these would bring Christians into conflict, beginning with suspicions and hatred.

3. A Community of Service [Mk 10:42-45]

...42* And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 43* But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45* For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

a. After the third Passion prediction, the disciples were still protective of power and precedence coming to them – James and John wanted ‘box seats’ in heaven when the Lord would be in His glory [10:37] – Disciples need to be ready to follow Jesus on the way of the Cross. It is the Father to decide on positions of grandeur.

b. The other ten are perhaps self-righteously ‘indignant’ – not unlike the older brother in the Compassionate Father parable. Jesus then sums up both the ethics and the Christology: rulers who lord it over others have no place among Christians. Jesus rejects the all too common human mode and manner of power structures – the ‘great’ need to become servants, slaves of all.

c. Once again the term diakonos [as at Cana when Mary speaks to the table servants]. This becomes a term of office in Christianity, it never loses its root meaning – the Deacon is meant as to serve as a constant reminder, witness to remind the Church what she is. One of early problems of Corinth that so disturbed Paul in their Eucharistic customs [cf. 1 Co 11:17-34] – Community leaders in authority are Table Servers, devoted to the Eucharist.

d. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many! Table Service becomes a way of life – the Son of Man possesses authority on earth – yet, He will suffer, die and be raised up – will eventually come in glory [8:38]. Yet, this Same Son of Man will perform the ultimate service by giving His life that others may be free – a ransom ‘for the many’, as the Suffering Servant of Is 53. The ethics of discipleship in Mk, are possible only when one grasps his Christology of Redemptive Self-giving. The ransom is to liberate a community for mutual service, in intensifying solidarity with Jesus: by His constant renunciation of all human perks, He becomes the Font of Liberation, Universal Salvation, Redemption.

4. A Watchful Community [Mk 13:33-36]

... 32* "But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33* Take heed, watch and pray; * for you do not know when the time will come. 34* It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35* Watch therefore—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning—36 lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Watch."

- a. Are these the predicted times of Holy Thursday Night and Good Friday morning???
- b. While we wait out these 'final times', expecting Jesus' return, the certainty of the end is as sure as the coming of a New Spring-time with the budding of the fig tree [13:28, f.]. The allegory is we are all servants waiting for the master to return [13:34-36] – each has a task, with sufficient competency to do see it through to the end. This watchfulness is an active waiting.
- c. This is the Markan Church: a community where we are servants, deacons to each other! – we are gifted with the competency to see this all through [6:7] – the Final Times are that period between the resurrection and the Parousia, Second Advent of Jesus – we are all assembled in mutual service and prayer-filled watchfulness. Only Jesus is the Master of our Household, and we long for His return!

Conclusion

[1] Vocation is a commissioning to a community of Eucharistic service. This is expressed in family language. Mk writes for believers for whom Faith engages all in the mystery of Christ, His Person, Word and Mission. It is a life of on-going, life-long, intensifying conversion: be converted and believe in the good news! [1:15 – the opening salvo!]. To 'believe' is a constant call to leave an old way of life, to follow a new path of com-panionship with Jesus. To share the life of Jesus – the Incarnate Word – is to let His Word dominate our minds and hearts, as Mary. This is the most radical dimension.

[2] Such a vocation is an empowerment, a facilitation, an endowment. It calls for trust in God, even in the face of undeserved rejection, pain – to give one's life, time, talent, share one's grace so that Jesus may come to life in others. Leave behind the old sources of identity, security, family, possessions – become members of a New Family. This will demand mutual service, enunciation of a need to dominate, stand out.

[3] The ancient 'House Churches' have left their indelible mark – we are

Deacons for life, Table Servers through the Eucharist and the Bread of the Wisdom of God's Word [Jn 6]. Exclusivism does not belong, no place for any prejudice. Mk's view is one of community life, solidarity, mutuality and service. It is a call to renounce prestige and power over others – and yet, with the courage to live and teach only God's word.

This is all epitomized by Mary's fundamental Message: let it be done to me according to Your Word – and you do whatever He tells you!

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B. Fr. LENOTTI'S 4TH CONFERENCE TO THE HOUSE OF NOVITIATE

As the Company of Jesus ... like the Company...

(4.)

COMPENDIUM RUDE

1. The Objective of this Community is to be: Apostolic Missionaries for the service of Bishops.

2. The Manner [*Modus*] of Achieving this Goal: [the Apostolic Missionaries are] *to work under the direction of, and dependent on the Ordinaries of those places in which the Missions may be offered. The Missionaries are to be totally submissive to these Bishops, concerning all that pertains to the exercise of their Apostolic endeavor. The Missionaries are to receive beforehand from them their permission, along with the necessary faculties, always observing the guide-lines set down by these Ordinaries concerning the places and the time in the exercise of their apostolate.* [From the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation, December 20, 1817].

3. Weapons: The Divine Word and Prayer

The End – The Manner: As the Company of Jesus is with regard to the Pope, we are towards the Bishops, without binding ourselves by vow to individual Bishops. – *Prepared for all* - The Weapons: the sword of the Word of God and the armament of Prayer. The saying of Fr. Caraffa – Exhortation.

Beginning to read our *Original Constitutions*, we read that which our Saintly Founder puts at the forefront.

It is seen clearly that Fr. Bertoni's intention would have to have been that of instituting a Congregation, which like the Company of Jesus is in a special manner dedicated, directed toward the assistance and the dispositions of the Roman Pontiff, would be that of being dedicated and determined in a very special and outstanding manner to the service of Bishops: however, with this difference, that while the Professed of the Company of Jesus make a Vow of Obedience to the Pope, our Members do not make the Vow of Obedience to the [any one] Bishop, but seek in every way that they can, to help him, to assist him obsequiously, in a particular manner to be dedicated to him. Since it is one matter to vow oneself to the Pope who has the administration of the entire Catholic Church, it is another to be committed to a Bishop in this way. For, by dedicating oneself to a single diocese would mean to restrict also the sphere of our ministry. We would then be *Apostolic Missionaries for*

the Assistance of one Bishop, and not of the Bishops: indeed a single Bishop could, in such a case, absorb, terminate its service, by sending us here and there, now one confrere, and then another, this would destroy us and consume us.

This, then, is the essence of our Institute, its end and the manner [*modus*] of obtaining it⁵. This is a great commitment, as you see well as well as the excellence of this end: to serve⁶ the Bishops, *whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God* [cf. Ac 20:28]. We are called to be the successors of the Apostles, and companions of all Missionaries dispersed⁷ all over the world.

But, as we have said other times, we have to be Missionary-Soldiers, disposed for anything: *parati ad omnia!*⁸. We are called to proceed through the level paths as well as through the steep ascents, we are soldiers in peace as well as at war, in prosperity as well as in adversity and tribulations. We are called, in all of the above, to remain firm at our post, and to defend ourselves from the enemies and to wage combat in the wars of the Lord. Therefore, for this we need weapons.

The principal weapons of the Missionary are two: the Sword of the Divine Word and the Sword of Prayer.

The Sword of the Divine Word: *the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God* [cf. Ep 6:17]. This is that sword, that is more penetrating than another sword with two cutting edges: *for the Word of God is living and effectual and more piercing than any two-edged sword* [cf. Heb 4:2], which penetrates even to the most intimate part of the soul, and wounds and conquers. And this, my brothers, it is necessary to

⁵ This is a very important text: the model for Fr. Bertoni's *Compendium Rude* seems to have been the *Formula* of the Society of Jesus. The nine numbers of this *Formula*, contain 'Five Chapters', perhaps the original Ignatian jotting: 1. the End of the Company and its Fundamental Regimen; 2. The Special Obedience to the Supreme Pontiff; 3. Obedience within the Company; 4. The Poverty of the Company; 5. Miscellaneous: no specific habit; no service in Choir, etc. Fr. Lenotti's emphasis in this comparison he makes is the special obedience the Stigmatine owed to Bishops [in the plural]. This is the *Stigmatine Modus* - there is an interesting study on the Ignatian *Modus*: *Appunti di Spiritualità* 12. *El modo nuestro de proceder – il nostro modo d'agire*. [Conference of Fr. General, January 18, 1979. Fr. Stofella has noted that the Founder's CF # 185 articulates the headings left as incomplete sentences in the *Compendium Rude*. It seems that for Fr. Lenotti the essence of the Stigmatine Community is this qualified *obsequium* – service of the Bishops.

⁶ It may be of some interest to note the Fr. Lenotti renders *in obsequium*, as to serve [cf. also CF # 3]: St. Ignatius wrote his Constitutions in Spanish, and the words; *servir, servicio, servo* recur over 1,000 times. In translating these Constitutions into Latin, the faithful Secretary of St. Ignatius, Fr. Polanco, varied between *servitium* – *auxilium* and *obsequium*. It seems that Ignatius was moved by the Servant of the Lord, that Christ had come to serve, not to be served: cf. Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; Jn 12:26.

⁷ This is Fr. Bertoni's geographical abandonment, *quocumque in dioecesi et mundo!* [cf. CF # 5.

⁸ This is Fr. Marani's oft-repeated motto – and it is interesting to see Fr. Lenotti using it here in a very broad application of the various services to which the Community is committed in the Apostolic Mission – the priestly services very often appear in the plural: *actiones; labores; media; varia et propria ministeria; missiones; munera; opera*.

learn to handle well, with studies and with holy lectures, and to use it well, according to the circumstances: in the confessional, in the prisons, in the pulpit, on the platform, from the altars, in the Exercises, Missions, Oratories, Retreats, familiar conversation, etc.⁹, animating it with the Spirit of the Lord, Who always ought to be in our hearts, so that the inflamed Word might proceed to move and to enkindle the hearts of the faithful.

The other weapon, the other sword is prayer. My brothers, this is what I really want to reaffirm: that we might fit well into our minds the great need we have of prayer and that we would give ourselves over to it with great fervor.

Prayer, as you know, is that canal through which the Lord has determined to give us his graces: prayer is that means which, even alone, obtains all: *and being but one, she can do all things*¹⁰: prayer is the key to God's treasures. It brings a sweet violence to God's heart.

Prayer unites us with God, it fills us with courage, with lights, with strength. What good can we do, both for ourselves as well as for others, if the Lord does not endow us with His help and grace? Our words would be gone with the wind. It was a familiar saying of Fr. Vincent Caraffa that to convert souls, *a good person of prayer is more suited than a most accomplished orator*. He used to call prayer *the proper task in leisure, and the real leisure for one's tasks*.

The Moabites and the Ammonites were congregated against Josaphat, the King of Judah. He did not lose heart, but had recourse to God with all his heart., with his people and his children. They went into battle not with the sound of trumpets and drums to excite the soldiers, but with the Canticle of Praise for the Lord. And God brought it about that the enemies would kill each other among themselves, and none escaped from death. So, the soldiers of Josaphat had no other task other for three

⁹ Etc.!! – once more *Missions* appear as one part of a list, and not even mentioned first here – Fr. Bertoni offers his list in his Part IX [cf. ## 158-186] of the Constitutions, where he develops in 7 Chapters the *varia et propria ministeria* of our Apostolic Mission. St. Ignatius has three separate lists for his *quodcumque Verbi Dei ministerium*: *Formula # 3*; Part IV, c. 8, nn. 400-414; Part VII, nn. 637-654. The discernment to judge which aspect of these varied and proper ministries' of the Apostolic Mission is the law of *magis*, what is more needed, good, universal, the greater glory of God, the larger number of needs [cf. CSJ nn. 622, ff.]. It is hard to understand what is sometimes referred to the Stigmatine lists from the pen of the Founder as a *genericità rischiosa*. St. Gaspar's well remembered visit to the Altar of St. Ignatius [MP, September 15, 1808], speaks of promoting the Glory of God *by the same paths, even thought not in all those manners* [the word here is *modi*] *that he was able to employ....*" Fr. Bertoni also uses here the image of the Word of God as a sword. The Jesuits have a broad spectrum of possible apostolic services – this seems to be the parallel Fr. Lenotti is drawing.

¹⁰ cf. Ws 7:27 – here this text on the fruits of Divine Wisdom is accommodated to Prayer.

whole days than carrying off the very rich spoils. And so, still singing their praises to the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem¹¹.

So, my brothers, prayer is so necessary to fulfill the scope of our vocation. Let us pray much for our brothers are on the Mission¹², and more for the increase and progress of our Congregation. Prayer is our *refuge from the trouble which has encompassed us* [cf. Ps 31:7]. Let us pray much, then, let us trust in god, and He will not fail to bring us help in our needs: *He flew on the wings of the wind* [cf. Ps 17:11]: thus, God flies to respond to whomsoever prays to Him: *I have called upon You... and You have heard me...* [cf. Ps 85:7]¹³: *no one has hoped in the Lord and has been confounded...* [cf. Si 2:11].

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¹¹ Cf. 2 Ch 20:1-30.

¹² It is interesting that Fr. Lenotti has left this word in the singular – in many communities, to be ‘on the Mission, means the men are carrying out their Apostolic tasks for the Lord. The allusion here is to our Stigmatine Apostolic Mission.

¹³ Fr. Lenotti has made an accommodated use of this verse: *I have called upon You in the day of my trouble: because You have heard me*. It is close to Ps 4:2: *When I called upon Him...God heard my prayer...*

C. St. GASPAR BERTONI's THOUGHT

Fr. Bertoni's great charism [he was also a Model of Crucified Joy – the Integral Paschal Mystery – Hope in life-long suffering] was accepted, lived, as well as expressed in a variety of terms. A few of these follow here:

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1 CONFORM

24th JULY 1808

[13.] "Making the most of your time" (Ep 5,16). Time never comes back. We have therefore to use it with great diligence.

In this note there are three separate parts that seem to be closely connected to an admonishment toward the *Imitation of Christ*.¹⁴ This is also in three parts:

... Keep always in your mind the end. The last time never comes back. You will never acquire virtue without care and diligence...

The second and third part of this warning are openly related to each other. In the second there is an identity of concept and almost the same words are used. The third seems to be a development and a fulfillment. The Pauline *making the most of your time* finds in the quotation of the *Imitation of Christ* the stimulus to pass to action. If we understand the phrase as *remember your last end*, which is not so far from us, this is the glory of God and our own sanctification; our final end is the beginning of eternal life.

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Do not conform to this world, but be reformed in the spirit of your mind.

This is a combination of Rom 12:2 and Eph 4:23. In his great command of the Scripture, Fr. Bertoni blends these texts in a kind of memory exchange, yielding a happy result. To the Romans, Paul wrote Do not conform to this world but reform yourselves with the renewal of your senses. To the Ephesians who, in Christ, had already been instructed to put off the old man, he wrote be renewed therefore in the spirit of your mind. As anybody can see these two texts are similar in meaning. The be reformed of the first contains already the renewal which follows it, and the be renewed of the second. There is no reform which is not in the same time a renewal too.

¹⁴ Book I, c. 25, 11.

As regards the opening vibrant warning, Fr. Bertoni was certainly familiar with the expression contained in the book of Fr. P. Segneri, *The Manna of the Soul*, as well as his *Instructed Christian*, the *Lent* of the same author. We shall find the first book mentioned here in his hands during the early months of his *Spiritual Journal*. Fr. Segneri wrote:

... Do not be conformed to this world, do not conform to its teachings, do not conform to its affections, do not conform to its actions... In a word, never take as the rule of action what the world is accustomed to do: take your rule only from the law of God...¹⁵

Fr. Bertoni had already preached from the pulpit of St Paul's on the Epiphany in 1806:

... Not the human mind, not the opinions of men, not the principles of the present world, not the dogmas of modern experience...but the WORD OF GOD IS THE UNIQUE AND INFALLIBLE RULE OF OUR THINKING, OF OUR OPERATING, in order to reach our supernatural and divine goal to which we are called...¹⁶

As far as he personally was concerned, Fr. Bertoni had already for a long time practiced in that which he would exhort the Clergy to do after the words of Christ:

... *I have chosen you from the world* - therefore: You do not belong to the world... (Jn 15,19). It is necessary that we be separated... detached from the world... crucified... dead to the world. These are four degrees on which I must judge myself and be ashamed to have so badly corresponded to my vocation, so far...!¹⁷

As for the reform which a "new life" implies, Fr Bertoni preached in 1803 saying:

... A New Year, a new life, my dear people. Let us walk in newness of life! This is nothing else but the life of grace, which is so desirable. Do you possess such a lovable beauty? If the grace of God is in you, what effort will you make today not to lose it forever? You will do your utmost, sure, to find the most necessary and useful means to keep it. In all sincerity you will take the holy initiative of removing immediately those occasions which could damage it even slightly. How much more effort will you make, with God's help, to increase it and develop it all the more...!¹⁸

Similarly on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1807, he said:

... As Christ has risen from the dead for the glory of the Father, we too walk in newness of life. We are called to Heaven, yes, to Heaven and to eternal

¹⁵ Meditation 2 of March, 5th Point.

¹⁶ cf. PVC, p. 252. Sermon 35, MssB ## 1213, ff.

¹⁷ *Collectanea Stigmatina*, I, p.127.

¹⁸ PVC, pp. 126, ff. - Sermon 15., January 1, 1803. MssB ## 714, ff.

life. You are already on the way..., carry on until the heavenly homeland. You have been recruited by God for all eternity to become citizens of Heaven, members of his household and heirs of God...¹⁹

As director of the Seminarians, Fr. Gaspar saw in this reformation and newness of life the necessary sign of a true disposition for the ecclesiastical vocation. Thus he blended again the two parts of St Paul's exhortation:

... The world loves what pleases the flesh, what makes rich and above all what gives the height of glory. But the person who is visited by the Holy Spirit is renewed in a more knowledgeable manner of looking at things. Reality is seen not for its own value but just as means to the end, which is the glory of God and the salvation of souls: appreciating only what Christ appreciated. Such a person not only abhors the things which the world loves and throws them away as rancid, old and moldy... he will loathe even the thought of them. Especially if it comes from those people who have been deceived in placing in them their happiness, as their status and their glory. This attitude is a good proof of genuineness. And if this is lacking, it is a bad sign which almost infallibly reveals ill disposition. This is the "old man" who loves "old things". *Let old things go away !* [1 S 2:3] The Lord loves youth: *I will go unto the altar of God, to the God who gives joy to my youth*" (Ps 43,4)...²⁰

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[15.] During Mass I received from God the gift of a spontaneous and constant self-offering in union with the Sacrifice, with much contentment.

This grace or gift of prayer recalls that disposition to suffer pain which Fr Gaspar earlier felt infused into his heart on 11 July. Here, however, it is intimately connected with the self-offering of Christ in the Eucharist²¹ and in union with it, as the capital "S" indicates. This is the realization of: Imitate what you handle (from the Rite of Priestly Ordination), at the altar and beyond the altar.

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¹⁹ PVC, pp, 293, 299 - Sermon 38, The Spiritual Life, MssB ## 1297, ff.

²⁰ Meditation 9, on *Primum Regum* of St. Gregory the Great – MssB ## 5099-5141.

²¹ Web-site Note this is the *obsequium* so often noted by Fr. Bertoni [cf. Rm 12:1, ff.]

[16.] *He who neglects the small things shall fall little by little.*

This half-verse from Sirach 19,1 can be read in a transcription in the very handwriting of Fr Bertoni at the head of several texts which develop the idea until the conclusion of Qohelet 7,19: *He who fears the Lord neglects nothing*. These are selected extracts from the book of Fr. A. Rodriguez *Exercise of Perfection*²², where the author develops the theme of Taking into account the small things and not to despise them. After the quoted verse from Sirach, the text of St Bernard follows: Those who fall into big mistakes have started with small trespasses. Cassian then is quoted saying: Houses do not fall all of a sudden: they start from small drops of water which filter through their foundations. And then St John Chrysostom:

*... I dare say something new and unheard of. Sometimes it seems to me that we should make not so much more effort in avoiding big sins rather than small ones. The former by their own nature carry with themselves certain repulsion. The latter by the reason of their pettiness make us relaxed and lazy. And while we take little notice of them we do not make any big effort to get rid of them. As a result these little sins become big because of our negligence...*²³

Also St. Augustine is quoted:

*... What does it matter in a shipwreck, whether the boat had been overturned by one large wave or whether the water seeping through the hold by a leakage, which had not been taken into consideration by negligence, submerged the boat? ...*²⁴

Faithfulness in little things assures us of God's help. We have a text of St Basil to support this:

... He who desires to be helped by God, should never cease from doing what is proper to him, namely his duty. If he does this, he will never be deprived of the divine help. Therefore we have to do our utmost to see to it that we should never be accused by our conscience of anything...

And we come to the text which was so often quoted by Fr Bertoni and his two first companions at the Stimmat: *He who fears the Lord neglects nothing!*

†††

²² Part I, Tract I, cc. 9, 10.

²³ St. John Chrysostom, Homily 37 in Mt. St. Gaspar offers a number of Meditations from St. John Chrysostom *On Matthew* – cf. MssB ## 7341, ff.

²⁴ Letter 106 to Seleuc.

2. COPY

[cf. Fr. Lenotti above]

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3. EXAMPLE

[cf. CF ## 217; 269; 271, ff.]

22nd OCTOBER 1808

[68.] Cheerfulness in adversities, and the consequences of real poverty, with thanksgiving to the Lord. Self-offering for the greater experience of humiliations and suffering if He chooses to grant these to me. This attitude is the best gift I received. I consider myself utterly unworthy of it. May God be praised always!

In the Bertoni home there was real poverty, effective poverty! What were its causes? No profits from the family farm! Several set-backs during that year and the previous years had taken place. Since the first French invasion of 1796 the Bertoni estate was subjected to raids, taxation and harassments as it was in a war zone. The other permanent cause, unfortunately, was Mr. Francis Louis Bertoni, Fr. Gaspar's own father. After a voluntary separation from his wife, he kept for himself alone the administration of the common goods. He lived in the country family estate, while the wife with their son lived in the city, thus nullifying even the appearance of peace.

In July of 1808, Mr. Bertoni received an injunction from the State Property Office to pay a debt of a taxation on some personal properties. He was threatened to have his property sold by auction in case of inability to pay. He could not meet that levy. It was then that his son, Fr. Gaspar, intervened and paid the debt, together with the extra tax to remove the real threat of an auction of the family properties. In doing so Fr. Gaspar had to cut very deeply into the funds of their city property.

The text, therefore, is quite clear: real poverty in the Bertoni home. Well then, "Welcome, Lady Poverty!" Furthermore, in the adversities which accompany *Lady Poverty* and the consequences, Fr. Bertoni accepted all with cheerfulness and thanksgiving to the Lord. He saw it all as a real gift of God! *What shall I return to the Lord ? ...self-offering for the greater experience of humiliation and suffering*, if the Lord chooses to grant these to me. This is the third degree of humility in the Ignatian ideal of perfection. But this, too, is from God. Then, with a disarming simplicity and cheerfulness, the conclusion: This attitude is the best gift, which I consider myself utterly unworthy of. Fr. Bertoni finds himself overwhelmed from all sides and explodes: May God be praised always!

We cannot help; but think of his aged mother Brunora too, as a soul worthy of the *fruit of her womb*.

4. FOLLOW

[MP October 22, 1808]

[69.] I experienced a desire of imitating Christ in poverty and in the distresses of poverty.

This note, though separated from the previous one, seems to have been written on the same day. It is both the fruit and the practical resolution of the latter, even if expressed with that term of desire. Resulting, as it did, from an actual experience and one that was blessed by God, this is surely not the *desires of the lazy man* considered above, against which Fr Gaspar had long since trained himself.

It is perhaps a reflection of the characteristic perfection of the humble Patriarch of the poor, Francis, the most perfect imitator and lover of Christ, who cries to us: "Be my imitators as I am of Christ".²⁵

7th DECEMBER 1808

[83.] When God calls people to some projects of spiritual life, one has to seize the opportunity of the moment. *And at once they left the nets and followed Him*.

We can trace the thought of Fr Bertoni in a Meditation from DaPonte which is entitled The Calling and Vocation of the Apostles. The text is from St. Matthew 4,20. Fr Bertoni summarized the 4th point as follows: The obedience of the Apostles to God's vocation was most perfect with regard to:

1 the intellect 2. The will 3. The execution.

DaPonte wrote²⁶:

... Consider the excellent obedience with which the Apostles answered their calling. In fact...while Peter and Andrew were casting their nets into the sea and Zebedee's sons were mending their nets in the boats with their father, when Christ called them immediately and at once, they left their nets and their father and everything and followed Him.

... With this kind of obedience the apostles showed the three excellent properties of this virtue. The submission of intellect and judgment: making them obey Christ and

²⁵ This seems to be a thought noted in St. Gaspar's notes for a second Panegyric honoring St. Francis of Assisi: MssB ## 1844-1874.

²⁶ Meditation 6.

subjecting them to His orders without making any excuse²⁷. The submission of will²⁸: subjecting it completely to that of Christ, dispossessing themselves of the love they had for their wives, children, fathers, relatives and their own properties. The perfect execution: which was – as Saint Chrysostom says – prompt, punctual and cheerful, without delay not even for a moment and without contradiction. Oh, the miracles of God's power! Oh, what changes can God do!

Fr. Bertoni spoke of his teacher here, Fr. DaPonte, who has stated that that this attitude comes "through the grace of the Holy Spirit", not depending on our merits, and that with it all other necessary goods are given for our salvation...then this was really the case to exclaim: I fear Jesus passing by! This is seen in the traditional sense, i.e. "Woe to those who let Him pass without following after Him! Woe to those who do not seize the opportunity of the moment!"

20th DECEMBER 1808

[87.] In the spiritual enterprises it is of great advantage when two people find that they can share the same perception.

Fr. Gaspar found this advantage from the outset with his companions, Fr. Matthew Farinati (ordained in 1802) and afterwards also with Fr. Cajetan Allegri (ordained in 1805). Fr. Giacobbe²⁹ wrote that ... *these priests, animated by the zeal and spirit of Fr Bertoni, formed, as they put it, a threefold cord of admirable harmony among themselves...* This principle held not only collaborating in the youth apostolate (to which Fr Giacobbe seems to refer) but also in common study for their mutual spiritual growth. In addition to many other indications, we have a witness of this in the various extracts of quotations which the three priests drew together from the Life of St. Cajetan of Thiene and above all from Rodriguez' *Exercise of Perfection*. Very revealing are the words which Fr. Farinati wrote on the inside page of the hard cover of that book: *There are excellent ideals contained in this booklet!* These words are followed by a quotation from the prophet Ezekiel: *I sought among them for a man that might set up a hedge and stand in the gap before me I favor of the land so that I should not destroy it: but I found none. (Ezk 22:30).* It seems that Fr. Farinati recognized in that prophetic text a common vocation of the *three* friends to be just that man. This was what stimulated them – as priests belonging to no Order – applying to themselves the whole exercise of perfection which was reserved for the Religious. It was also in the strength of the principle which Fr. Bertoni will support

²⁷ St. Gaspar puts this among his Grades of Obedience in his *Original Constitutions* - CF # 144.

²⁸ Noted in St. Gaspar's *Original Constitutions* - CF # 141. The qualities Fr. Bertoni notes here, based on St. Ignatius, are: *integra, prompta, fortis, humilis*.

²⁹ *Summarium Additionale*, Document 26, p. 342.

strongly, i.e., that what in the Religious is a *tension* towards Perfection, in the Priest should be already some *acquired* perfection.³⁰

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[88.] While we feel called to some high degree of Perfection, we should pay attention not to underestimate those who do not want to follow us. They might perhaps be of equal and greater merit in front of God. We all have the same purpose. Not all use the same means.

This maxim is a development on that of 12 Oct: He who is drawn by the Spirit to a way of greater perfection...should not resent others who are of lower virtue and use lesser means as long as these are good. We were saying, there, that such is the spirit that filtered through the meditation of *The Kingdom of Christ*, according to St. Ignatius and Fr. DaPonte. Different people are freely called to militate under the banner of Christ. It is clear that each person must imitate Him in the condition to which each has been called for himself following those different invitations.

Fr. Bertoni intended to keep the commandment which regards our neighbor: Do not judge... and to preserve one's own meekness and humility of heart. We can see an encouragement in reminding ourselves that merit does not depend on the greater or lesser excellence of a vocation. This is God's gift. It depends rather on the greater or lesser correspondence to such a gift. It could therefore happen that somebody with a lesser gift of God would correspond to it with greater perfection than others with a greater gift.

As for the variety of ways and means to reach the same Ultimate End, this is but a logical consequence of the variety of the same vocations.

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[89.] - *It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you (John 15,16).* We have to pay much attention not to set ourselves against the Lord with our sins and lack of mortification.

The text from St. John's Gospel could have been applied also to the preceding entry. But Fr. Bertoni wrote it with a dash separating it from the previous note. He admonishes the *chosen one* – i.e. no one other than himself – not to put obstacles against the action of God with sins and the lack of mortification. He saw also here the connection between two undertakings: that of his personal sanctification (cf. 12 Oct) and that of the promotion of the greater glory of God through a life dedicated to the Apostolate (cf. 15 Sept). We could have expected a hint at the Ignatian principle

³⁰ cf. his Retreat to the Clergy, in 1810, in: *Collectanea Stigmatina*, Vol. 3, p. 129, 'The Purpose [End] of the Priest'.

which is at the base of everything, as we have said in the note of 12 Oct: very few are those who... And also the encouraging sentences of 2 and 3 Dec.: Take care that we do not fail the Lord, because He will surely not fail us. The Lord, just shows us the cross...

16th FEBRUARY 1809

[108.] *Do not follow the crowd in doing evil.*(Ex 23,2)

Do not judge by appearances but judge justly.(Jn 7:24)

Do not be conformed to this world. (Rom 12:2)

The just lives by faith. (Rom 1:17)

The Word that I have spoken to you: that will judge you! (Jn 12:48) God will not judge us according to the principles of this world, nor following the opinions of roughly more lenient theologians, but according to the Gospel.

The first text is from Ex 23:2. The Latin Vulgate³¹ reads: *You shall not follow the multitude to do evil...* Fr. Gaspar, in his Conference to the Seminarians from *Primum Regum*³², will compare such sheep as *stupid* - the text from exodus goes on: *... neither shall you yield in judgment to the opinion of the most part to stray from the truth...*

The second text is from Jn 7:24: *... Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment.* This is immediately preceded by these words: *....If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath day, that the Law of Moses may not be broken; are you angry with Me because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath day...?* The Lord is alluding to His healing the paralytic on the Sabbath.

The third text is from Rm 12:2: *... and be not conformed to this world...* this has received a relatively abundant testimony in Fr. Bertoni's entry for July 22, 1808, above.

The next text is from Rm 17:2: *... the just man lives by faith...!*

The final text is from Jn 12:48, but Fr. Gaspar has accommodated it somewhat: *... he that despises Me, and receives not My words, has One that judges him; the word that I have spoken shall judge him on the last day...* Fr. Bertoni's comment here is a development of this: the sermon of God is not the word of men. The former is what will judge.

³¹ Italian translation is Martini.

³² Meditation 19 [MssB ## 5649-5700] - 1 Reg 4:16-23.

These are as flashes of *Doom's Day* during and after the sermon on Death!

22nd FEBRUARY 1809

[110.] *I see a rod watching* – that is the loving scourge.

If this does not work...*I see a boiling cauldron* – that's Hell.

This is the beginning of a rather lengthy sermon outline. The text is from Jeremiah 1:11, 13 and it is interpreted allegorically following Cornelius a Lapide. Here is the quotation: *In its topological sense God shows to the watchers (those who want to repent) the rod of correction as a beginning. If they do not accept it and remain impenitent he reserves the cauldron of the Gehenna for them.*³³ The aim of correction is that the sinner should be converted and live.

The rod is therefore a sign of love: *loving rod*. This *watching rod* will appear again in Fr Bertoni's preaching – he will say in the sermon *The Consequences of Sin*³⁴:

... Divine Justice – is like a rod covered with eyes to watch over sinners. To number one by one all their evil deeds. To consider precisely the way, the time and the amount of their punishment.

This also is a reflection of what Fr. Segneri wrote in *The Instructed Christian*.³⁵

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[111.] Three are the things needed for salvation:

1. Avoid small sins. *He who neglects little things shall fall little by little*. They are like little thieves who enter by the window in order to open the door to the big thieves.

2. Convince ourselves that we shall not go to Heaven without the cost of much labor and effort. *The Kingdom of God suffers violence*. Make an effort to go in. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me*.

3. Have the good will to go [to Heaven]. *He who has good will, has everything*. Demosthenes managed to overcome four natural defects in order to become an orator. A) Longing for [irresponsible] freedom through solitude, by shaving half of his beard. B) A weak voice. C) A poor

³³ Cornelius a' Lapide, *Commentary in Jeremiah*.

³⁴ St. Gaspar Bertoni, 'Consequences of Sin.'

³⁵ Fr. Paul Segneri, SJ, *The Instructed Christian*. Part 2, Reason 12, n. 6.

pronunciation, by keeping a stone in his mouth. D) Raising his shoulder by using a sword...

The first requirement for Salvation is based upon a passage from Sirach 19:1, which has already been well commented upon in the note of 24 July 1808. We add here some statements by St. Teresa of Avila which Fr. Bertoni must have surely read. At the conclusion of the Foundation of Palenza, she admonished the Discalced Nuns and Monks with these words:

... By means of little things the Devil goes about boring and drilling holes, through which bigger things can enter later on. Never let yourselves say 'there is no harm in this...this is of little importance... In this way much damage are in fact done...' ³⁶

In her autobiography Teresa wrote: "I was preoccupied not to commit any moral sin, but I used to care little about venial sins. This was in fact what ruined me!" ³⁷

In her *Life*³⁸, we read that she had noted she had not committed any mortal sin – but, that she paid little heed to her venial sins, and it was these which ruined her. To make little account of venial sins ruins the soul.

As regards the second requirement for salvation, i.e. the practical conviction of the necessity of laboring for salvation, the biblical support is taken from Mt 11:12 where Jesus praised John the Baptist: *The Kingdom of God is conquered by force and is the reward of those who take it by violence*.

The second biblical support is Luke 13:24: *Make an effort to enter by the narrow door* – that of virtue – *because, I tell you, many will seek to enter and will not manage* because they do not use the narrow door but the wide and broad entrance.

The third biblical support is again Mt 14:24 or Luke 9:23. It is always Jesus' word. In both quotations the beginning is the same: If one wants to come after me - and in the second one we have also the pick up his cross every day. We have already seen at the end of September and in the beginning of October, that Fr. Bertoni used this text to organize his points for the Panegyric of St. Francis. This text, however, is not only for heroic saints, but is rather a matter of everyday spiritual living. Fr Bertoni will write to Leopoldina Naudet in 1828:

... It's up and down... sometimes straight, sometimes crooked. We follow Him Who walks in front of us with the Cross on His shoulders and keeps on crying: "He who

³⁶ *Foundations*, c. 29, n. 32. In: *Opere*, Ed. Veneice 1723., Rome edition 1949.

³⁷ *Foundations*, nn. 193, 194. Ed. 1723. Tome 2. Sentences.

³⁸ St. Teresa of Avila, *Life*, o.c., c. 4, n. 7 – Rome Edition 1949.

wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, let him take up his cross and follow behind me...³⁹

With regard to the third necessity for salvation, this would be *good will*. It is quite correct to say that he who has it, has all, provided he does whatever he is able to. In some other writing Fr Bertoni completed the Latin quotation as follows but the will is not good, if it does not do all that one can. A man of good will has everything, because God, on His part, will never fail him. In the *Imitation of Christ* we read about the anxieties about Salvation: ...*Oh, if I only knew that I shall (be able to) persevere!... And he suddenly heard God's voice: "If you knew this, what would you do now?... Do now what you would then like to do, and you will be quite sure..."*⁴⁰

There follows the example of the classical pagan, "to show how a strong will can overcome the obstacles which to ordinary people seem insurmountable, and how to reach the height of artistic excellence through labor and study."⁴¹ If Demosthenes was able to exercise such violence on himself for his earthly purposes, what should a Christian do to conquer the Kingdom of Heaven?

With reference to n. 1: "It is related that Demosthenes lived for months on end in an underground room with his head half shaved in order not to be tempted to go out. There [cf. n. 4 above] he would declaim aloud, in front of a mirror as tall as his body. A sword was suspended just above one of his shoulders which he had the habit of raising too high. In this manner he succeeded in controlling his rude bearing and his clumsy mannerisms."

With reference to the 2nd and 3rd points above: "He had a thin and weak voice, a faulty pronunciation of the "r", a short and a belabored breath. In order to strengthen his voice, it is said that he used to run up a slope while proclaiming poems, speeches and conversation in a loud voice. To correct the defects of pronunciation he used to recite rapidly, while keeping little stones in his mouth. To accustom his eyes and ears to the noisy excitement of the crowd, he used to discourse along the shores of a stormy sea."⁴² And this rather extended outline is not yet finished.

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[112.] If the matter of our Salvation would depend on God alone, no one would ever be damned: *I do not want the death of a sinner...*

³⁹ *Epistolario*, p. 242. Letter 144, late spring or summer of 1828.

⁴⁰ *Imitation of Christ*, Book 1, c. 25, n. 2.

⁴¹ Joseph Arcangeli, *Commentary on Cicero's Orator*. Prato 1885.

⁴² Jerome Bartolotti-Dominic Bassi, Introduction to *The Three Orations of Demosthenes* [against Philip] n. 8

But since it depends also on our cooperation, and this is lacking, and so, many are damned.

It is a great danger to hear God's Word without drawing fruit from it.

The first and the second sentence go together with what was said about the third requirement for Salvation. They confirm that *whoever who has good will has everything*. The scriptural text that is inserted between the first and second statement is from Ezekiel 33:11. This is accepted in the liturgical form of the Divine Office for Prime during the ferial days of Lent:

... As I live, says the Lord, I do not wish the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live. The original text sounds as follows: As I live, says the Lord God, I do not wish the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn back from his way and live...

The last sentence repeats for everybody the moral of the predicament of Herod with John the Baptist: "he likes to listen to him...but does not obey his essential message it is not lawful!... nor does he send Herodias back to her husband".

[In a sermon on The means of salvation Fr. Bertoni will say that Salvation:,

...must be sought after with our cooperation. It is not sufficient to ask help from God. We ought to help ourselves with those powers which God gives us. It is like people besieged in a square, who both act and wait to be rescued... Paradise is not a hereditary Kingdom, but a Kingdom to be conquered... Saints were of the conviction that it is not by a light effort that we are saved but that all powers of man are necessary. It is worthwhile to believe the Saints, because "he who has crossed the river knows how deep the water is..."⁴³

29th FEBRUARY 1809

[116.] Ask for the Grace to follow Him and to have zeal for His glory and the salvation of [my] soul.

"Let him who serves me follow me".

1809 was not a leap year. So, the date of 29th February was certainly a human error...to which the holiest of souls are always subject as long as they live on this earth! He simply had overlooked the fact that with the previous entry, the month had come to an end. There is also a bit of a mix up in the original manuscript. The pen is different for this note, as is the ink.

⁴³ The Translator has added this paragraph, not found in Fr. Stofella's Notes for the *Memoriale Privato*. Cf. perhaps MssB ## 4092-4094.

This is a very personal note of Fr. Gaspar. The scriptural quotation is from Jn 12:26. It belongs to the texts of the solemn day of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. It follows the short parable of the grain of wheat which unless it falls into the ground and dies, it remains unproductive. If it dies, it brings forth abundant fruit. Martini translates and comments as follows: He who serves me, let him follow me; where I am, there, will also be the one who serves me. My ministers are more especially called to fall in behind me, along the way of the cross. He who will follow me along such way, will follow me into blessedness too." Yes, because the complete text has the following words: And he who will serve me, will be honored by my Father.

Let him follow is therefore a command, as Fr. Bertoni reflects. It implies what is intended by the parable of the grain of wheat: the imitation of Christ crucified. Namely: to bear the cross and to love the cross. To chastise the body and bring it into subjection. To shun honors. To bear willingly with insults. To despise oneself and wish to be despised. To suffer adversities and losses. Not to desire prosperities in this world...

All these thing principles we read in The Imitation of Christ, and they are "not in accord to man's natural inclination". Fr. Gaspar, then, affirms together with the *Imitation of Christ*: If you rely on yourself, you will not be able to do anything like this, but if you rely on the Lord... God does not command the impossible.⁴⁴

He would, however, add: Ask for what you cannot do, because he was sure that God will help us to do it. And his exhortation is to ask for the grace to follow Him and to have true zeal for His glory and the salvation of the soul for which He shed His most precious Blood.

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⁴⁴ *Imitation of Christ*, Book 2, c. 12: 'The Royal Way of the Cross, n. 9.

5. ICON

[Kittel , pp. 203-206]

1 OT Prohibition of Images

The belief that God Himself was not meant to be depicted is intrinsic to the OT [cf. Ex 20:4] – it is fundamentally forbidden. The main reason is that God's spiritual nature underlies the belief – but, also in the sense that He is not under human control, or fits into any one image – the hole in the beach and the endless sea in Augustine's view. The Ark is linked only to God's spiritual presence. God dwells in obscurity – he is the revealed god but remains hidden – from there He governs the sky's brightest [albeit, minor' (!?) star [1 K 8:12]. Massive earthquakes and fires are His work, but these are not 'Himself' [cf. 1 K 19:1, ff. – God is not in the powerful images, but in the gentle whisper of His word.

God has created all things – so, no one of them, even their complexity, could ever properly depict Him. Israel saw no figure of God when He spoke to the People from the fire, the whirlwind [Dt 4:15,f.]. To do otherwise, is a rebellious act of disobedience [cf. Am 5:26] – especially when 'others' made an image out of an animal, the golden calf. There are sarcastic accounts to the disobedience [cf. Is 44:12, ff.].

b. Images in Judaism and Christianity

1. There are 3 practical implications:

- There was required an avoidance of all images of false, alien gods. The isolation of this was called 'apostasy.'
- The second implication is the absence of representations of the Lord God in the Liturgy. The hand of God however, was seen in the sacrifice of Isaac, and the lifting up of Ezk.
- Likewise, the depictions of humans and animals were avoided – as humans are in the image of God.

Whatever art was used [e.g., ark of the Covenant, knife of circumcision, candlestick, etc. were depicted – all served rather to present God's actions rather than Himself.

2. This hesitancy for representations of God over-lapped into Christianity. The NT never speaks of a picture of Jesus – it is only after the NT that some representations filtered in. In the NT, lack of any positive interest may also imply the lack of negative opposition.

3. NT images draw some attention:

- Images on coins [Mk 12:6 are offensive in that they represent foreign rulers-but, for all practical purposes, they were used anyway.
- The image of the Beast cannot be worshipped [Rv 13:14,f.] There us a real clash here with the widespread ruler cult, as in Dn 3:5, ff.. As an insult, the Alexandrian mob put images of the Emperor in the Jewish synagogue. Rv 13:15, speaks of priestly devices that make images move.

c. The Greek usage of ICON

This is form the Greek verb EIKO, meaning: 'to be like', 'similar', 'to appear' – hence, *eikon* mans 'image' – either artistic; mental; a likeness, or manifestation'.

1. Col 1:15: Christ is the ICON of the invisible God – the meaning here is a revelation with substantial participation [cfr. Plato; Philo]. The EIKON needs to be its reality, and illumines the inner essence. Those in Platonic cosmology the world is the visible ICON of the intelligible *autozoon*.

2. For the Greeks the god is present in the image – the copies have powers, feelings, as the originals. Rulers were seen as gods in visible manifestation.

d. The OT Divine Likeness

1. The OT divine likeness can n=only be understood remembering the distance between God and humanity. While we humans are made of earthly materials, God acts more directly in our creation – precision is given to the special relationship of Gn 1:28: *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness* [Gn 1:28].

2. Mythical Ideas: may be hinted here but needed to prevent us from as in modern times, as referring to personality, or moral capacity. The double statement: 'image and likeness' must not be over-stressed – or wonder whether this is a spiritual or bodily issue at stake here. There is no speculation on God's own form The main point is: humanity belongs by nature to the divine sphere However, this 'image' is transmitted by physical sequence of generations [Gn 5:1, ff.]. Ps 8:5 transcends the spiritual/ physical alternative – humans here have a glory of outward appearance. However, their 'glory' lies, like God's, in the inner force that is native to them. While the OT does not describe what the content of the divine likeness really is, it speaks much of its implications. Humans control creation as God's chosen vicegerents [Gn 1:26], they thus represent the divine dominion and majesty [cf. also Si 17:3, f.].

3. The OT nowhere speaks of the loss of divine likeness – the decline of the length of life suggests degeneration of our native fiber.

4. This concept must be understood only in the created divine image is involved in the greatest possible distance from God. Anthropologically, man is dust and ashes before God and cannot stand in the sphere of His holiness. It is highly significant that the OT did adopt this idea in dealing with the mystery of human origins. Man is made up of dust and a shed on the one side, to which he returns – but the divine spirit of life has been breathed into him: thus Pascal's concept of infinite nothings. All of Gn 1:1-2:4b tends to emphasize the distance between the Creator God and the human image. By origin each man is brought into a direct relationship with God. Man first made sketches or pictures on a tablet – this is an apt description of the new creature directly as the counter-part of the deity.

5. Later Christian theology is developed this ICON ideal as sharing in the divine freedom of good and intelligence. What is implied in the text is the clear revelation that man is not 'from below' – Gn 5:1, ff. emphasizes more the meaning that the transmission of the divine likeness is in the physical sense of generations. A second text prohibits murder [Gn 9:6] – the prohibition is based on a victim of murder as in the image of God.

e. The Divine Likeness in Judaism

1. Gn 1:26-27: rabbinic tends here to focus on the meaning let Us [an OT Trinity hint??] – the question is whether this pertains to God's consultation with His own heart, with angels, with the Torah, or with heaven and earth. No problem is felt with the divine image – no suggestion of its loss, diminution, or effacement by sin, either individual or collective.

2. The Greek spirit raises questions of the divine image' as a metaphysical gift [cf. Ws 2:23-24] – Philo associates the number '7 with nous and logos. He makes much of the phrase in our Image, after our likeness which applies to the earthly humanity.

3. Ps 8:5, ff. man is only a little lower than God what is impressive in him consists primarily in the inner force which is native to human beings. There is revealed a mysterious identity between man and God. In Si 17:3,f. the divine likeness consists in the fact that man was invested with some control over the universe. These two verses are similar in that they present the same fullness of humanity to the created universe.

f. The NT Metaphorical Use of Images

1. In the NT the original is present in the ICON giving it a visible manifestation Heb 10:1, distinguishes ICON from mere shadow but not the form of the realities indicated. There is also the word copy and ICON for the actual figure of humans, birds, animals, when they are in the place of God [Ws 13:13].

2. Christ the ICON of God [cf. 2 Co 4:4; Col 1:15]: the stress is on the equality of the Icon with the original. Christ is in the form [*morphe*] of God and equal to Him [Ph 2: 6]. To see Him is to see the Father [Jn 14:9] 'Beloved Son' drives home the intended point. This is derived from Gn 1:27] – Christ is the Second Adam [1 Co 15:45, ff.] For Paul ICON is Philo's *logos*, Paul's interest is not speculation the point for him is that Christ is given to us as God's image so that we might know what God wills and does. The concept of the image of God makes perfectly plain who Jesus Himself is.

3. Man as Image: In 1 Co 11:7, Paul applies Gn 1:27 to the male to bring out certain consequences for daily conduct. On the basis of Gen 5:3, Paul contrasts our present bearing of the image of the earthly man with our future bearing of the heavenly man. The idea here is that our beings as the ICON of God is restored after sin with Christ as our ICON. This is clear in Rm 8:29 – our being in Christ is given its distinctive emphasis by the fact that this means participation in His divine likeness. Those who are in Christ's image are in God's image in the true and original sense of Gn 1:27. Such likeness is the goal of 2 Co 3:18. Seeing God's glory means to share in it, by being changed into this new likeness. The concern for the Christian life is the putting on of the new being renewed after the image of the Creator [Col 3: 10]. The restoration of the image of Christ leans toward an eschatological future [1 Co 15:49; Rm 8:29]. However, this future is linked to something already present in 2 Co 3:18; Col 3:10 – the restoration is also the purpose of ethical action.

4. Paul adopts a line of exegesis to show that the Father begot His image in Christ, and Christ is given to us as the Image of God by which we may know what God wills and does. The divine image does not undermine the personal nature of Christ, as though He were but a divine power or nature. Paul uses the concept of the image of God also to make clear to the community who Jesus is. His image in us, is already – and it is still to be. It is not yet fully enjoyed – but, in its eschatology it is even now at work.

g. The Greek Meanings of ICON

These are many and varied: to be similar; like –to appear – artistic representation – a painting, statue, or impress on a coin – the 'image' of god is a reflection, apparition – a mental image, similitude – the sense of a copy, living image, a likeness, embodiment, manifestation.

1. In Col 1:1: Christ is God's ICON – giving rise to the speculation: how can there be an 'image' of something invisible, without form? This is not only representation in its implications, but it is to be thought of in terms of an emanation – a revelation of the being with a substantial participation in it. Image is not merely magnitude, but is further a share in the reality. The ICON is not a weakening, feeble copy of the original – it is also an illumination of the inner core and essence.

In the Greek and Hellenistic world this line of thinking took on a strong monistic and optimistic character. In Platonic cosmology, the world as a whole – and not only man, as in the Christian sphere, is the visible image of the *autozoon*. The concept of images seems to be of systematic importance in the Hermetic conception of the world-organism – the world is the first, and man is the second – image of God. God holds the world together and the world holds man.

2. Along-side the cosmological, speculative, philosophical line – there is also a marked religious view of this term. In the image of God, man, has somehow the God Himself present in his own being. The copies have the same powers, capacities as the originals.

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6. St. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

[BERTONI, *Epistolario*]

1 Variety of Letters [Epistolario] to L. Naudet]

Letter 3, p. 29:

... Questa lezione pare che il Signore mi volesse ben ripetuta egli orrecchi, quando stando io gravemente ammalato ne' giorni scorsi, mi faceva ogni sera per bocca dell'antico mio Maestro, P. Fortis, dire quella eccellente orazione che io seguitava col cuore: *Suscipe Domine, per manus S. ignatii, universam meam libertatem, etc. amorem tui cum gratia mihi dones et dives sum satis nec alud quidquam ultra posco....*

Lettera 4, p. 31:

... Non tema, Signora mia! In Paradiso sara' sempre giorno chiarissimo: Ella non potra' piu perder di vista il suo Signore. Ma, finche' siamo in terra, sono giorni e notti che si avvidendano. Seguiti, Ella, il suo ullne; anche di notte il Signore fa ridurre qualche stella...

Lettera 9, pp. 41, f.:

Mi pare, circa l'esposto nella lettera da Vostra Signoria, della signora Cristina, di poter' affermare ullness buona vocazione, ma insieme una forte tentazione, che s'e' nutrita finora dal pascolo di alcuni difetti che oonviene al tutto a quest'anima deporre per seguitare addovero Nostro Signore, ad essere eletta fra le compagne del Figliuol di Cristo Nostro Signore; perocche' infine, e' sempre vero che *Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi* [Mt 20:16; 22:14].

Dio ha fatto tutto da canto suo. Ha chiamato, ha data e dona la grazia per ben seguitarlo. Ma resta ullness, adesso, che l'anima faccia tutto, colla Divine grazia, da

parte sua: che corrisponda, che neghi se stessa, che pigli volontaria la sua Croce in ispalla e che seguiti daddovero, per l'obbedienza...

Lettera 22, p. 68:

Ha fatto bene a seguire l'Ispirazione, ma bisogna seguitarla sino al suo compimento...

... Ma ull [Signora Cristina] pensare che il seguire Cristo Nostro Signore e' cosa da piu' che non puo' ella ullnesste, e vale tanto, che infinite pene ancora e travagli lunghissimi, non che agguagliare, non pongonsi pure in conto di si' gran prezzo. E questo Iddio permette, affinche' poi che l'avra' conseguito, compresone un cotal poco del suo gran costo, lo debba custodire, questo gran dono, e non lasciarselo sfuggire per negligenza...

Lettera 24, p. 71:

...Il che importa, a mio parere, che quallora l'anima non sia attualmente attratta dal Signore, ella debba prepararsi second ch'e' prescritto nel libro autentico di S. Ignazio, e serbare diligentemente l'orario, il modo, il tema, l'ordine e che altro ivi e' espresso; ma quando il Signore ulln, non convien guardare altro, ma seguitarlo finch e' suo piacere...

Letter 26, p. 75:

... Questo al detto di sopra circa le vie degli Esercizi, cosi' vuole essere inteso, che insieme prudentemente e discretamente, Vostra Signoria, sapendo il Signore non tenersi a vie, lo seguiti anche fuor di via e fuor di tempo...

For St. Gaspar, St. Ignatius served indeed as his vocation to follow the Lord Jesus:

b. Ignatian Tenets [Regime]

1. Fortiter et suaviter: Perhaps along with the concept that developed from Ignatius' own background, the Jesuits were considered to have a kind of 'military' obedience – a Company of Holy Warriors battling under the Standard of Christ. Any close reading of the Jesuit Constitutions, however, would also show that this is a 'spiritual government' according to the charism of St. Ignatius⁴⁵. In this may be noted the root of Ignatian authority: *fortiter et suaviter* [cf. CSJ n. 270]⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ cf. Giuseppe Pittau, SJ, *Il Governo Spirituale Secondo il carisma ignaziano*, o.c.; cf. also: Antonio M. deAldama, SJ, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. The Superior General*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources 1999. [The English translation of the Spanish Original: *Comentario a la IX Parte de las Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús. Su persona y su gobierno*. Roma: CIS 1982.

⁴⁶ Cf. The Qualities of the Prepositus General: CSJ nn. 723-735.

2. The Imitation of the Apostolic Way of Life: The inspiration for the Ignatian commitment was that of a life-long effort to share the same poor and humble life of Jesus Christ with His Apostles. The early Jesuits truly wished to form 'the Company of Jesus' – to be related to the Pope as Jesus was to His Father and to His Apostles. This is the paradigm of life that Ignatius dearly wanted to form:

The Call of an Earthly King:...Whoever wishes to join with Me in this enterprise must be content with the same good, drink, clothing, etc., as mine. So, too, he must work with Me by day and watch with Me at night, etc., that as he has had a share in the toil with Me, afterwards, he may share in the victory with Me...Eternal Lord of all things, in the presence of Your Infinite goodness, and of Your glorious Mother, and of all the saints of Your heavenly court, this is the offering of myself which I make with Your favor and help. I protest that it is my earnest desire and my deliberate choice, provided only it is for Your greater service and praise, to imitate You in bearing all the wrongs and all abuse and all other poverty, both actual and spiritual, should Your most holy majesty deign to choose and admit me to such a state and way of life...⁴⁷.

The Standard of Christ...Consider how the Lord of all the world chooses so many persons, apostles, disciples, etc., and sends them throughout the whole world to spread his sacred doctrine among all men and women, no matter what their state and condition.

Consider the address which Christ our Lord makes to all His servants and friends whom He sends on this enterprise, recommending to them to seek to help all, first by attracting them to the highest spiritual poverty, and should it please the Divine Majesty, and should He deign to choose them for it, even to actual poverty. Secondly, they should lead them to a desire for insults and contempt, for from these things springs humility.

Hence, there will be three steps: the first, poverty as opposed to riches; the second, insults or contempt as opposed to the honor of this world; the third, humility as opposed to pride. From these three steps let them lead men and women to all other virtues...⁴⁸

The "Imitation of the Apostles"⁴⁹ was long a Church ideal for the religious life – Fr. Bertoni mentions this repeatedly in his rule [cf. CF ## 185; 189; 195; 259; 272; 273; 287, etc.]: it is a Trinitarian Communion, in the Company of Jesus, in Community with the Apostles, celebrated in the Eucharist, with Mary and Joseph. This is close to

⁴⁷ cf. St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, nn. 91-97.

⁴⁸ *The Spiritual Exercises*, nn. 145, f.

⁴⁹ cf. M.-H. Vicaire, OP, *L'imitation des Apôtres. Moines, chanoines, mendiants. [IV e-XIIIe siècles]*. Paris: du Cerf 1963.

a summary of the Stigmatine Apostolic Mission: a Christological-Apostolic form of life, with Mary and Joseph as our Patrons.

3. Obedience: The early Companions of Ignatius, after many days of discussion, arrived at the unanimous conclusion that it would be better to render obedience also internally, to someone from among their number. The reasons adopted for rendering obedience to a superior elected from their number are most important and offer a good idea of the purpose and scope of obedience in the Ignatian charism:

- the wish to fulfill the Will of God: the early spirit was one to put in place whatever structure in their faith, they believed would help their discernment in living the will of God. They wanted this 'cover' not only for the choices in the Apostolic Mission, already consecrated through their Fourth Vow to God into the will of the reigning Sovereign Pontiff – but, they wanted to prolong, to live out the experience gained in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The ideal remained to seek in everything, and to carry out God's Will in everything. This was not only an obligation on the part of the individual Jesuit. This ideal challenged the superior – to be a man of God – to live in, for, with God, in order to be a truly spiritual man, and to render also spiritual leadership.
- this structure would offer the 'Company' greater security: it was clear that if the community could stay together, this would offer advantages – as when the Lord asked His Apostles to carry on in memory of Him, also to insure the continuation of the Church even after the deaths of the Apostles present:
- this interior structure would increase the possibility to seeking recruits, and of being prolonged, following the deaths of the original Companions of Jesus;
 - the over-riding hope in all this was that the original spirit animating all at the beginning through St. Ignatius, would be maintained among them. This proper spirit, this special characteristic, this manner of proceeding, this *means Ignatiana* would remain and be preserved among them.
- each one would then better be able to handle his own 'area' of competence: the interior government was designed to be of help so that each one of the Companions would be able to absolve better the Mission entrusted to him. Today this might be called *the principle of subsidiarity*. The Supreme Pontiff in the Apostolic Mission, and the superior in the daily living of the life, could not descend into the particular decisions – this aspect would have to be left up to the individual Jesuit, to be resolved through his own spiritual, intellectual, apostolic and human competence. Thus, a key idea is progress, continuing conversion, on-going formation. With the passing of time, it became apparent with the increasing numbers, that there was a need for regional, local and

even departmental leadership – all of these appointments rested firmly in the hands of the spiritual leader, who needed consultation.

4. An Apostolic, Missionary Community Spirituality⁵⁰: the word *Apostolic* as has already been seen, did not only mean any “apostolate” of the Word of God, suitable for the propagation and the defense of the faith, as a service rendered for the greater glory of God, and the greater service of souls – which it did. Furthermore, however, the word kept before the minds of the Companions that they were seen as a continuation of Jesus’ relationship to His Father in the Holy Spirit, and the College of the Twelve. The Society of Jesus was seen to be an expression, an incarnation of the Apostolic Mission: that universal mission of the Church, adapted then by subsequent history, according to the needs of the Church. This was a Mission to be exercised using as the paradigm, Jesus’ loving obedience to his Father, in the Holy Spirit: it was a *praedicatio* [i.e., *ullnessteon*] *in paupertate*, a community mission, a united body constituted by competent individuals, continuing their *progress*, on all levels. This Apostolic Mission was in Obedience to the Heavenly Father, continuing that of Jesus, realized under the continuous action of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the ultimate point of departure for the entire life. In the Original Constitutions of St. Ignatius, the word “community” hardly ever means the local community – there was required of each an ecclesial sense of service.

5. Letter and Spirit of the Constitutions: these are not a doctrinal treatise, as is evident, but they certainly do contain their own ‘theology’. The Jesuit Constitutions are the result of prayerful reflection by St. Ignatius on his own spiritual experience – they were born from a life that was already being lived and experienced. The various experiences were filtered through an intense life of prayer, in a theological climate of faith, hope and love. St. Ignatius described his Constitutions as the fruit of his own daily Mass: each day he would offer whatever part of the document he was working on in his Mass. The end result is a document which has as its purpose that of inspiring, exciting, orienting, guiding in an authoritative, organized manner, the spiritual example of the community. In this document, the juridical elements are all mixed in with the spiritual challenges – while it is a code of juridical concepts, these simply incarnate an earlier lived spiritual experience. There are many segments that are far more a contemplation than a juridical contract. For Ignatius, the ‘law’ is an expression that manifests the divine demands to a determined organization of competent men, continuing the Mission of Jesus Christ. Very often, the terminology seems far more like an urgent suggestion:

- *it would help a lot* [cf. nn. 282; 263; 276; 284; 286];
- *let them try, strive* [cf. nn. 272; 296; 360];

⁵⁰ cf. Manuel Ruiz JURADO, SI, *Spiritualità Apostolica delle Costituzioni Ignaziane*. 2 a ed.. Dispensa ad uso degli studenti. Roma: PUG 1991.

- *let each one seek* [cf. nn. 251; 542];
- *let each one see to it* [cf. nn. 668; 671; 673; 815; 819; 821];
- *they ought to be ready* [cf. n. 569].

6. Authority and Obedience: St. Ignatius was perplexed when it came to writing the Constitutions – the reason against so doing were:

- the 'Company' was not his, but it was the Company of Jesus. Therefore, it was Christ's responsibility the manner according to which he should carry forward His work;
- the Holy Spirit had already inspired the enterprise within the Law of Charity. However, the reason for writing the Constitutions proved stronger:
- divine Providence awaits a specific cooperation on the part of His creatures;
- the Vicar of Christ, and centuries of Church legislation, demand this;
- the example of so many other Founders/Foundresses.

These regulations, for Ignatius, have as their specific purpose that of making clear the sense of the internal law impressed by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of each one. The Jesuit was understood and only received if indeed he were a spiritual man, or on the life-long journey to become one. Throughout, the appeal is made by the legislator that if the law and the community authority are to express the content of the Spirit's work, then the attention of both the superior and each confrere ought to direct himself according to the manner of acting of the Holy Spirit, who in the Ignatian Rule:

- directs: ... charity and discretion of the Holy Spirit will indicate the manner which ought to be used in the dismissal, if God, our Lord, should permit the necessity of doing this... [cf. n. 219];
- inspires: ... it is the supreme providence and direction of the Holy Spirit that must efficaciously guide us to bring deliberations to a right conclusion in everything, and in sending...
- impresses: ... more than any exterior constitution, the interior law of charity and love which the Holy Spirit writes and engraves upon hearts...[cf. n. 134] – the Holy Spirit moves to the election... [cf. n. 700].

Neither the Constitutions, nor the Superior take the place of God – the ideal is that their injunctions flow from, and lead to, this interior law of charity, infused within all in the state of grace. The key under-lying, over-riding, permeating principle throughout is: Jesus Christ is the Head:

- Christ should be seen as though present in the superior [n. 6];
 - authentic obedience does not look at the person to whom obedience is due [as the cook], but for Whom he obeys – it is the Lord Whom all are called to obey [n. 84]. One obeys always God and only God – in faith, the Superior, the Constitutions can be seen as a visible, audible sign of the divine intervention in our lives –the command – even of the cook – proceeds from Jesus Christ, our Lord [n. 85];
 - Divine Providence directs the Jesuit through the Superior [n. 304];
 - obedience is perfect only when there can be mustered this interiorization of motives [cf. nn. 284; 424; 550];
 - hence, the need to express reverence for the superiors, considering and revering Jesus Christ in them [n. 551] - the challenge is to live them with all our hearts, to live life in a spirit of love, without keeping from them anything that might help the community mission, whether it be internal or external. The manifestation of conscience is one means of personal spiritual progress, and a contribution to the betterment of the Mission.
 - in faith, the superior, the Constitutions, may be seen as the Mediator of God's Will, and these hold the place of Jesus Christ in our lives [n. 552];
 - in a spirit of love the challenge is always to hold before our eyes the person of Jesus Christ our Lord. The voice of authority is the voice of Christ our Lord – hence, the ideal obedience is prompt, joyful, persevering [n. 547].
7. Discretion and Discernment: from his entrance, the Jesuit needs to be a person of judgment [cf. n. 154]. There needs to be balance between what one asks of his physical and intellectual forces [cf. nn. 298; 462]. The formed Jesuits, the Brothers, all should be endowed with this good judgment [cf. nn. 431; 582] – as should the Assistants General [n. 779] and the General himself [n. 729].

Much was left to prudential judgment of the Superior:

- to shorten, or lengthen the time of rest [n. 301], of prayer [nn. 341-343];
- the choice of studies [n. 460];
- to provide in a fitting manner for food, sleep, and the necessities, or conveniences of life [n. 581];
- in caring for the corporal, spiritual works of mercy [n. 650];
- dispensation of cloister [n. 267];

- assignment to various duties [n. 149];
- in obedience [n. 285].

It is often necessary to weigh the circumstances of persons, times and places [n. 211] – physical constitution [n. 297; 301]; temperament [n. 142]; habits [n. 297]; age, intelligence, cultural inclinations [n. 354]; talents received from God [n. 522]; social position [n. 142]; the ability to withstand challenge [n. 285]; the ability to accept, or not, corrections, a penance [n. 269]; the common good which is hoped [n. 354]; the greater service of God and universal good [n. 659].

Discernment is most important, particularly in the choice of Missions. It is necessary to give much attention for the choice of places, purposes, persons, and manner, and duration of specific 'missions.' The central principle always is: *the greater service of God and the more universal good*. [cf. nn. 618; 622; 623; 626]. There are two ideals to be kept in mind in the practical choice:

- the more universal the good [cf. Part VII, c. 2]: the greater necessity for that specific place; the fruit expected; the duties that have been contracted with that locale; the good that can be worked out there. Special attention should be given to the persons of greater importance there;
- the greater and better good: greater urgency, fidelity to the charism [the specific field of the Institute [n. 623 d]; difficulty in physical work [nn. 623-624]; those of a spiritual order [n. 624 c]; there are needed light, help from God, prayerful reflection, the courage to deliver, decide and to act.

Thus, this quality is a real capacity of gathering and analyzing in a context of prayer, consultation and reflection, all the data that might concur to zero in on a specific choice⁵¹.

8. Superior for Life: this was noted by Fr. Bertoni as his desired ideal early in his Original Constitutions: CF # 8: Regiminis ratio sic est, ut sit omnibus praelatus ad vitam, quam sibi elegerit Sodalitas. St. Ignatius handles this stipulation – and the various reasons for it in CSJ nn. 719b-722:

... There is a possibility of electing him in either of two ways, namely, for a determined period, or for his whole life. But since his experience and practice of government, his knowledge of the individual members, and the prestige he has with them, are a great aid in performing this office well, his election will be for life, and not for a determined period. Thus too the

⁵¹ For these pages, cf. Giuseppe Pittau, SI, *Il Governo Spirituale. Secondo il carisma ignaziano*. Roma: CIS 1994, pp. 3-31, *passim*

Society, being universally occupied with important matters of divine service, will be less disturbed and distracted by general congregations [CSJ n. 719 b].

Besides the reasons mentioned in this Constitution, there are still others for having one general who is elected for life:

- One is that thoughts and occasions of ambition, which is the pestilence of such offices, will be banished farther than would be the case if elections had to be held at fixed times.
- Another reason is that it is easier to find one capable person for this charge than many.

Still another reason is the example of the common practice among the most important government offices, which are held for life. So it is with the Pope and bishops among churchmen and with princes and lords among laymen.

Furthermore, the remedy for certain disadvantages which could follow the holding of such a charge for life will be treated below [in Chapter 4, nn. 773-777] [CSJ n. 720].

The superior's prestige will be greater if he is unchangeable than if he is elected for some one or several years: greater with the externs because he will be better known by all, and greater with the members of the Society for the same reason. On the contrary, the knowledge that he must relinquish his office and be equal or inferior to the others, as also his being new in the office, can diminish his prestige. [CSJ n. 721].

It is certain that the congregations of the whole Society will occur less frequently if the superior general holds office for life. For the majority of the congregations will be convoked by him, and other occasions will be few [CSJ 722].

Three ideas are found here of some value, but not accepted by all:

- experience is needed for government, knowledge of people and time is required for all this. This is particularly so in spiritual government in which the members are not ordered around like parts in a faceless machine of big business, but 'guided' according to God's will for each. This is also so that no one will be placed in a situation beyond their capacity in dangers, or labors greater than they could endure in the Lord. Knowledge of personnel is difficult in a missionary order, where the members are quite spread out – yet, the government being centralized, the General needs a more thorough knowledge of his men. [It is interesting to note that in the 450 year history of the Society of Jesus, the average years of service per General are about 14].

- the prestige of a General for life: however, in truth, being known can increase authority, as well as diminish it.
- that there will be less disturbance to the all-important apostolic mission: Part VIII of the Ignatian rule will legislate in unusual manner: general congregations should not be convoked many times [nn. 677; 689]; so as to spare the Society as a whole from that work and distraction [n. 677] – and when convoked, every effort should be made to finish as soon as possible [n. 711]⁵².

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7. IMITATE

Letter 48, p. 115:

... Adoriamo tanto e si' alto Signore, e amiamo Colui che tanto si e' abbassato e sia abbassa sino ad amar noi. E come, e sino a quel segno dovremo profundar noi, per rispondere ed imitare il suo abbassamento, con che Egli e' disceso e discende [still now!] per unirsi con noi? A Lui sia eterna gloria, che vive e regna pertutti i secoli.

Letter 126, p. 222:

... Se vuol un esempio, lo trovera' nel santo [Ignazio], che Ella vuol imitare, il quale lascio' quella dolce solitudine [Manresa], in cui aveva si' dolci trattenimenti col suo Signore, e la contemplazione piu' dolce, per l'azione la piu' viva ed efficace in mezzo al mondo...

Letter 9 [al P. Bragato], p. 324, f.:

... Non cercae il Regno di Dio e la sua giustizia [Mt 6:33]: e compiacetevi della Vostra santissima di Dio e conformatevi ad esso. Fate che s. Anselmo non sia ullnesste con voi, ma tirate utilita' dalla sua intercessione e dlla imitazione delle sue magnanime virtu...

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8. MIRROR

a. **Medieval Classic [*Speculum Monachorum*]**

In the imitation of Christ, this metaphor has always had an important role. It would be enough to quote the Medieval classic of Monastic Spirituality.

⁵² For these few thoughts, and many others, cf. Antonio M. deAldama, SI, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. The Superior General*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources 1999, pp. 7-17, *passim*.

b. A Mirror for Monks (speculum monachorum)

Introduction:

[1] This old-time classic: “Mirror for Monks” [Speculum Monachorum] - may remind the modern believer of the classic Imitation of Christ, or, on a deeper level, of the biblical quest for Jesus, the ICON of the Invisible God [Col 1:15] – a window into the Trinity – whoever sees Me, sees the Father! [Jn 12:45] – a Mirror for Christianity.

[a] The ICON of the Invisible God [In St. Thomas]:

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, 16 for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [Col 1]

There follows a Commentary from St. Thomas:

29. – After Paul recalled for us the universal and special benefits of grace, he now commends the Author of this grace, that is, Christ. And he does this, first, in his relation to God; secondly, in relation to all of creation (15b), and thirdly, in relation to the Church (v. 18).

30. – As to the first, we should note that God is said to be invisible because he exceeds the capacity of vision of any created intellect, so that no created intellect, by its natural knowledge, can attain His essence: “Behold, God is great, and we know him not” (Job 36:26); “He dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6:16). And therefore, he is seen by the blessed by means of grace, and not by reason of their natural capacity. Dionysius gives the reason for this: all knowledge terminates at something which exists, that is, at some nature that participates in the act of existence [esse]; but God is the very act of existence [*ipsum esse*], not participating in the act of existence, but participated in – and thus he is not known. It is of this invisible God that the Son is the “image” [ICON].

31. – Let us now see in what way the Son is called the image of God, and why he is said to be invisible. The notion of an image includes three things. First, an image must be a likeness; secondly, it must be derived or drawn from the thing of which it is a likeness; and thirdly, it must be derived with respect to something that pertains to the species or to a sign of the species.

For if two things are alike, but neither is derived from the other, then neither one is the image of the other; thus one egg is not said to be the image of another. And so something is called an ‘image’ because it ‘imitates’. Further, if there is a likeness between two things, but not according to species or a sign of the species, we

do not speak of an image. Thus, a man has many accidents, such as color, size and so on; but they are not the reason for calling something an image of a man.

But if something has the shape or figure of a man, then it can be called an image, because this shape is a sign of the species. Now the Son is like the Father, and the Father is like the Son. But because the Son has this likeness from the Father, and not the Father from the Son, we, properly speaking, say that the Son is the image of the Father, and not conversely: for this likeness is drawn and derived from the Father. Further, this likeness is according to species, because in divine matters the Son is somehow, although faintly, represented by our mental word. We have a mental word when we actually conceive the form of the thing of which we have knowledge; and then we signify this mental word by an external word. And this mental word we have conceived is a certain likeness, in our mind, of the thing, and it is like it in species. And so the Word of God is called the image [ICON of the living God] of God.

32. – As to our second question, we should note that the Arians misunderstood the text: for they thought about the image of God as they did of the images they made of their ancestors, so they could see in these images the loved ones no longer with them (just as we make images of the saints to see in these images those whom we cannot see in reality). And so they said that to be invisible was unique to the Father, and that the first visible reality was the Son, who manifested the goodness of the Father. They were saying that the Father was truly invisible, but the Son was visible, and thus their natures would be different.

But the Apostle refutes this when he says: “He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3). And thus the Son is not only the image of the invisible God, but he himself is invisible like the Father: He is the image of the invisible God.

33. – Then when he says, the first-born of all creation, he commends Christ in relation to creatures. First he does so; and secondly, he amplifies it (v. 16).

34. – We should note, about the first point, that the Arians understood this to mean that Christ is called the first-born because he is the first creature. But this is not the meaning, as will be clear. So we have to understand two things: how this image is generated, and in what way it is the first-born of creatures.

In regard to the first, we should note that things generate in various ways depending on their nature and manner of existence, for men generate in one way, and plants in another, and so on for other things. But the nature of God is his existence [*ipsum esse*] and his act of understanding [*intelligere*] and so it is necessary that his generating or intellectual conceiving is the generating or conceiving of his nature. (In us, however, our intellectual conceiving is not the conceiving of our

nature, because our nature is not the same as our act of understanding). Therefore, since this image is a word and concept of an intellect, it is necessary to say that it is the offspring of the nature, so that the one receiving the nature from the other is generated by necessity.

35. – Secondly, we have to understand in what way the Son is called the first-born. God does not know himself and creatures through two different sources; he knows all things in his own essence, as in the first efficient cause. The Son, however, is the intellectual concept or representation of God insofar as he knows himself, and as a consequence, every creature. Therefore, inasmuch as the Son is begotten, he is seen as a word representing every creature, and he is the principle of every creature. For if he were not begotten in that way, the Word of the Father would be the first-born of the Father only, and not of creatures: *“I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, the first-born before every creature”* (Sir 24:5) [Vulgate].

36. – Then when he says, in him all things were created, he explains what he has just said, that is, that the Son is the first-born because he was generated as the principle of creatures; and this with respect to three things. First, with respect to the creation of things; in the second place, with respect to their distinction, in heaven and on earth, and thirdly, with respect to their preservation in existence, and in him all things hold together.

37. – He says that the Son is the first-born of every creature because he is generated or begotten as the principle of every creature. And so he says, for in him all things were created. With respect to this, we should note that the Platonists affirmed the existence of Ideas, and said that each thing came to be by participating in an Idea, like the Idea of man, or an Idea of some other kind. Instead of all these we have one, that is, the Son, the Word of God. For an artisan makes an artifact by making it participate in the form he has conceived within himself, enveloping it, so to say, with external matter; for we say that the artisan makes a house through the form of the thing which he has conceived within himself. This is the way God is said to make all things in his wisdom, because the wisdom of God is related to his created works just as the art of the builder is to the house he has made. Now this form and wisdom is the Word; and thus in him all things were created, as in an exemplar: *“He spoke and they were made”* (Gen 1), because he created all things to come into existence in his eternal Word.

38. – With respect to the differences among things, we should note that some, like the Manicheans, were mistaken in thinking that earthly bodies, since they are corruptible, were made by an evil god, while the heavenly bodies, because they are incorruptible, were made by the good God, that is, by the Father of Christ. This was an error, because both types of bodies were created in the same [Word]. And so he says, in heaven and on earth. This difference is based on the different parts of

corporeal nature. "In the beginning," that is, in the Son, "God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1).

39. – The Platonists also said that God created invisible creatures, that is, the angels, by himself, but created bodily natures by the angels. But this is refuted here, because Paul says, visible and invisible. As to the first he says: "By faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God; that from invisible things visible things might be made" (Heb 11:3). About the second we read. "We have seen but few of his works. For the Lord has made all things, and to the godly he has granted wisdom" (Sir 43:32-33). This difference in things is based on the nature of created things.

40. – The third difference is concerned with the order and degrees found in invisible realities, when he says, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities. The Platonists were mistaken in this matter for they said that there are different perfections found in things, and attributed each of these to its own first principle. And they said there was an order of principles according to the orders of these perfections. Thus they affirmed a first being, from whom all things participate in existence; and another principle, distinct from this, a first intellect, from which all things participate in intelligence, and then another principle, life, from which all things participate in life. But we do not agree with this, for all the perfections found in things are from one principle. Thus he says, whether thrones or dominions ..., and so on. As if to say: they do not depend on an array of principles, but on the one unique Word of God.

41. – Why does Paul say in his letter to the Ephesians (1:22) "He has made him the head over all the Church"? For he does not seem to be saying the same thing there as here. I reply that here Paul is giving a descending list of such beings, because he is showing the procession of creatures from God; but in Ephesians he gives an ascending list, because he is showing that the Son of God, as man, is above all creatures.

In Ephesians, the principalities are placed under the authorities (or powers), and the virtues are between the dominions and authorities; but here in our text, the principalities are placed above the authorities, and between the dominions and the authorities.

This is the way the teaching of Gregory differs from that of Dionysius. For Dionysius arranges the spiritual beings as they are in Ephesians, because he puts the dominions, the virtues and authorities in the second hierarchy. But Gregory arranges them as Paul does here, because he puts the dominions, principalities and authorities in the second hierarchy; and the virtues, archangels and the angels in the third hierarchy. We should note, as Gregory and Dionysius say, that the spiritual gifts from which these different orders receive their names are common to all of them; yet

some orders receive their name from certain of these gifts, and others receive their name from different gifts.

The reason for this can be seen from the teachings of the Platonists: whatever belongs to something belongs to it in one of three ways: essentially, or by participation, or causally. A thing belongs essentially to another if it belongs to it according to a certain proportion to its nature; this is the way to be rational belongs to man. A thing belongs by participation to another if it surpasses the nature of the thing which has it, although the thing participates to a certain extent in it, although imperfectly; thus man is intellectual by participation, while to be intellectual, which is superior to being rational, is in the angels essentially.

One thing belongs to another causally if it accrues to it, as artifacts belong to a person; for they do not exist in him as in matter, but exist in his artistic power. Now a thing is named only from what belongs to it essentially; thus we do not define man as an intellectual or artistic being, but as rational. In regard to the gifts present in the angels, those which belong to the higher angels essentially, belong to the lower ones by participation; and those which belong to the lower ones essentially, are present in the higher angels causally. Consequently, the higher angels receive their names from the higher gifts. But the highest thing in a spiritual creature is that it attain to God and somehow participate in him; and therefore the higher angels receive their name because they attain God: seraphim, as being fervent or on fire with God; the cherubim, as knowing God; and the thrones, as having God seated in them.

42. – For one thing can participate in another in three ways: first, it can receive what is proper to the nature of what it is participating in; secondly, it can receive a thing insofar as it knows it; and thirdly, it can somehow serve the power of a thing. For example, a doctor participates in the art of medicine either because he possesses in himself the art of medicine, or because he has received a knowledge of the art, or because he serves or devotes himself to the medical art.

The first way of participating is greater than the second, and the second way is greater than the third. In Sacred Scripture, what is divine is signified by fire: “The Lord your God is a devouring fire” (Deut 4:24). And so the highest order of angels is called the seraphim, as though on fire with God and having a divine property. The second order is the cherubim, who attain God by knowledge. And the third are the thrones, who serve or are devoted to his power.

The other orders are not given their names because they attain God, but because of some activity of God. Some angels direct or command, and these are the dominions. Others accomplish and carry out [what is commanded], the principal

angels who do this are the Principalities: “Princes went before, joined with singers” (Ps 68:27).

Among the others who carry out commands, some act over spiritual creatures, such as the authorities (powers), who restrain the evil spirits. If some act over natural things, they are called virtues, and these perform miracles. If they act over human beings, they are called archangels – if they are concerned with great matters, and angels if concerned with lesser things. And so Paul concludes, all things were created through him [*per ipsum*], as by an efficient cause, and in him [in Thomas’ text], as in an exemplary cause: “All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made” (Jn 1:3).

43. – Since someone might ask: Are all things eternal? The Apostle, says in answer: No! He is before all, i.e., that is, before all times and other things: “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything from the beginning” (Prov. 8:22). Or, He is before all in dignity: “Who among the heavenly beings is like the Lord?” (Ps 89:6).

44. – As relating to the conservation of things he says, and in him all things hold together, that is, they are conserved. For God is to things as the sun is to the moon, which loses its light when the sun leaves. And so, if God took his power away from us, all things would immediately cease to exist: “Upholding the universe by his word of power” (Heb 1:3).

c. Col 1:18-23:

18 He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. 21 And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, 23 provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven.

45. – After the Apostle commended Christ in his relationship to God and to all creatures, he here commends him in his relationship to the Church: first, in a general way; secondly, in particular, in reference to the Colossians (v. 21); and thirdly, in reference to himself (v. 23b).

In regard to the first he does two things: first, he mentions Christ’s relationship to the entire Church; and secondly, he explains this relationship (v. 18b).

46. – He says therefore that Christ, the first-born among creatures, is the one in whom we have our redemption. But because he has been made the head of the Church, two things have to be explained: first, in what way the Church is a body; and secondly, how Christ is its head.

The Church is called a body because of its likeness to a single human being. This likeness is twofold: first, in that it has distinct members: “And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (Eph 4:11);

.... Secondly, because the members of the Church serve each other in ways that are different: “The members may have the same care for one another” (1 Cor. 12:25); “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2). Again, just as a body is one because its soul is one, so the Church is one because the Spirit is one: “There is one body and one Spirit” (Eph 4:4); “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor. 10:17).

Next we have to consider the relationship of the members to the head of the Church, i.e., to Christ. For Christ is the head of the Church. “But you, O Lord, are the lifter of my head” (Ps 3:3).

47. – He explains what it means to be a head, saying, he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead. The head has three privileges over the other members of the body. First, it is superior in dignity, because it is a source and a ruler. Secondly, it has the fullness of the senses, which are all in the head. Thirdly, it is the source of an inflow of sense and movement to the members of the body.

So first, Paul shows how Christ is head because of his dignity; secondly, because of the fullness of his grace (v. 19); and thirdly, because of an inflow from him (v. 20).

48. – The Church exists in two states: the state of grace in the present time, and the state of glory in the future. But it is the same Church, and Christ is its head in both states, because he is the first in grace and the first in glory.

With respect to the first he says, he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, because he is not only first in grace insofar as he is a man, but all men are justified by faith in Christ: “By one man’s obedience many will be made righteous” (Rom 5:19). So he says, he is the beginning [principium], that is, the beginning or source of justification and grace in the entire Church; because even in the Old Testament some were justified by faith in Christ: “I am the beginning who am speaking to you” (Jn 8:25); “With you is the beginning” (Ps 110:3) [Vulgate].

Christ is also the beginning of the state of glory; and so he says, the first-born from the dead. The reason for this is that the resurrection from the dead is a kind of second birth, because it restores us to eternal life: “In the rebirth, when the Son of

Man sits on his glorious throne" (Mt 19:28); but Christ is the first of all; and thus he is the first-born from the dead, that is, the first-born of those who are born by the resurrection.

49. – But what about Lazarus (Jn 11)? I answer that he and some others did not rise to the above mentioned immortal life, but to a mortal life; but "Christ, having risen from the dead, will never die again" (Rom 6:9); "Jesus Christ, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth" (Rev 1:5); "Christ has risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20). And this is so that in everything he might be pre-eminent: pre-eminent in the gifts of grace, because he is the beginning; and pre-eminent in the gifts of glory, because he is the first-born: "In every nation I have had first place" (Sir 24:10) [Vulgate].

50. – Then (v. 19), he shows the dignity of the head with respect to the fullness of all graces. For some saints had particular graces, but Christ had all graces; and so he says, that in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell [it seems that Thomas' version lacked the words "of God"]. Each word has its own force.

Pleased indicates that the gifts Christ had as man were not the result of fate or merits, as Photinus says, but were due to the good pleasure of the divine will taking this man into a unity of person: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:17).

He says, all, because some have one gift and others different ones; but [with Christ] "The Father had given all things into his hands" (Jn 13:3).

He says, fullness, because one can have a gift without having the fullness of it or of its power, because perhaps one lacks something unwillingly.

But John says that Christ was "full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14), "My abode is in the fullness of the saints" (Sir 24:16).

He says to dwell, because some received the use of a grace for only a time; thus the spirit of prophecy was not always possessed by the prophets, but it is continuously present in Christ, because he always has control over this fullness to use it as he wishes: "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" as we read in John (1:33).

51. – Then when he says, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, he shows that *Christ is the head of the Church because of an inflow from him*. And this is the third characteristic of a head. First, he shows the inflow of grace; and secondly, he explains it.

52. – He says therefore: I say that it pleased God not only that this fullness exist in Christ, but that it also flow from Christ to us; and so he says, and through him to

reconcile to himself all things: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor. 5:19).

53. – He mentions the nature of this reconciliation and how all things are reconciled. Now there are two things to be considered in a reconciliation.

First, the matters in which the reconciled persons agree. For people at odds have conflicting wills, but when they have been reconciled they agree in some things; and so wills that were before in conflict are made to harmonize in Christ. For example, the wills of men, of God and of the angels. The will of men, because Christ is a man; and the will of God, because Christ is God. There was also conflict between the Jews, who wanted the law, and the Gentiles, who did not want the law. But Christ created harmony between the two, because he was from the Jews, and he freed us from the legal observances. This harmony was accomplished by the blood of his cross. The cause of discord between God and men was sin; the discord between the Jews and the Gentiles was caused by the law. Now Christ destroyed sin by his cross and fulfilled the law; and thus he took away the causes of discord: “You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb 12:22).

Thus we are reconciled and all things are set at peace, whether on earth, that is, Jews and Gentiles, or in heaven, that is, the angels and God. And so when Christ was born the angels sang: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men” (Lk 2:14). Again, Christ said at his resurrection: “Peace be with you” (Jn 20:19); “For he is our peace, who has made us both one” (Eph 2:14).

54. – Then (v. 21), Christ is commended because of the gifts he gave them. First, Paul recalls their past condition; secondly, Christ’s gift (v. 22); and thirdly, what they have to do now (v. 23).

55. – Their past condition had three evils: in their intellect, they were ignorant; in their affections, they were enemies of justice; and in their actions, they committed many sins.

In regard to the first he says, estranged; in regard to the second, hostile in mind, according to the reading of one version.

This shows that there was a defect in that wisdom that the Jews proclaimed about the one God: “Men loved darkness rather than light” (Jn 3:19). But were the Jewish people bound to the law of Moses? Yes they were, so far as it concerned the worship of the one God. Or, we could say the Jews were estranged in mind, i.e., by choice, maliciously contradicting God: “They turned aside from following him” (Job 34:27).

As to the third evil of their past condition he says, doing evil deeds: “Their deeds were evil,” as we read in John (3:19).

56. – Then when he says, he has now reconciled, he mentions the benefits coming from Christ.

The first of these is reconciliation in his body; and so he says, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh. He says, his body of flesh, not because his body and his flesh are not the same, but to show that Christ took a real body: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn 1:14). A body of flesh, that is, a mortal body: “God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and of sin, has condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:3).

The second benefit coming from Christ is holiness; thus he says, in order to present you holy: “So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood” (Heb 13:12).

The third benefit is their cleansing from sin; and as to this he says, and blameless: “The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purifies your conscience from dead works” (Heb 9:14).

For the future he says, irreproachable: “Be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace” (2 Pet 3:14). And he adds, before him: “Man sees things that appear, but the Lord beholds the heart” (1 Kg. 16:7).

57. – What God requires of us is that we be firm in faith and hope. And so Paul continues, provided that you continue in the faith, stable. For faith is a foundation; if it is firm the entire structure of the Church is firm.

And steadfast in hope, not weakening themselves from within; not shifting by allowing others to shake that hope. This hope, I say, is the hope of the gospel, that is, the hope that the Gospel gives for the good things of the kingdom of heaven: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 4:17). And there is no excuse, because the Gospel has been preached; and he uses the past tense here instead of the future tense because this future event is so certain. The Gospel has been preached, by the apostles that is, to every creature under heaven, that is, to every new creature, that is, to the faithful, for whom it had been prepared.

d. Col 1:23b-29:

23b And of which I, Paul, became a minister. 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints. 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching

every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me.

59. – He says: I say that the Gospel has been preached to all, the Gospel of which I, Paul, became a minister; to preach it, not on my own authority, but only as a minister: “This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1).

60. – He is a faithful minister. This is obvious, because he does not run away from the dangers involved in his preaching.

First, he shows his attitude toward his sufferings; secondly, the fruit of his suffering (v. 24b).

His attitude was one of joy, because Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, that is, for your benefit: “If we are afflicted it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer” (2 Cor. 1:6).

He also rejoices because of the joy of eternal life which he expects from them, and which is the fruit of his ministry: “Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testimony of your faith produces steadfastness” (Jas 1:2), “Even if I am to be poured as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all” (Phil 2:17).

61. – And along with the above there is the fruit that in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. At first glance these words can be misunderstood to mean that the passion of Christ was not sufficient for our redemption, and that the sufferings of the saints were added to complete it. But this is heretical, because the blood of Christ is sufficient to redeem many worlds: “He is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn 2:2).

Rather, we should understand that CHRIST AND THE CHURCH ARE ONE MYSTICAL PERSON, whose head is Christ, and whose body is all the just, for every just person is a member of this head: “individually members” (1 Cor. 12:27). Now God in his predestination has arranged how much merit will exist throughout the entire Church, both in the head and in the members, just as he has predestined the number of the elect.

And among these merits, the sufferings of the holy martyrs occupy a prominent place. For while the merits of Christ, the head, are infinite, each saint displays some merits in a limited degree. This is why he says, I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions, that is, WHAT IS LACKING IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE WHOLE CHURCH, OF WHICH CHRIST IS THE HEAD. I COMPLETE, THAT IS, I ADD MY

OWN AMOUNT; AND I DO THIS IN MY FLESH, THAT IS, IT IS I MYSELF WHO AM SUFFERING.

Or, we could say that Paul was completing the SUFFERINGS THAT WERE LACKING IN HIS OWN FLESH. FOR WHAT WAS LACKING WAS THAT, JUST AS CHRIST HAD SUFFERED IN HIS OWN BODY, SO HE SHOULD ALSO SUFFER IN PAUL, HIS MEMBER, AND IN SIMILAR WAYS IN OTHERS. And Paul does this for the sake of his body, which is the Church that was to be redeemed by Christ: "That he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle" (Eph 5:27).

In the same way all the saints suffer for the Church, which receives strength from their example. The Gloss says that "afflictions are still lacking, because the treasure house of the Church's merits is not full, and it will not be full until the end of the world."

62. – Then when he says, of which I became a minister, he shows the greatness of his ministry in three ways: first, from its origin, in the second place, from the end to which it is directed (v. 25b); and thirdly, from its purpose (v. 28).

63. – But someone could say: "Is his a great ministry?" He answers: Yes, because I became a minister because it was given to me according to the divine office. This can be explained in two ways.

First in an active sense, and then the meaning is that I became a minister so that I could dispense divine things to you, faithfully passing them on; and this power has been given to me.

Secondly, it can be explained in a passive sense, and then the meaning is that Paul became a minister in so far as he was appointed by God. "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers" (Eph 4:11); "Set apart for me Barnabas and Paul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

64. – What is the end of his ministry? Certainly, not money, or his own glory. Rather, he has received it for a great purpose, that is, to make the word of God fully known. First, he shows the greatness of that for which he has received this ministry; secondly, he shows what this is, that is, that it is Christ. He shows its greatness because it has been widely proclaimed, both in an obscure form and openly.

65. – The ministry he received was to convert the Gentiles; thus, to make fully known the word, that is, the eternal dispensation of God. In other words, by my preaching I am to show that the word of God has been fulfilled, that is, God's dispensation and plan and promise concerning the incarnation of the Word of God. Or, I am to show by my preaching the eternal dispensation of God in which he arranged that the Gentiles were to be converted by Christ to a faith in the true God. And this had to be

accomplished: "Does he say and not do? Does he speak and not do what he said?" (Num. 23:19), "My word that goes forth from my mouth shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it," as we read in Isaiah (55:11).

66. – But God arranged that this be accomplished by Paul's ministry, and so Paul says, to make fully known this mystery (it is called a mystery insofar as it is hidden), because this mystery which has been hidden is this word: "I have a secret, I have a secret" (Is 24:16) [Vulgate]. This mystery was hidden for ages, that is, from the beginning of the ages, and it was hidden from all the generations of men, who were unable to know this: "the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God" (Eph 3:9). For even though the early philosophers seem to have said something about Christ's divinity, either as being his own or appropriated (as Augustine found in the works of Plato, such as that "in the beginning was the Word," and things like that), yet none could know that the Word was made flesh. But you ask if this was not known by the prophets? I reply that it was, insofar as it pertained to the Gospel; but it was not known as explicitly as the apostles knew it.

67. – Next, he deals with the revelation of this mystery. First, he shows to whom it was revealed; secondly, why it was revealed to them (v. 27).

68. – He says that this mystery is now made manifest, that is, in this time of grace: "Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). This is the knowledge of the saints: "She gave him knowledge of holy things" (Wis 10:10); "He showed his friend that it belongs to him, and that he can approach it" (Job 36:33) [Vulgate].

69. – It was revealed to his saints not because of their own merits, but because of God's good pleasure; thus Paul says, to them God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery: "All that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you" (Jn 15:15); "Yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will" (Mt 11:26).

To make known the riches of the glory of this mystery, because by the fact that such things had been hidden, God now appears superabundantly glorious. For God was formerly known in Judea, but through this mystery of the conversion of the Gentiles the glory of God is made known to the entire world: as we read in John (17:4), "I glorified thee on earth." And this is to be done among the Gentiles, that is, it is to be accomplished among them: "Let us rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God" (Rom 5:2); "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom 11:33).

This mystery, which is Christ, i.e., which we obtain through Christ, is the hope of glory, which had formerly been promised only to the Jews: "The believers from

among the circumcised were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles" (Acts 10:45); "Justified by faith, let us have peace toward God; and let us glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God" (Rom 5:1-2); "The root of Jesse, who stands as an ensign of the people, will be called on by the Gentiles" (Is 11:10). So far Paul has indicated the origin and end of his ministry.

70. – Now he mentions its function. In regard to this he does three things. First, he indicates its function; secondly, its fruit (v. 28b), and in the third place, the help he was given (v. 29).

71. – Its function is to announce Christ; and he shows this function and the method he used: "Announce his ways among the Gentiles" (Ps 9:11); "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you" (1 Jn 1:1). He states his method when he says, warning every man; this is a complete proclamation, because it is to every person, and not just the Jewish people: "TEACH ALL NATIONS" (Mt 28:19). His method is to teach the truth and to refute what is false, and so he says, warning every man, or unbeliever, in this life: "The weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:4); and it also consists in teaching every man in all wisdom, which is the knowledge of God: "To know you is complete righteousness, and to know your power is the root of immortality" (Wis 15:3); "Among the mature we do impart wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:6).

72. – The fruit of this in this life is that men are brought to perfection; and so he says, that we may present every man, that is, of any condition, mature, not in the law, but in Christ. "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). But is everyone bound to perfection? No, but it should be the goal of the preacher. Now the perfection of charity is of two kinds. One is from a necessity of precept, that is, that one not allow into his heart anything opposed to God: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Mt 22:37). The other perfection of charity is from a necessity of counsel, which is that one give up even those things that are lawful; and this kind of perfection goes beyond what is required. But for this Paul had God's help.

73. – And so he says, For this I toil, striving against unbelievers and sinners: "Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 2:3); "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7). And Paul does this with all the energy, "the grace of God is with me" (1 Cor. 15:10), which he inspires within me, because God does this in me mightily, i.e., that is, by giving me the might or power: "Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high," as we read in Luke (24:49).

e. Jn 12:45:

[b] Jn 12:45: '... whoever sees Me sees the Father...!'

42 Nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 for they loved the praise [glory] of men more than the praise [glory] of God. 44 And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. 45 And he who sees me sees him who sent me. 46 I have come as light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

1706 Above, the Evangelist described the failing of those who did not believe at all; here he explains the failing of those who believed in secret, because they were timid, faint-hearted. First, he mentions their dignity; secondly, their failing (v 42); and thirdly, he suggests the root of this failing (v 43).

1707 The dignity of those who believed in secret was great, for they were the authorities, and on this point he says, many even of the authorities believed in him. He is saying in effect: I said that although Jesus had done so many signs, still they did not believe in him; and although this was true for the majority, yet there were some who did believe in him, because many even of the authorities, of the people, believed in him. One of these was Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, as was said (c 3). Thus the words of the Psalm (47:9) were fulfilled: "The princes of the peoples gather as their people of the God of Abraham"; and the statement of the Pharisees is proved false: "Have any of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him?" (7:48).

1708 The failing of these authorities is timidity, faint-heartedness; thus he says, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it. For as stated above, the Pharisees "*agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue*" (9:22). So, although they believed with their hearts, they did not profess him with their lips. Their faith, therefore, was insufficient, for as is said in Romans (10:10): "For a man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved." "Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed" (Lk 9:26).

1709 The root of their failing is vanity, vainglory; so he says, for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. By confessing Christ publicly they would have lost the glory of men, but won the glory of God. But they chose rather to be deprived of the glory of God than the glory of men: "How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" (5:44). "If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ" (Gal 1:10).

1710 Now he shows how Christ rebuked the Jews for their unbelief: first, he shows their duty to believe; secondly, he mentions the fruit of faith (v 46); thirdly, he warns the unbelievers about punishment (v 47). But because vision comes after faith, with regard to the first, he treats of faith; and secondly, of vision (v 45).

1711 As to the first he says, And Jesus cried out, both because of the importance of what he intended to say and because of their free will, to charge them with their sins: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression" (Is 58:1), and said, He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. This seems to contain a contradiction, for he says, he who believes in me believes not in me.

To understand this we should note first, according to Augustine, that our Lord said this to distinguish his divine and human nature.^[41] For since the proper object of faith is God, we can indeed believe that a creature exists, but we should not believe in a creature (*in creaturam*) but in God alone (*in Deum*) [See *Summa*, Part I, commentary on 6:29]. Now in Christ there is a created nature and the uncreated nature. Therefore, the truth of faith requires that our faith be in Christ as having an uncreated nature. And so he says, he who believes in me, that is, in my person, believes not in me, as a human being, but in him who sent me, that is, he believes in me as sent from the Father: "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (7:16).

According to Chrysostom, however, our Lord says this to suggest his origin.^[42] It is a way of speaking similar to a person drawing water from a stream and saying that this water is not from the stream but from the spring: for it does not originate from the stream. So our Lord says, he who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me, as though to say: I am not the source of myself, but my divinity is from another, that is, from my Father. So, he who believes in me, believes not in me, except insofar as I am from the Father.

1712 Then when he says, and he who sees me sees him who sent me, he treats of vision. In regard to this we should note that just as the Father sent the Son to convert the Jews, so Christ also sent his disciples: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (20:21). But no one of the disciples dared to say, nor should he, that one should believe in him [the disciple], although he could say that one should believe him (*crederetur ei*). For this could not take place without detracting from the One who sent him, because if someone believed in the disciple, they would cease to believe in the master. So the Jews could say on the same basis that since you have been sent from the Father, anyone who believes in you ceases to believing in the Father. Therefore, our Lord shows against this that one who does not believe in him, does not believe in the Father. This is his meaning when he says, he who sees me sees him who sent me.

The seeing which is referred to here is not a physical vision, but a consideration of the truth by the mind. And the reason why one who sees the Son also sees the Father is that the Father is in the Son by a unity of essence. For one thing is said to be seen in another either because they are the same, or they are entirely conformed. But the Father and the Son are the same in nature and entirely conformed: because the Son is the image of the Father and unlike in nothing, for “He is the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15).

And so, just as one believes in the Father, so also he believes in me: “He who has seen me has seen the Father. Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?” (14:9). It is as though he said: The reason why one who sees me sees the Father also, is that the Father is in me and I in the Father. Thus it is clear what faith should be: faith should be in Christ, as God, just as it is in the Father.

1713 Next he shows the fruit of faith. First, he shows his own worth and power when he says, I have come as light into the world. It has already been explained how Christ is a light: “He was the true light, which enlightens every man coming into this world” [1:9], and “I am the light of the world” (8:12). He also shows by this that he has the divine nature. For to be light is proper to God; others may give off light, that is participate in light, but God is light by essence: “God is light and in him is no darkness at all” (1 Jn 1:5). But because he “dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen” (1 Tim 6:16), we were unable to approach him. And so it was necessary that he come to us.

This is what he says, I have come as light into the world, that is, I am the unapproachable light which rescues from error and disperses intellectual darkness: “I came from the Father and have come into the world” (16:28); “He came to his own” [1:11]. And although the apostles are called light – “You are the light of the world” (Mt 5:14) – they are not light in the same way as Christ. For they are a light whose light has been given to them, even though in some way they also give light, that is, in their ministry. Furthermore, none of the apostles could truly say, I have come as light into the world, because when they came into the world they were still darkness and not light, for in Job [37:19] it says: “We are wrapped in darkness.”

1714 Secondly, he continues, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. To become enlightened, therefore, is an effect of faith: “He who follows me will not walk in darkness” (8:12). May not remain in darkness: that is, the darkness of ignorance, of unbelief and eternal damnation.

This shows that all are born in the darkness of sin: “For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord,” as we read in Ephesians (5:8).

And in the darkness of ignorance: “A man whose way is hidden and God has surrounded him with darkness” [Job 3:23].

And in the end, unless they turn to Christ, they will be brought to the darkness of eternal damnation. And so, he who does not believe in me remains in darkness: “Whoever is unbelieving in the Son will not see life; rather, the anger of God rests on him” [3:36].

1715 Then he discloses the punishment of unbelievers, which they will incur through their condemnation at the judgment. First, he states that the *judgment will be delayed*; secondly, that there will be a judgment in the future (v 48); and thirdly, (v 48b).

f. Biblical Mirror:

Jb 37:18: *Do you spread out with him the firmament of the skies, hard as a brazen mirror...*

Ws 7:26, ff.: ... *For [wisdom] is the refulgence of eternal light, the spotless mirror of the power of God, the Image of His goodness. And she, who is one, can do all things, and renewal everything while herself perduring and passing into holy souls...*

1 Cor 13:12: *At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully as I am known ...*

Jas 1:22-26: *Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect Law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such shall a one shall be blessed in what he does...*

g. The Mirror for Monks

Summary

[1] As the ‘*Imitation of Christ*’ seems to some interpreters, to have a Franciscan background, this Mirror for Monks seems to be a practical manual on how to live some aspect of the Benedictine Rule.

[2] The author of the ‘Mirror for Monks’ refers to his work [p. 8] in his question to his reader: is my glass big enough? Is this not sufficient for you yet, you to hear more in express terms... and again [p.93]. You desired a mirror, or looking glass; whether you have received one....I have given you what things our Lord has given me; but be they better or worse, I desire you sometimes to read them over [The End].

[3] There are eight chapters: 1. Purpose of Vocation; 2.] Each Day’s Practice; [3.] Choir; 4.] Christ’s Passion [for our purposes in this brief presentation, this is central]; 5.] Examen and Expiation; 6.] Temptation and Desolation; 7.] Food and Conversation; 8.] Mortification.

[4] The document emphasizes prayer of the Scriptures always more than its study. The comparison is constant contact compared to flowing water that always cleanses.

[5] The Document emphasizes the major importance of Christ's Passion [c. 8, p. 83] – we are all Disciples of the Crucified [p.79]

[a] Much importance in remembering the Lord's Passion, especially in prayer.

[b] Much reflection on the Lord's Passion, especially Gethsemane There is a need to remember that our divine Judge is also our Advocate.

[c] Much to be derived from the examples of the Virgin Mary, and Mary Magdalene. There is a great need to 'live the solemnities'. Prepare yourself – if book, reading help – continue them, otherwise set them aside.

[d] Cleanse me from my filth cure my wound, stretch forth your hand, I am in danger.

[6] In the final chapter, there is much emphasis on one's own practice of Mortification. We are not bound to perfection, but rather each is bound to the endeavor to reach it [p. 91]. If you fall, renew the over-thrown work – better than before. If this happens twice – ten – 100 or 1000 times - repair it as often as you have fallen. Never despair of God's Mercy – seems to be the central message].

A Brief Modern Evaluation

For the modern reader, there may be a bit of excessive insistence on what each monk has to do – rather than on the Lord's work. No mention of the Eucharist which seems unusual. The main image is the Crucified Lord.

The concluding principle: Never despair of God's Mercy!

A few biblical passages for reflection: emphasizing God's word as something like a mirror:

... have a copy of this Scroll ...keep it... read it all the days of one's life that each day learn to fear the Lord.. to heed and fulfill all the words of this Law and statutes... [Dt. 17:18]

.... Joshua inscribed upon the stones a copy of the Law written by Moses... [Jos 8:32].

... You have made me built a temple on your holy mountain and an altar in the city that is your dwelling place, a copy of the holy tabernacle which you had established from of old ... [Ws 9:8].

... Moses was warned ... see that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the holy mountain. Now He has obtained so much more excellent a ministry as he is mediator of a [NEW] – [cf. Jr 31:31-33] and better covenant... [Heb 8:5].

... Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified by these rites, but the heavenly things themselves by better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a copy of the true one, but heaven itself, that he might now appear before God on our behalf... [Heb 9:24].

St. Gaspar Bertoni

The Imitation of Christ for Fr Bertoni. Is central. We have a further proof in this *Journal*.

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9. MODEL

30th JULY 1808

a. St. Ignatius

[17.] For the examination of conscience one should choose a Saint of the same vocation as a mirror. In this way one finds matter for confession every day. Whatever falls short of that Saint's perfection is faulty.

It is worthwhile to consider the method of Fr Bertoni in his daily Examination of Conscience. It is not surprising that during these examinations he sometimes was given remarkable gifts and graces. We have an example on 27 October 1808 when he wrote:

... In the first point of the Midday Examen, i.e. the thanksgiving, while prostrated on the floor in the sight of Heaven, I felt a deep sense of the divine presence with love and self-offering...

This maxim of Fr. Gaspar provides an insight into what should be every examen of conscience for one called to perfection.

Fr Bertoni had chosen St Ignatius of Loyola as model for his priestly vocation. He will tell us expressly in this JOURNAL on 15 Sept. The first biographer, Fr Giacobbe, wrote that Fr Bertoni admired and studied much the works and virtues of St Ignatius, and had reproduced them very faithfully.⁵³ In fact Fr Gaspar studied the Life of St

⁵³ *Summarium Additionale*, Document 36, p. 456.

Ignatius directly of at least four authors, i.e. Fr. John Peter Maffei, Fr Peter Ribadeneira, Fr. Daniel Bartoli and Fr. Francis Mariani. Of the hand written extracts from the four authors which we possess, several could be part of this *Journal*. They reveal not only admiration for the Saint, but also his endeavor to imitate him.

b. Dom Scupoli, *Spiritual Combat*

The original idea of modeling his life on that of a Saint could have come to Fr. Bertoni (after his boyhood practice of imitating Saint Aloysius Gonzaga), from the *Imitation of Christ* where he read: Look at the living examples of the Holy Fathers⁵⁴. He found inspiration also in Fr L. Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat*:

*... Compare your works with those of the Saints and other servants of God. In comparison with theirs you will know that your best and greatest works are of very low quality and worth. If you then compare them with those of Christ...(I am not talking on the side of his divinity, but purely as they have been humanly performed with sincerity and pure love)... you will see that yours are insignificant...*⁵⁵

The *Imitation of Christ* and the classic of Scupoli appear as the first teachers of Fr Bertoni. We shall have a further proof in this *Journal*.

c. To seek God alone

[18.] To seek God alone. To seek God in all things. This is to make oneself superior to all human things.

This seems to be a development of the mystical gift that Fr. Gaspar received during the Mass of the Sacred Heart (on 2 July) : I felt my spirit detached from all creatures. This is also what he admired (with his author Fr. Mariani) in Saint Ignatius in whom he mirrored himself. Describing Saint Ignatius' magnanimity he noted 4 points:

1. Tolerance in hardships
2. Confidence in God while despising human helps
3. Fortitude in embarking in hard enterprises
4. Constancy in bringing them to an end.⁵⁶

d. Serve God in Total Abandonment: *seek God alone and His Will.*

The sign of signs which shines forth in the life of St Ignatius is a total abandonment of self in God.⁵⁷ Is this not making oneself superior to all things? And he wanted the same attitude from his sons.

⁵⁴ *Imitation of Christ*, Book I, c. 18.

⁵⁵ *Spiritual Combat*, c. 32.

⁵⁶ Mariani, Book 4, c. 10, p. 403.

Long before this date Dom Scupoli had taught Fr. Gaspar that if we truly seek God alone and do his will, and if we submit all judgment to that of our spiritual fathers, by praying the Holy Spirit, we shall always be granted the knowledge of the truth, inspired into our hearts by his light. A constant exercise of serious and honest reflection carried out in the right way, will make us understand clearly the following truths. That we retain as empty, useless and deceitful all those things that the blind and corrupted world loves and longs for, because they are induced by it. That the honors and pleasures of the world are nothing else but emptiness and moral suffering. That the insults and humiliations which the world heaps upon us brings about true glory and contentment. That to pardon our enemies and to do good to them is magnanimity. This makes us more similar to God. It is better to despise the evil world than to be its master. That to obey willingly poor creatures for the sake of God is more generous than to rule over many princes. That to know ourselves in all humility is a more precious thing than the highest science. That to conquer our appetites and to keep them in check, even the smallest ones, is a greater achievement than to conquer many cities or to win over powerful armies by wielding weapons or to work miracles and to raise the dead⁵⁸.

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e. Warning against lukewarm, *velleity* [wishful thinking].

[19.] All depends on the resolution of wanting to serve God at any cost. It is necessary to guard against velleity [wishful thinking]. We can distinguish velleity from the will by their consequences. In front of difficulties the former shrinks back and gives up, while the latter persists, gains stability and is strengthened.

It is clear that these three maxims are intimately connected to one another, and they condition the preceding note. On the part of man *all depends on strengthening, that is to make firm and stable, the resolution of wanting to serve God at any cost*: this is an Ignatian expression⁵⁹. Here is what Fr Bertoni proposed to the Clergy of Verona in 1810, during the Spiritual Exercises:

Whoever undertakes these Exercises will find much advantage if he comes with an open spirit and generosity towards his Creator and Lord. In all free will he should make an effort to offer himself to God so that he might decide of his person and his possessions according to His good pleasure⁶⁰.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Book 3, p. 204.

⁵⁸ *Spiritual Combat*, c. 7.

⁵⁹ *Spiritual Exercises*, 5th Annotation.

⁶⁰ *Collectanea Stigmatina* I, p. 110.

f. Sincere dialogue with the lord in the spiritual exercises

He developed this theme more abundantly in the dialogue with the Lord which concluded the Introduction to the *Spiritual Exercises* :

... Lord, what do you want me to do? It is up to You to decide what should I work on during these days of Retreat, which are days of salvation? It depends on me, whatever the cost, to remove all obstacles which prevent me from complying with Your orders, and to carry out Your divine designs, when I come to understand them...⁶¹

It is clear that such attitude of spirit conceived during the *Exercises* was not intended to limit this work to the retreat experience but had to continue as a steady disposition of will all during all his life.

A Genuine will: Fr. Bertoni warns that one should be on guard against *velleity* [wishful thinking]. As far as he himself was concerned, he had already copied from Rodriguez⁶² a useful teaching: St Bonaventure says that there are some who take good resolutions, but they never do the work of controlling themselves and making the effort of putting them into practice, as the saying goes: *For to will, is present with me; but to accomplish that which is good, I find not...*(Rom 7,18). These, often-times are not authentic resolutions, nor genuine desires. They are just some *velleities* according to which some express their wishful thinking, but they do not genuinely will to act: The sluggard wills and wills not.. (Prov. 13,4). On this point, let the above suffice: the rest of the transcription will find its application later on.

Fr. Gaspar concludes that *velleity* lacks firmness of resolution, so that *in the face of difficulties it shrinks back and gives up*, while the authentic will profits from difficulties. It knows how to persevere, to acquire stability and get established. St Teresa taught him that *the Devil fears much people who are determined*⁶³.

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g. Heaven at the end of a long journey [similar idea of Don Bosco, some 40 years later]

[20.] We should imagine heaven as at the end of an avenue strewn and obstructed with thorns, scrubs and thickets. We have to look steadily to the end. Not to the thorns! And to walk on while removing this and that thorn bush. We should never rest until we reach the end.

⁶¹ *Collectanea Stigmatina* I, p. 114.

⁶² Part I, Tract I, c. 3..

⁶³ St. Teresa of Avila, *Path of Perfection*, c.23.

It seems a paraphrasing of the evangelical How narrow the way that leads to life, already quoted. Would it be that it is only "narrow"! Here, the classic motto *look to the end*, the goal which is Heaven, is of urgent necessity. Otherwise who would endure the journey?

It is unusual to compare this image of Fr Gaspar with a dream or vision which Don Bosco had almost 40 years later (in 1847). Guided by Our Lady, the Saint states that he saw the road of his apostolate and life in anticipation, as it were. He saw a beautiful rustic portico with roses in full bloom which covered also the ground. Don Bosco took off his shoes with the intention not to crush the roses. Soon, however, his feet started bleeding as the roses were hiding the thorns. "I need shoes", said Don Bosco to himself. "You need good shoes" added Our Lady. Don Bosco put on his shoes. As he made his way through the bower, which remained attractive, it became narrower and lower. Don Bosco was pricked repeatedly from above and from the sides. He was bleeding from his whole body. Finally an enchanting garden opened up in front of him in which a gentle breeze healed his wounds and strengthened him. And suddenly he saw an enormous building and a magnificent hall scented with the fragrance of fresh roses without thorns.

We have offered something a summary here by bringing together a few points of comparison. It was Our Lady who gave the explanation: "You must walk with the shoes of mortification" Then she addressed herself to everybody and said: "You will overcome all things with love and mortification and you will reach the thorn-less roses."

This is at least a coincidence! Fr Gaspar wrote his note when he was thirty. Don Bosco had his beautiful dream at thirty years of age.

h. MODEL: a much used image [cf. Bertoni Letters 7; 25; 38; 51; 88; - to Bragato, n. 3

The MODEL is an image often used by St. Gaspar:

Lettera 7, p. 37:

... Quanto alle formule, mi viene ora in mente di suggerire a Vostra Signoria, rapporto alla promessa, il modello di quel volto [cioè, di S. Ignazio] che fecero la' in Parigi, di andare insieme alla Terra Santa...

Lettera 25, p. 74:

...e' vero, Signora, alcune regole non sono per loro: il complesso pero' e' utilissimo per loro, e io credo necesario riguardo agli studi ... Potremo cangiar materia, non fine, ne' ordine di mezzi, per arrivarci. Laonde io proseguirò negli intervalli delle mie occupazioni, a mettere sotto gli occhi di Vostra Signoria tutto intero il modello

perfetto del Gusto negli studi, come cosa di molta Gloria del Signore, il Quale n'è Autore:....*Deus scientiarum Dominus est..* [1 K 2:3].

Lettera 38, p. 99:

...E in tutte queste due maniere e' sempre uniforme il suo abbandono in Dio. Questo, s'io non m'inganno, e il perfetto modello dell'abbandono nostro in Dio Bella virtu' abbandonarsi...

Letter 51 p. 122:

...Se questa e' impresa che debba piacere a Dio – siccome tratta da si' buon Modello: la Compagnia di Gesu' - dev'essere bene contraddetta dal suo nascere sino al suo fine...

Lettera 88, p. 178]:

...Mi pare dhe il Marchese Canossa potrebbe avere da sua sorella,il Decreto di Approvazione del suo Istituto, dal quale si cavera' la forma organica per modellare il nostro...

Lettera 3 al P. Bragato], p. 313:

... Bella e' la dichiarazione a questo proposito del Santo Dottore e Pontifice Gregorio Magno [Mor, I, 25, c 7]...Leggete spesso nel Vangelo, e dalli detti e fatti di Cristo Nostro Signore sminuzzate con la considerzione e meditazlone, e applicate a voi quel che e' all'uopo nelle circostanze she siete. Formatevi su quel Modello, once ritrassero tutti in Santi...

A Summary

'For the examination of conscience, one should choose a saint...as a mirror.' The examination of one who is called to perfection. The Patron saint of the Servant of God: St. Ignatius Loyola. Doctrine of the Imitation of Christ and of Fr. L. Scupoli. 'Seek God alone Ignatian detachment [from extracts]. Doctrine of Fr. Scupoli, 'All depends on the willing to serve God at any cost A norm from the Ignatian Exercises, from Fr. Bertoni's Retreat to the Seminarians and Priests. Will and wishful thinking: from Rodriguez. St. Teresa and resolved souls. 'It is necessary to think of Heaven at the end of an avenue ... 'Cf. the dream of St. John Bosco [1874]. Charity and mortification.

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10. MODUS

Fr. J. Nadal's Ignatian Exhortation – Spain 1554 - 1564⁶⁴

a. The Grace of the State of Religion in General:

[1] The Lord has given us all a great grace in calling us to the State of Religion, and so it will be helpful to see what is proper to this grace. This will serve as a simple Introduction to what needs to be reflected.

[2] The State of Religion [taking what theologians say about it] is a virtue which treats of that which concerns divine worship. Under this general sense, all religious Christians and the Christian religion are included, in that it is with this virtue according to which they all serve and honor the true God and offer him divine worship. And so it includes not only those who follow the Commandments of God alone, but also includes the counsels and the evangelical perfection, together with the commandments. However, those who pursue the precepts and the counsels are more properly said to be religious, and they more perfectly follow [in the objective sense] the Christian religion. It is in this latter manner that religion is taken in conformity to our proposal here. For this reason, it needs to be noted that our Lord not only seeks to be served in this way [one that is common to all religious, in which the devotees follow not only the precepts, but also the counsels] - but He seeks to be served and honored with particular honor and worship. And this is what every individual religious family is called to do. And in accord with the diversity of the particular worship and services that are offered to God that there are diversified the distinct religious families.

[3] And since all religious of the particular religious communities obliged to the divine worship, in the state of perfection, that person is the more religious who the more belongs to this and is obliged in it. One example would be a Brother who has three vows, who might be more obliged than a priest who has only one. And among those, who might have three vows, the one who serves is in a higher Grade.

And this is the meaning of a particular religious family: we call ourselves 'religious', because we make our vows in an approved religious family, dedicating ourselves in it totally to the divine worship in this particular manner in which the Lord has called us, as will be noted as we go on. As the text reads:

Where it is to be noted, among other truths, that special grace had been granted to the Society, so that it might sit well among religious communities, but also among the religious, loving them. And in this particular enjoyment there is

⁶⁴ P. Hieronymi Nadal: *Commentarii de Instituto Societatis Iesu*. Edidit P. Michael Nicolau, SJ. Romae: Mon. Hist. S.I. 1962, pp. 31- 35, 35-47, *passim*.

consolation, knowing that of itself, the grace of a religious vocation has been granted to others.

[4] This has to be said speaking speculatively about the state of religion in common, and in particular. However, coming to the practical level, it is necessary that the conversation should properly and rightly note that as our Lord seeks to assist His Church, He uses this manner: that He inspires a person, bestowing a special grace and influence upon this individual, which will then serve him in a particular manner, as He did with St. Francis. He gave this Saint an efficacious grace with which he would be helped for himself, and also for others, for the end for which we are all created. And so, coming together with him, there was brought together a body, and a congregation with that proper and particular nature of grace, which is then called a particular religious community. And so it was with all the others.

[5] In this same manner, God inspired our Father Master, Ignatius, communicating to him a grace which came into use, through him, which we now follow, and govern ourselves according to it. And this is our particular manner [modus] in which we differ from other religious families. And it is necessary that we experience this and rejoice in it. However, it is not necessary for other religious men to experience this as we do, as they have their own particular manner [modus] which it is necessary for them to follow.

[6] And there is no wonder that there is this diversity of graces and particular influences in the different religious families, since we see that giving each of the Sacraments the grace that we duly receive in them. Thus, each one of the Sacraments has its own particular grace, which is called sacramental grace, the grace of the sacrament. There is, for example, in Baptism that particular grace which purges the soul, and renews it, giving it a spiritual rebirth, which none of the other sacraments does. In like manner, Confirmation strengthens one in grace giving a firmness and constancy to the person confirmed. And the Eucharist nourishes and transforms the soul and unites it with a particular union. And so it is with the rest of the Sacraments.

And in this same manner, God bestows diverse graces into religious communities, with which He wills to be served in diverse manners. And this is also so that the Church might be clothed roundabout with varieties of graces, not only of the Sacraments, but also of religious families. But all these things and the same Spirit works, dividing to everyone according as He will [cf. 1 Co 12:11].

[7] And so it is to be noted that the virtues come to be particularized with that particular grace, working according to that particular manner [MODUS] and influence. And so, too, it is necessary that all of us work according to our manner of apprehending the virtues with this particular sentiment and special grace and divine influence. And this is the practice of our particular religious community. In this

Institute, there are particular matters that are not in other religious congregations, for example, that particular manner [Modus] of obedience, which is a special grace that of God our Lord has granted to the Company.

b. From the Very Beginning of the Company

[8] In order to know how the Company is a particular religious institute, it is necessary to see what beginning it had. To this, an answer is given in the beginning of the Examen Generale, where Ignatius speaks of the approbation of the Company: This minimal Congregation... [CSJ 1]. However, in fact, this was the ultimate beginning: that God, our Lord, out of His infinite goodness, moved our Father Master, Ignatius, by exciting within him his grace in a particular manner [modus], as was said above here in this text. God thus projected His Majesty to His Church and to the world, and assisted in two matters; i.e., that the letter and the spirit should come together; and secondly, that these be applied for the common usefulness of our neighbor. There may be found in some, the letter without the spirit; and in others, the spirit without the letter, as in persons not well educated and yet devout; there are also those who have both letter and spirit, but very few serve the Lord in this manner [modus] of providing for their neighbor with these:

There is to be noted here that those who follow the spirit without letters, and those who in prayer experience what they speak, and these often slip into error, especially when they do not know the manner of speaking [what scholastic theology teaches].

[9] The Lord then sought out someone who would serve him in this manner, and called our Father and Master, Ignatius, in an infirmity of his, and so on, and giving him from the outset to desire with great devotion, to pursue the greater honor and glory for His Majesty. And so, as he was in the world, he had the soul for great matters, and so gave himself over to the service of God. He would not remain content with little, but intensely desired and worked for he might the more please God in everything and with all perfection.

And he would often repeat this ideal many times in his Constitutions, i.e., for the greater honor and glory of His Majesty. And so it is necessary that all the members of the Company that we should hold this ideal before our eyes, with devotion, and that we are to seek to make this our inner spirit, to strive and to procure in all things the greater service and glory of God Our Lord, whether we read, or preach or eat, or whatever else we do, do all for the glory of God [cf. 1 Co 10:11]. And since the state of religion is nothing other than a state of acquiring perfection, it follows that that God, our Lord, employed to move our Father Master Ignatius in this manner [modus], and with these desires that to give him the spirit and the design of

a most perfect institute of religion and to excite this in him the ideal of forming a particular and new form of religious life.

His first task at hand was to conquer himself through penance, to learn through prayer, and then to help his neighbor. And Fr. Ignatius went through these steps in orderly fashion. For he underwent penance, and gave himself over to contemplation; then he exercised himself in the ministry in behalf of his neighbor, teaching and preaching to others, what he had first experienced within himself.

[10] Our Father Master Ignatius moved forward with these plans and divine motions, and took up the doing of penance, and committed himself to doing penance, thinking that this would please the Lord very much, in harmony with that which Christ began to preach, saying: Do penance! [cf. Mt 4:17]. And in this he experienced much, and drew from the experience a clear knowledge of what would be fitting that we should do who follow this spirit of his. It was in this period of his life that he maintained an extraordinary application to penance and he took the discipline three times a day, and dedicated himself to seven hours of prayer, sleeping on the ground, and eating only bread and water, and so on. Once he went seven days without eating or drinking to overcome his scruples; and he knew that so much penance was not fitting.

[11] This was his method of handling penance: pondering within himself, how he would be equipped to be a knight of Christ, he procured for himself a sack with a cord and a pole, and confessing in a general manner, and receiving Holy Communion on the Day of the Annunciation of our Lady in 1522, it was thus that he began to do penance.

[12] In this time, with our Lady guiding him, he began to treat of the interior of his soul and the variety of spirits, and the Lord gave him in this a great understanding and a very vivid sentiment regarding the divine mysteries and the Church. And at this time, he began to write, but he did not persevere in this.

At this time, Fr. Ignatius began to write a book about the Trinity, in the knowledge of Whom principally in Whom each day he had been most specially illumined. It is to be noted here that it is proper of the Christian way [*modus*] to believe in the Trinity of Divine Persons and the God Man [in this, the Christian way is distinguished from others – who, although they attribute to God other aspects, such as unity, infinity, and the like, this Mystery, however, they deny].

Fr. Ignatius went off to Jerusalem; others, who wanted to do so, were impeded. In this, it was made clear to us that they could get to this same Jerusalem, not bodily, however, but spiritually. This we did through meditations on the life of Christ.

[14] And thinking that in order to achieve this purpose, it was fitting for him to study, he did this in Spain, and then in Paris, studying philosophy and theology, and 9 companions joined him there in Paris. These needed a Formula for living, which is that which is now on the Papal Bull of the first confirmation⁶⁵. And he had papal approval only to accept 60 candidates, nevertheless Our Lord multiplied these as we will see, laying the groundwork for his work that was already underway.

These as their intent was sought, they first offered to us the vow of poverty, chastity and obedience.

[15] Having already seen something of the institution and foundation of the Company, let us now take a look at the Constitutions, how they were written. However, first there is to be noted that as God Our Lord founded the Church through many and great undertakings which He then gave to His Son, and to the Church which is His Body, and therefore, He also gave it increase – so, out of His infinite Mercy He has given us this grace to be similar to Christ in some manner, and to found the Company in this likeness, due to the persecutions, as were seen to arise, many in number and very serious which Father Master Ignatius underwent in Alcala', Salamanca, Paris and so on. These had their source not only from men, but also due to the very severe poverty that he experienced in Paris. Principally among many sufferings, there was continuous and grave illness that he suffered – and from his life of prayer, i.e., the affliction that he had for prayer, was somewhat taken away, due to his studies, as these were necessary. And knowing that this was the will of God, he went on studying with much diligence, and thereby giving us an example for that which it is fitting for us to do as we take up our studies in the Company. This means that we are not to neglect study for our yearning for prayer. These and other persecutions Fr. Master Ignatius endured in his person, in the likeness of Jesus Christ...

c. The Authority and Parts of the Constitutions

[20] This authority is such that no other set of Constitutions in the future would have it just this way. In order that these later Constitutions would have the authority of the Pope, of the Society, of the General, just as these Constitutions have, such support would be lacking to them. No other would be made and left as they presently are, by this particular Father General, i.e., the Founder of the Society, to whom in the very foundation and beginning God would have communicated this influence, and the grace by which he rules and governs the Society – who would doubt that this authority would be more abundant than every bestowed on all others? And this is the special grace and the privilege granted to us by God, who are in this very beginning of the Society

⁶⁵ This was received through the first Bull, of September 27, 1540, *Regimini Militantis*.

[21] There are three Parts of the Constitutions, i.e., the Examen, Constitutions, Declarations [66]. In addition to these, there are Rules [67]; but these last mentioned are not numbered within the Constitutions themselves. These Rules are proven to be necessary because the Constitutions are unchangeable and for their alteration and mutation it is necessary to assemble the Society in a General Congregation. The Rules though, are changeable, and these can be varied in accord with the time and place and persons involved; and so, as regards their firmness, that authority of the Constitutions is greater. Nevertheless, all of these are to be lived most diligently, and not a single iota of them is to be omitted, or neglected.

[22] The Examen [cf. CSJ nn. 1-133] is proposed, that they be examined according to these. These numbers are also called the Summa of the Society, and there are shown the Papal Bulls, and the like.

[23] There are ten Parts of the Constitutions, and this is the explanation of this distinction of them. The First Part [cf. CSJ nn. 134-203] [after the *Examen cum Declarationibus*] is about who is admitted into the Society; therefore, in the First Part there are treated the manner of the receiving, and of the recipients, regarding their qualities, probations, experiences, and the like.

And then if there might be found those who are not suited for the Society, in the Second Part [CSJ nn. 204-242] there is taken up the matter of their expulsion. For, there is among others, this special grace in the Society, i.e., of purifying and discerning who might be fitting, or not, for this Institute.

Then, the manner of training, instructing and conserving those who remain, is discussed in the Third Part [CSJ nn. 243-306].

In the Fourth Part [CSJ nn. 307-509: 17 Chapters] there is taken up the matter of the students and what pertains to the Colleges.

Concerning the form and reason of the vows according to each state of the Society, is treated in the Fifth Part [CSJ nn. 510-546].

And furthermore, in these the integrity of the Society is, and consists.

⁶⁶ The Jesuit Constitutions really are made up of four separate compositions: the Formula [containing the official Papal Documents establishing the Company]; the First, and General Examen nn. 1-134]; and its Declarations; the Constitutions proper, and their Declarations - these begin in CSJ 137, with the outline of the Ten Parts – in all, 827 units. These are all united together, with the exception of the Formula [which has its own numbering], in consecutive numeration, 1- 827. Originally, maybe there were four separate booklets – now brought together in one volume, with the title *Constitutions*.

⁶⁷ There have been published volumes of these early *Regulae*, and one of these is from Ignatius' time; cf. *Regulae Societatis Iesu. 1540-1556*. Monumenta Historica S.I. editio P. D. F. Zapico, S.I. Roma: 1948.

How, and who ought to be ruled regarding oneself [ad intra], is taken up in the Sixth Part [CSJ nn. 547-602]; here there is taken up obedience, poverty and something also about chastity is treated.

Then, how and who ought to conduct himself with regard to one's neighbor, is presented in the Seventh Part [CSJ nn. 603 – 654] [ad extra] where there is presented the Missions and those diverse ministries [68] for the betterment of one's neighbor

Since the Society is indeed a body, what its union ought to be, that of the members toward one another and with the head, is treated in the Eighth Part [CSJ nn. 655 – 718]; where it treats of the General and Provincial Congregations, the election of the General.

There is then treated in the Ninth Part [CSJ nn. 719 – 811], concerning a matter of the greatest weight, i.e., the qualities and the conditions with which the Father General should be endowed, concerning his office and authority. For God assisted Fr. Ignatius in this Part in a special way, who also has expressed himself in this in some manner; for when he says just what kind of person the future General should be, he manifestly shows what he himself is who has written these qualifications.

Then, the last and Tenth Part [CSJ nn. 812-827] teaches how the Society might be conserved and augmented toward its end which he intended.

[24] The Declarations are those annotations for the greater understanding of the Examen and the Constitutions. They are placed, so that the Constitutions themselves might not exceed a just quantity, as it is necessary for these to include only the substance of the matter, in a brief manner.

d. Annotations in the Constitutions [1556] [69] - God's Helps for the Whole Church - [Grace, in General]

[32] Up to this point, enough might have been presented concerning the matter of grace, in general, regarding the religious state. Now, something is to be said regarding the grace of our own Institute, under the leadership of Jesus Christ. And first, there is presented something in the manner of type, and a compendium. And then we will proceed with what we have proposed here

⁶⁸ St. Gaspar Bertoni emulates this in his *Original Constitutions*, and explicitly in his Part IX [CF ## 158-186], *De Professorum Gradu*. In particular CF # 185 notes; ... *per varia et propria suae vocationis munera...haec est specialis gratia huius vocationis, quae potentior est omnibus periculis et difficultatibus...*

⁶⁹ cf. P. Hieronymi NADAL. *Commentarii de Instituto Societatis Iesu*, edidit Michael Nicolau, SI. Romae: apud Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu. 1962, pp. 121-130.

[33] Our Lord and God, Triune and One, is infinitely rich in His mercies and pity [cf. Ep 2:4], as He always wins over what He sets out to do [cf. Ps 50:6; Rm 3:4]. Wherever sin abounds regarding us, there arises His abundant grace [cf. Rm 5:20], and help from His part. For He does not desert us, nor abandon us [cf. Jos 1:5; Heb 13:5]. But perfects and heals [cf. Dt 32:29; Ho 6:2; Tob 13:2], he humbles and raises up [cf. I K 2:7], and He mortifies and vivifies, He leads to the netherworld, and brings back again [cf. 1 K 2:6; Ws 16:13]. This most clement Father never permits us to be tempted but what we can bear [cf. 1 Co 10:13]; but he gives both to happen at the same time, both allowing the temptation and that from which we can escape from it, since He bestows upon us the greater faculty of sustaining, and the grace that is more abundant than the tribulation and the temptation, so that we might be above all difficulty and anguish, and furthermore, that we might draw from that sterility ever more abundant fruit.

[34] And so, if we consult the ages of the Church, very much greater were the graces than were the greatest anguish. For indeed what greater tribulation was there in the Church than that in which Christ acted out on the Cross? Indeed that was the fullness of the time, the age of age, and by far, the most glorious. There was supreme anguish after the Ascension of Jesus Christ; and the grace excelled in the Apostles, the Evangelists, and the Disciples of the Lord. There were ten atrocious persecutions of tyrants; and there came to the fore a most extraordinary yield of martyrs against these very monstrosities: the deaths of these were illustrious for the Church; and the more who went to meet their deaths, by this even more fruitful grace was heaped on the Church and many flocked to Baptism by the Divine mercy of our God.

[35] Nor indeed would anyone doubt in those times that there did not flourish through the grace of Jesus Christ, those who would embrace the state of Christian perfection to be acquired through the evangelical counsels, both by following some other way, as well as also in a perfect manner, through the vows. For indeed who would doubt in such a multitude of saints, in so much fervor of the Christian spirit, in so much hope and necessity of martyrdom, that there would not be very many who, through the counsels of Jesus Christ, committed themselves earnestly to that contest, to that victory and palm of martyrdom? For if for these martyrs there is the perfection of charity sought in the very first place, that they might lay down their soul for Christ, then if Christ would be suggesting efficacious counsels for the obtaining of the perfection of charity, would there not be those persons indeed fervent in the spirit of Christ; what would it mean if there were not many who would eagerly reach out for these means, through which they would arrive at that perfection, counseled by Jesus Christ?

[36] But should one desire the testimonies of writings and history to confirm this, even though these may not be frequent, neither are they totally lacking. And indeed

this is a marvel: that where you have the faith of God from the Gospels, the faith of the Church and the Saints, the witness of the spirit, with all of these presupposed, you would earnestly seek for yourself testimonies that are by far inferior; the fact that one would do this... I do not know what I would say; I need to be careful so that zeal might not impel me further... He who would experience this, it is seen that his faith is so expressed: since it confirms him in his own opinion, in his own understanding; for one who believes in his own judgment, and is led thereby in the matter of faith; what is more dangerous?

[37] Therefore, our God provided helps both for the early Church and for the ten persecutions; and apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Bishops and religious persons; and He so endowed these with his affluent grace, and by this grace, they were able to carry out His tasks, that they might defend the Church of God.

[38] Then what happened after these early times? Heretics rose up to attack the Church. Holy bishops and doctors appeared, the liberty of the counsels, various institutes of monks: in Egypt first, under Antony, and other Abbots; then, in Syria under Jerome; in Africa, under Augustine; in Greece, under Basil; in Italy, under Benedict; under the leadership of these the heretics were rooted out, the discipline of manners was embellished, the perfection of the Christian religion was exercised, and the universal Church, in its own, i.e., divine, splendor was both conspicuous and illustrious.

[39] Furthermore, our God then added other graces of religious communities, then through those two luminaries of the Church, the Order of Francis, and that of Dominic: and by these lights, the world would be illustrated right up to these present times. Almost by an extraordinary innovation of the monastic grace, those who were called in this manner [*modus*] to perfection might find their support, both to further the salvation of souls, as well as assisting in the burdens of bishops and their cares.

e. God's Helps for the Society - The Special Grace, in Particular

[40] Then, as the last of all these, our God has graciously bestowed on the Church the grace of this least congregation, out of His infinite wisdom and goodness; this divine influence, this divine movement of Jesus Christ, this virtue of the spirit and its vivacity, by which, our God, the most clement triune and one, called those whom He foreknew and predestined [cf. Rm 8:29] to the militia of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the total Gospel enterprise, for the perfection and the development of Christian perfection and charity; and he brought about a kind of abbreviated word of the monastic way of religious life [70].

⁷⁰ A *Compendium* [??]

[41] In this religious institute, not only did He include all the other institutes of the religious life, but also those matters that would bring together the institutions of the bishops and priests; in so far as having set aside all those matters which might prove to be a hindrance either to poverty, or those ministries and works which ought to confer on the procuring of the salvation and the perfection of one's neighbor, from this institution.

[42] For this Congregation has those vows common to other religious institutes, and it includes a two-fold form of life, namely the active and also the contemplative; and both of these pertain to it as a certain perfect and superior action so that it might be exercised in the salvation and perfection of souls; that both the active and contemplative life be so efficacious, that this be lived also in a superior fashion so that no active souls, and no contemplative souls might escape from the ministry of the Society. And finally, there might be others who would aspire to that superior activity which is proper to the responsibility of Bishops and therefore of those priests who have received the care of souls committed to them by the bishops.

[43] Likewise, the Society has from the primary responsibility of the bishops, that it might dispense the Word of God in both conferences and lectures, and in every ministry of sermon [presenting God's Word] [71]; and from the office of both bishops and pastors, that the Society might celebrate Masses, and administer the Sacraments.

[44] All these tasks, the Society so accepts as though from Christ Jesus, through the Church, so that the Institute does not accept the use of Choir [cf. Formula 8; CSJ n. 586], nor the practice of the monastic burials, or habits [cf. CSJ n. 577]; these practices the monks rightly employ. Neither does the Society admit of Episcopal dignity, such as jurisdiction [CSJ n. 817], nor honors, nor the revenues of investments, nor the regular care of souls [cf. CSJ n. 588], or any other obligation, other than what is her proper vocation. Moreover, she indeed sets aside all these usages, so that the members might be committed to the salvation of souls and to perfection, with ever greater humility, and more easily and more attentively.

[45] Put briefly: this is a certain imitation of the apostolic order [72] and its representation. We should not be ashamed of the grace of our God and of the Church. For God has not bestowed this grace of the religious life, as something to be hidden under the bed; rather, it should be placed in the candle-holder so that it might shine forth [cf. Mk 4; 21; Lk 8:16; 11:33; Mt 5:15]; and if God speaks these ideals into

⁷¹ This broad ministerial service of the Word of God is noted in the Jesuit Formula n. 1 ... *aliud quodcumque verbi Dei ministerium*.... Fr. Bertoni quotes this phrase in his CF # 163: *Verbi Dei quodcumque ministerium*, under the Part IX of his *Original Constitutions, De Gradu Professorum*.

⁷² For Fr. Bertoni, *Missionarii Apostolici* also implies assuming the Apostles' manner of living, as is noted from the Founder's frequent citation of the Acts of the Apostles [cf. CF ## 189; 226; 232] and the Early Church.

our ears in our rooms, He orders that these be preached on the housetops [cf. Mt 10:27]. What could ever bring it about that we would fear to confess the mercies of the Lord before all the living? [cf. Tb 12:6]. For indeed, for all this, who, of all those everywhere on earth, and who in the heavens, could be the counselor of God [Is 40:13; Rm 11:34], or who could say to Him: why have You done this? God chose to inspire this grace into the Church; the Church receives it, confirms it, approves it. Who are you, who could neglect or reject that grace, for indeed who are we that we could choose not to confess this, or preach this?

[46] Indeed, if one would be moved by the name, as though he would scorn the apostolic way of religion; then, so be it, let us be silent over the name apostolic; and let us judge the imitation of that way of life, and let us ponder the matter in pious reflection. For indeed there can be no controversy regarding names. For nothing will really not be of much help to us in what we are called to do, simply by what we are named, provided that we do this with the grace of Christ Jesus; since it is consecrated by the Church let us have that most outstanding name, that this least congregation of ours be called the Society of Jesus.

[47] But, let us look at the imitation of the apostolic state. First of all, the Apostles are called that they might know Christ [cf. Jn 2:37-39]. Ours are called to the first formation so that they might understand that grace which we receive from Christ, and that they might come to see the entire Institute of the Society [cf. CSJ nn. 18; 190]. Again, they are called Apostles so that they might follow Jesus Christ [cf. Mt 4:19-22]; that they might hear the faith from Him, so that they might arrange their conduct: briefly, so that they might take on the apostolic duty. Our men then go on to the second probation, which is conducted for the composition of their manner of life, then on to the studies of letters, and having been exercised and instructed in such things, they are admitted to the Professed Society [cf. CSJ nn. 16; 244; 289; 307].

[49] Apostles are then sent to preaching the Gospel to every creature [cf. Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15] and that they might administer the sacraments, i.e., that they might carry out the universal ministry of the Word of God; they take on the care of all souls. The Society is called for all these: it takes on the word of God in sacred conferences, lessons on the sacred letters; the teaching of children and the unlettered; in pious conversations, spiritual exercises, the administration of the sacraments⁷³— and briefly, to every ministry of the Word of God [cf. Formula, n. 1]. And the Society takes on the care of all souls from its own institute, not out of some other obligation, or jurisdiction.

⁷³ Fr. Bertoni offers a similar list of *Means by which his Institute is to promote the salvation of its neighbors*. In CF # 161-164.

[50] The Apostles pronounced vows of the counsels of Christ [74]. The Society has vows. The Apostles did not assume the habit of monks [which can be seen from the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Dionysius]; at the same time from the practice of the Roman Church, we accept that the Apostles did not make use of a dissimilar garment than the prelates and clerics of Rome wear. The Society admits of no other habit than that which is in use among the more honest priests [cf. Formula n. 8; CSJ n. 577]⁷⁵. The Apostles were not occupied in the signing of psalms and hymns; but neither did St. Gregory the Great wish that the Early Church might be committed to these matters. The Society does not make use of the choir [cf. Formula n. 8].

[51] Briefly: in addition to those matters which pertain to dignity, increase, jurisdiction, and to the conferral of two of the Sacraments, from her vocation the Society has all the rest, by which the apostolic task [76] might be imitated. For this reason not without merit do we profess ourselves to be the servants of the supreme and universal Pontiff the Pope, and of other bishops who by a legitimate succession, they have taken the place of the Apostles and their dignity.

[52] Therefore, in those matters in which souls may be helped, the Society embraces all of them, provided it can administer these in humility and poverty. For indeed ours is a vocation of the imperfect, and of a religious institute, through which we ought to strive forward toward perfection; ours is not of the holy and the perfect, which is the state of bishops. Therefore, since we have been called to the state of perfection to be acquired, this is the magnitude of the divine grace toward this least congregation: not only has it granted to us all other means to obtain that end, but also that which otherwise might seem difficult and dangerous [77], for us it becomes easy and smooth from the illustration of divine light, so that thus we constitute the great part of our spiritual advancement in it, if we become the more committed to the salvation and perfection of our neighbors.

f. The End and Grace of the Society

[53] Moreover, for the sake of removing these difficulties for the Church, Christ Jesus gave this grace of the religious life. The exposition of our Institute and the authority of the Apostolic Letters explain this. It is pointed out by these that this Society most especially was instituted for the defense of the faith and for its

⁷⁴ cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, II-II, q. 88, a. 4, ad 3^{um}; q. 186, a. 6 a. 1; Suarez, *De statu religioso*, Book 3, c. 2, nn. 9-10.

⁷⁵ Fr. Bertoni uses this same standard, in his *Compendium Rude*, CF # 6.

⁷⁶ This *apostolic task* seems to be what Fr. Bertoni intended by: *perfectum opus sacerdotale* [cf. CF # 7] ... *missionem apostolicam ...graviora ministeria...* cf. CF # 158].

⁷⁷ This line of thought has made its way into Fr. Bertoni's CF # 185, which Fr. Stofella maintains that the Founder 'spells out, verbalizes more completely', his *Compendium Rude* which is not made up of complete sentences, which become explicitated especially in CF # 185:... *haec quandque ardua et difficilis res est... name, haec est specialis gratia huius vocationi, quae potentior est omnibus periculis et difficultatibus...*

propagation ad for the profit of souls, as though this was to say that it was founded against the heretics and all infidels, and then for the confirming of the morals of Catholics from the norm of the faith and of the Christian religion.

[54] And even if these are not clamoring for attention, the calamities of our own times cry out loud and clear, with which the Church, the most holy Spouse of Christ, is afflicted and heavily burdened.

On one side, heretics demand attention, and on another, the Mohammedans, and both have been most atrocious, with their awesome strength, supreme potency, with their utmost discrimination of all of Christianity. And yet, as most extreme as all these seem to be, and really are, I have thought it a greater calamity easily, to be that by which, through most corrupted morals, both of fellow Catholics, as well as even supremely, if I do not say, uniquely, of the entire ecclesiastic order, and the most lost way of life and most pernicious examples of fellow Catholics, by which, the holy Church is devastated and dissipated. And indeed who would not pour out an inexhaustible font of tears and sorrows in so much pestilence and calamity of souls?

[55] On the other hand, to whom so much grace, such abundant benignity of our triune and one God, such vigorous and excellent assistance of God, would not all this make the human spirit great for helping those souls which are perishing? And, would all this not as an immediate result, lead to such harsh combat and bitter wrath, in so much victory over Lucifer, as though all this would not be totally drawn together, in so much wailing and anguish of the most holy Church, in so much stamping under foot of the blood and the mercy of Christ our Lord and God?

[56] Arise, o Lord, and help us! [cf. Ps 43:26] - Arise, why do You sleep, o Lord? [cf. Ps 43:23]. Arise, on account of Your holy Name; so that, I beg of You, the barbaric Mohammedans might not be able to say: 'where is the Church of Christ? Where is the triune and one God? Where is the man-God? Where is the merit of the Passion of Jesus?' And that they might not add atrociously and insolently that Mohammed is the supreme prophet of *Alla*.

[57] And again, so that the heretics might not say: where is the Roman Church? Where are her sacraments? And where the merit and necessity of works? Where is the invocation of saints? Where are the monastic communities and the vows – and numberless other questions of this type, and they would exult petulantly, and sing the victory chant of their doctor Luther, as though Satan would conquer the Church through both of these categories? Let not, I beg of You, Lord, Jesus Christ, that Your Blood, Your Spouse, Your Truth, Your faith be given over to into shame to the most proud demons, and to totally lower regions of hell.

[58] Call, I beg You, most holy and most clement Lord, call those whom You are going to call; send those whom you are to send [cf. Ex 4:13], to the province of Your

holy Society to be administered in dignity. For we are totally, on what can be said, are useless and inept; and nothing other than what you, Lord God, have decreed by Your grace and Your mercy, might not be impeded and corrupted by our ineptitude, error, negligence, sin, wretchedness.

[59] Therefore, the vocation of this least Society is great, a great institute through the outstanding grace of Jesus Christ. This grace has its select propriety of divine help, which is extended to all virtues, to all exercises, to all ministries and works, to the entire government and direction of the universal Society and of each of those who are admitted into it; so that we might attain the end which the Lord has established for us, and that we might pursue this strongly and efficaciously.

Concerning this property of the grace and the divine influence [from which proceeds the difference between religious institutes], must first be stated; then, regarding the extension to the tasks of the Society and the entire Institute. Listen, my beloved Fathers and Brothers in Christ Jesus; listen!

[60] First of all, the very grace of the vocation itself teaches this property, when anyone hears and assents to this grace; hence, one is rendered capable of the divine influence, which God has prepared to be dispensed for all whom He has disposed by His benignity to admit into the Society. For this received Grace brings it about that our minds might accept a certain spiritual strength from our God immediately, by which each might both experience His will in the spirit in this Institute, and also each one might be joined and acquiesce to that will, embrace it in his heart and taste its sweetness of spirit.

[61] Then, filled with good hope and confidence, each conceives that great and likewise, most sweet and constant desire that he be admitted into this Society, so that he might always live there, pour himself out, and serve in it; he accepts a great sense of divine assistance to carry out those challenges wherever the divine vocation leads; each imbibes that spirit, but which, as though being in a certain realm of wisdom, and spiritual principle [which at the same time attains to the memory and to the intellect and to the will], our mind, i.e., this three-fold faculty, he might have and almost at the same time, embrace all that pertains properly to the Institute of the Society, so that this might contain almost a single sense, one knowledge, and one preference.

[62] Here stands out that strength by which our Father Ignatius [that through whom our triune and one God wished to institute the Society] is able to dispose and constitute all that pertains to this Institute, and contains all. By this faculty, those who are called to the Society accept, in spirit the entire institute of the Society, so that those who occupy the roles of superiors might be able to govern others.

[63] But, I act with temerity and I work curiously, i.e., so that whatever is perceived in the spirit, I would like to present them by word, albeit an untrained one. Therefore, in one word, if I may say nothing, I have said all: that grace cannot be expressed; it cannot be felt and fulfilled by some deed. For witness to this matter I call on those, any and all, who have received this grace. For that which you accept, which you experience, which applies and impels you to this institute with such alacrity, such committed spirit, such hope, such zeal, so vibrantly, so constantly, I say that this is what I do not say, nor may you express this by word, but nevertheless, what we all experience in union and in the sense of the spirit in Christ Jesus, Who is our God, and blessed forever [cf. Rm 9:5].

[64] Moreover, from this proper sense of our Institute, it so happens that we embrace in a broad affection of charity all religious communities and all religious; so that we might have union in this matter, because we are all religious. For, neither can we feel the specific grace of our religious institute, unless we accept in good spirit, and consider as good at the same time in a general way the grace of religious life and the entire monastic vocation. We have not known the spiritual properties of other orders. For only they know these, who accept to live them.

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CHAPTER II

Special Grace of this Vocation.

The Grace Proper to the Company of Jesus [78]

In General, and then in Particular

[2] Our Reverend Father Vicar has directed me to give you this Domestic Exhortation on the spirit and the efforts of the Company in which the clemency of our Lord Jesus has deigned to gather us. The purpose of Fr. Vicar, and his intention, are that all the members of this Roman College might, following the Constitutions, renew their vows three, or four times a year, with even greater fruit.

[3] You know very well my own ineptitude to carry out this charge. I go forward, however, by the grace of God, to offer you some words in a practical manner for our

⁷⁸ This was a *Domestic Exhortation* given in the Roman College very early in January [the 2nd], 1557 – and it may be found in: *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio Loyola et de Societatis Iesu Initiis*. Romae: apud ‘Mon. Hist. Soc. Iesú, 1951, pp. 3-7; cf. also: Jerome Nadal. *Contemplatif dans l’Action. Ecrits spirituels ignaciens [1535-1575]*, o.c. pp. 213, ff. This was five months and a few days after the death of St. Ignatius [+ July 31, 1556], and Fr. Laynez, had already been appointed Vicar by the Founder, and was acting in this position, prior to his own election some 18 months later, in July 1558. He continued the Founder’s policy of sending Fr. Nadal through the Company with these *Exhortations*, presenting an authentic interpretation of the mind of St. Ignatius. [The paragraph numbers in brackets are found in the printed Latin original].

common edification – first of all, on the state and the grace of the religious life in general – and then on the particular grace, and the Institute of our holy Company.

[4] In order to liberate the world from the tyranny of the devil who had proposed to it, that of pursuing riches, honors, debaucheries and frivolities, the Lord Jesus, our Savior, willed that the principles of salvation might provide for all the way of the extreme opposite. It is by stamping underfoot all of these above-mentioned ways, through the observance of His commandments that that all would be Christian. With this purpose in mind, He has given to human beings a common grace by which all who choose to be Christians might observe the divine precepts and attend to the salvation of their souls. This is the first and common grace. We possess it in common with all Christians and we ought to have for it the greatest recognition.

[5] In addition to this common grace, the Lord has willed that there would be the monastic life for those who, in committing themselves in the way of the vows, would observe furthermore, the evangelical counsels and would thus tend to perfection. For this way of life, He provided a special grace for those who founded religious orders and for those who, after them, would follow along in their footsteps. St. Benedict, St. Dominic, St. Basil and the other Founders of different religious orders, having been endowed with a special grace. Sharing this with others, and by divine favor, they had a great number of disciples. These individuals, stimulated by their example, had recourse to special assistance of grace, which permitted them to adhere to such a way of life and to fulfill its requirements. The particular grace of the religious life is nothing other, in effect, than a special inspiration and a special assistance of God which enable those called to embrace and to carry out what is required by this particular way of life, divinely inspired and approved by the Church.

[6] Sharing as we do in this special grace of all religious, we ought always to address to the Lord our ceaseless and the most sublime praise. We should also bear a very great love for all religious, no matter to which each one of these they belong so that neither they, nor we, in our resistance to God might ever prove repugnant to God – which would occur if from heaven the Lord did not look down upon us in a very special manner.

[7] However, in conformity to our proposal here, let us take a look at that manner [modus] that the Company has received the special grace common to all religious orders and then, in similar fashion, to ponder the very special grace that has come to us with regard to them. Even though they all have their own proper grace, we need to reflect on our own. Let us then, pass in review some of the events that touched our own Reverend Father Ignatius and the entire development of the Company. Above all, the Company might be considered in the number of those other religious orders. The Company, as we believe, was divinely inspired at its origin, to our reverend Father Ignatius and his first companions, then approved as such by the Apostolic See.

The community has been fortified with each passing day up to the present moment with astonishing results, the increasing number of its members and the spiritual fruits it produces. As other religious institutes have their proper graces, so ours has had its in great number. This grace stands out the more above all in our obedience, which requires not only the material execution and the compliance of will, but the total abnegation of our intelligence, to the point of coming to judge that what has been commanded is the most perfect. This grace of ours shines out also in a certain vigor and particular aptitude in preaching, teaching and in exercising those other analogous ministries, and these examples cannot seem to be admired enough by all those who are witnesses of them. We ought, then, to receive this grace with a very particular gratitude.

[8] In that period when Luther was engaged in his detestable machinations, our Reverend Father was like a military leader who struggled with great ardor in order to achieve the military honors of this world - [however, he never killed anyone]. But, by God's Will he was seized from that was of life, when following a serious wound in the leg, he fell dangerously ill. This was the first grace – and no matter who it is who makes the comparison, each one could be able to find in a similar situation his own conversion, as is true regarding all other graces.

[9] Starting with this period in his life, he began to read with real application certain spiritual works, and to be buffeted by the violent flux and reflux toward this world, and then towards the service of God, but with this difference: that after the assault of the worldly thoughts, he would find himself always quite troubled and profoundly saddened – whereas, after the sublime holy thoughts that he would also experience, he realized that he was profoundly consoled. And beginning with this experience, through his discernment of spirits, he came to the decision in an absolutely certain manner that he preferred to serve God than the world. This is his second spiritual grace.

[10] But, in his service of God, he places as his fundamental base that he would always prefer to pursue that which would be to the greater honor and glory of God. This is why for the entire Company as its unique foundation and the sole rule on which all the constitutions and all the matters of the Company have been, and out always to be related.

[11] He then judged forthwith that the best for him for the service of God would be to hand himself over to a very harsh penance. And he put himself to this with some harshness, indeed, with five disciplines every day and other austerities beyond human strength, so much so that this excess moved him to find for his sons, this measure that we now find in our rules. There is in this still another grace ...

[12] From all this, he was elevated to an admirable illumination of spirit to the point that by the practice of prayer and by his spiritual contemplations, he saw into the divine mysteries more clearly than the light of day. And all this increased for him so much by his voyage to Jerusalem and through other pious exercises that the account of them would be astonishing. But, among the many others, his illumination of soul as most unique, that totally special and invisible grace that he received at Manresa near Montserrat, and to which our blessed Father customarily referred in all his decisions, so much so that even in Rome he governed the Company there, which each day assumed more importance for him.

[13] From all he came to an insatiable desire and a penchant to assist his neighbor: he would thereafter commit himself to being useful not only to himself, but equally to others.

[14] But as he hesitated then, undecided on the manner [*quonam modo*] on how to remain in harmony with his principle: ever more for the glory of God [*magis ad gloriam Dei*], he would come to realize this plan. He took cognizance on the numerous dangers of the errors that might happen upon one's own simple ignorance. From this time on, he came to experience imprisonment, persecution, suspicions of all sorts, on the occasion of what he undertook so excellently, according to his means, for the salvation of human beings. In total conformity with his inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he came to understand that he would have to study and to apply himself to the sciences for a greater glory of God and a greater profit of souls.

[15] He himself, at that time, was unlettered [*rudis*], knowing only how to write, so he committed himself to studies with a most dedicated application, first in Spain, and then later, in Paris. The question then that he put to himself was whether in committing himself to so great a work all alone, or rather with others. He then decided that he would have to provide himself with companions, whom he assembled, numbering nine.

[16] There still remained to him to decide whether this gathering would be constituted without approbation, or rather with the consent of the Holy See and go forward under the former of a Religious Order. It is this latter solution that was adopted in unanimous fashion. This is why, after much prayer and numerous consultations, our Company had on two separate instances⁷⁹, been approved by the Apostolic See to be counted among the number of other religious Orders of Christianity. Even though this was at the time the smallest of all of them, it would gradually come to have its members within her and those particular graces of her vocation and Profession.

⁷⁹ This is a reference to the two Papal Bulls: Paul III, *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae*, September 27, 1540 – and Julius III, *Exposcit Debitum*, July 21, 1550 – in the Latin edition [1949] – these are placed as the *Formula*, to the Jesuit Constitutions.

[17] It would then receive within her the Professed Fathers, the Spiritual Coadjutors, the Coadjutors for Temporary Matters, Scholastics and Novices. As for the organization of their studies, while the Brothers lived all together, they were content to have their instruction imparted to them from others, as was the practice in a number of cities in Spain; and then they came to teach themselves, as occurred in Rome where they founded and directed competed academic courses.

[18] If we were to bind all these matters into a kind of a fascicle, we would have much for which to render thanks to God and much to imitate in the example of our Reverend Father Ignatius, according to the authentic spirit of the Company – i.e., to renounce all that is worldly, and to allow the service of God to pass before the interests of this world. In this spirit, we always have in view that which is that which the most brings about the glory of God; thus, we do penance; we apply ourselves to spiritual contemplations; we thirst for the salvation of our neighbor; we pursue studies with ardor in this intention; we attach ourselves to our brothers by the indissoluble bond of charity; we allow our superiors, as vicars of Christ, the entire liberty to dispose of everything regarding ourselves; we always thank god for having willed to make of us members of this holy Company, and with all our strength we end always to advance worthily even unto death in our vocation, for the praise and the eternal glory of the One who is blessed, world without end, Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Leader, and our Guide.

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11. PORTRAIT

26th FEBRUARY 1809

[113.] We must make in ourselves a portrait of Jesus Christ.

From a little blot of ink on the original notebook, this date could be either the 25th, or the 26th. The entry seems to have been made in some haste – and the precise date would not make a great deal of difference.

This entry could very well have been inspired by a text of Fr. DaPonte in a Meditation on the Incarnation⁸⁰:

... God showed, in the last days, His Holiness and all His Virtues by impressing them on the God-made-man. He wanted Him to be a visible portrait of them all, so that we may be stimulated by His example to imitate them while he helps us by His grace to acquire them. In this way nobody can excuse himself from doing it...

⁸⁰ Fr. DaPonte, I, of Part 2, n. 3.

We want to report here a quotation from Fr. Surin's Spiritual Letters. Fr. Bertoni read with great interest his *Life* which he will quote also in his writings. That great Jesuit said:

*...What is needed is the image of Jesus Christ. It is this divine portrait which we have to draw in our hearts...*⁸¹

In the index of the more *notable matters* the word which refers to this quotation has the French *portrait*.

The *Formula*, then, represented a synopsis of their Form of Life, their Manner of Living, the manner of the image of their Profession. This was their self-portrait of their understanding of the "evangelical man": in order to be this, these words opened up a certain itinerary - it would only come to be understood by living it, by following this way.

This is the self-portrait⁸² of men who do not have any other point of view than the Lord Himself, no other objective than the Gospel lived and announced. There are described here those necessary traits for this way of life, exemplified by the men who lived it. They hoped for new vocations who would seek and desire nothing else other than the deliberate determination of imitating this manner of living. The goal was that this composition would reproduce in those who would join the condition of one being the Envoy of Jesus Christ. The ideal of the One Sent is that one who commits himself entirely to the One Who sends him, and who is totally for those to whom he is sent.

This eventual self-portrait, this Formula of Life, is a plan that would draw the following person:

1.] One who is an evangelizer, what does matter is having the faith [cf. Ga 5:6] - one who works out of faith, one whose life is a total commitment to service: *for it is not ourselves we are preaching, but Christ Jesus as the Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake...* [cf. 2 Co 4:5]. The sublime motivating force in this man's life is the divine service, as this was lived by Jesus Christ Himself, one who is committed to humanity and to its salvation: *... as the Father sent Me...*

2.] One who is voluntarily poor, and this way of life is accepted in order to place before one's eyes, God alone. The work is done out of absolute gratuity and for this to be the most clear and free manner of proclaiming Him, all is situated in a gratuity as a personal style and particular talent. Such a committed servant proceeds, offering all he does gratuitously, without receiving a stipend for his work.

⁸¹ Fr. Surin, *Lettres Spirituelles*. Tome I, Letter 24. Lyon 1843.

⁸² St. Gaspar Bertoni used this image of the need of drawing a portrait of Christ within us, in his *Memoriale Privato*: Feb. 26, 1809

3.] One who is ever available, whose interest is solely in serving the Lord. In whatever historical context the community may live, its whole body is called to be dedicated to the service of His Spouse, the Church, under the Roman Pontiff. Thus, the Vicar of Christ on earth might dispose of the Jesuit, commit his talents by making of each a Missionary Envoy as the Lord Himself did in His own life. We touch here the very heart of the Jesuit identity, and what specifies the existence of the “Company” of Jesus. Each one is called to be a follower of Jesus Christ, ever available, ‘abandoned’ to His Father. This is Ignatian “Christology”, and this is what the saintly Founder hoped to incarnate through these pages of his *Constitutions*, summarized in the *Formula*⁸³. This summary of the late Father General of the Society of Jesus seems to paraphrase the ideal as written by St. Ignatius over 400 years ago:

... ‘all of us, assembled together in this Company, have offered ourselves to the Supreme Pontiff, in so far as he is the lord of the flock of Jesus Christ. In this oblation, we made known to him that we are prepared in so far as within us all lies, and are disposed in Jesus Christ that should he desire to send us wherever he wills, we would rejoice in this. The reason behind this resolution of ours and which subjects us to his judgment and will, was in understanding that he would have a broader knowledge of what would be best for all of Christianity.’

4.] One who lives as a free man in a community of free men: these are men who commit themselves totally to the following of the Obedient, Poor Christ, to be disposed to whatever price is needed to realize the will of the Lord. Thus, anyone who, under divine inspiration, has enlisted in this militia of Jesus Christ, ought to be always prepared both day and night to pay this great debt. Thus, discernment is required regarding the best manner of proceeding, as would freemen, in accord with the Lord’s manner of moving ahead.

This manner of proceeding [*modus procedendi*] as a *communitas*, flows from the *con-vocation* of the Holy Spirit. Shortly, such a “community” should find itself to be a “body”, in which each one would come to experience his own theological condition as a “member”. No one is meant to be “solitary”, a “loner”, The “law of progress” is evident in this “community”, that becomes a “body” and will eventually be indeed an authentic “society”: all for the sake of realizing to the very best of its ability that evangelization that will be asked of it.

Such freedom can only increase, dependent upon that necessary foundation of abnegation of oneself⁸⁴. This will enable the greater initiative and the mobility of those who offer themselves to the community. Such was the lived experience of the

⁸³Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*. Sal Terrae, Santander 1981, p. 240.

⁸⁴cf. CSJ # 307.

first “Companions”, who were led by the Holy Spirit, as the *Formula* states, and subjected to that interior law of charity and love⁸⁵.

5.] A man proven, both in life and doctrine [cf. 1 Tm 4:16]: there is on-going, permanent spiritual and intellectual conversion, formation. This leads to an ever more gradual insertion into the ever more important Apostolic Mission, and further incorporation as a member, with the high point being the “Profession” of the four vows. The challenge is always that of new life, with ever more difficult challenges of the quality of each member’s following the One Who is sent. This “Institute” asks for men of profound humility and sublime prudence in Christ, and outstanding in their living of the Christian life and their grasp of letters.

6.] A man who becomes an expert in his response to the Gospel - one who is ready and able to be totally committed to the defense and the propagation of the faith and the advantage of souls. In this life-long conversion, the commitment to the Mission is the corner-stone of the on-going formation in life.

This challenging program is one that remains open to the varied means of the Word of God and of charity. It is a community commitment to doctrine, to the sacraments, to some of the works of mercy. It is a community that needs to adapt often to the changing pluralities, seeking ever new apostolic methods for the betterment of the Church. The Apostolic Mission in its height, requires the ministerial priesthood. It remains admitted that it is most difficult to fix in sentences a total commitment to the Apostolic Mission. This is the challenge that St. Ignatius offered, that has met with such success⁸⁶.

GENERAL SUMMARY

May this rather complicated summary of tradition help us to see the depths of the concern of St. Gaspar to: Copy - Follow – Imitate Christ Jesus in His vocation persevering in this quest of the lord until death. We might use St. Gaspar’s slogan to end here: *In the depths of one’s own nothingness, one finds God!*

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⁸⁵cf. CSJ # 134.

⁸⁶For these pages, cf. Ignacio Iglesias, SJ, “Introducción: Leer hoy la *Formula*”, in: *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús. Introducción y notas para su lectura*. Mensajero-Sal Terre. o.c., pp. 24- 40, *passim*.

D. St. PORTRAIT OF PASCHAL MYSTERY

[I] Suffering in God and Modern Theology

B. The Trinitarian Aspect of the Cross of Jesus Christ or the "Suffering of God"

[cf. International Theological Commission, 1981]

For historical or systematic reasons God's immutability or impassibility is often called into question in today's Theology, above all in the context of a Theology of the Cross. In that way different theological conceptions of the suffering of God have arisen. It is necessary to know how to separate false ideas from elements in accord with the biblical revelation. Since discussion of this problem continues, we limit ourselves to a first approach, which nevertheless seeks to point to a solution to the question.

1. The supporters of this Theology assert that their ideas can be found in the Old and New Testaments and in some of the Fathers. But the influence of modern philosophy has certainly had a greater weight, at least in the systematic presentation of this Theology.

1.1. Hegel was the first to postulate that for the idea of God to be comprehensive, it has to include "the suffering of the negative", that is, the "hardship of abandonment" ("*die Härte der Gottlosigkeit*"). In him there is a fundamental ambiguity: Does God have or not a real need of the world? After Hegel some Protestants and certain Anglicans developed so-called kenotic theologies, which are "Cross-centered". According to these the Passion of the Son touches the whole of the Trinity in different fashions and manifests above all the suffering of the Father who abandons his Son: "*Since he has spared not his own Son but has consigned him for all of us*" (Rom 8:32; cf. Jn 3:16). It also shows the suffering of the Holy Spirit, who in the Passion takes upon himself the "distance" between the Father and the Son.

1.2. According to many of our contemporaries, this Trinitarian suffering is rooted in the very divine essence itself; according to others, it is based on a certain emptying of himself on the part of God the Creator, who in some sense binds himself to human freedom or, in virtue of a pact, freely forces himself to hand over his Son—a fact that they say makes the suffering of the Father deeper than all the suffering of creation.

In recent years a few Catholic authors have made similar suggestions, maintaining that the principal role of the Crucified consisted in manifesting the suffering of the Father.

2. One could often suppose from the Old Testament, the divine transcendence

notwithstanding (cf. Jer 7:16–19), that God suffers because of the sins of men. Perhaps not all the expressions can be explained as simple anthropomorphisms (see, for example, Gen 6:6: “Yahweh repents that he had made man on earth and he sorrows about it in his heart”; Deut 4:25; Ps 78:41; Is 7:13; 63:10; Jer 12:7; 31:20; Hos 4:6; 6:4; 11:8ff). Rabbinic theology is even stronger in this respect and speaks, for example, of a God who abandons himself to lamentation because of the Covenant, which he has made and which constrains him, or because of the destruction of the Temple; and at the same time affirms the weakness of God when faced with the powers of evil (cf. P. Kuhn, *Gottes Trauer und Klage in der rabbinischen Überlieferung* [Leiden, 1978], pp. 170 ff, 275 ff).

In the New Testament, the tears of Jesus (cf. Lk 19:41), his anger (cf. Mk 3:5), and the sadness he feels are themselves also manifestations of a certain way of behavior on God's part. In other places it is stated explicitly that God gets angry (cf. Rom 1:18; 3:5; 9:22; Jn 3:36; Rev 15:1).

3. Without doubt the Fathers underline (against the pagan mythologies) the “apatheia” of God, without denying in this way his compassion for the suffering of the world. For them the term “apatheia” indicates the opposite of “pathos”, a word that means involuntary suffering imposed from the outside or as a consequence of fallen nature. When they admit natural and innocent suffering (like hunger or sleep), they attribute these to Jesus Christ or to God inasmuch as he feels compassion for human suffering (Origen, *Horn, in Ez. 6, 6; Comm. in Matt. 17, 20; Set. in Ez. 16; Comm. in Rom. 8, 9; De prin. 4, 4, 4*). From time to time they use a dialectical form of expression: God has suffered in Jesus Christ in an impassible fashion because he has done it in virtue of a free choice (Greg. Thaum., *Ad Theopompum* 4-8).

According to the Council of Ephesus (cf. the letter of St. Cyril to Nestorius: *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, 3:42), the Son makes his own the sufferings inflicted on his human nature (oikeiosis). Attempts to reduce this proposition (and others like it in the Tradition) to a simple “manner of speaking” do not sufficiently recognize its profound meaning. But the Christology of the Church does not allow us to affirm formally that Jesus Christ could suffer according to his divine nature (cf. DS 16, 166, 196 f., 284, 293f, 300, 318, 358, 504, 635, 801, 852).

4. Despite what has just been said, the Fathers cited above clearly affirm the immutability and impassibility of God (e.g., Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4, 4). Thus they absolutely exclude from the divine essence that mutability and that passivity that would permit a movement from potency to act (cf. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, q. 9, a. 1c). Finally, the following considerations have been taken into account in the Tradition of the Faith of the Church to clear up this problem.

4.1. With regard to the immutability of God it must be said that the divine life is inexhaustible and without limit, so much so that God has no need whatever for creatures (cf. DS 3002). No human event could gain for him anything new or actuate in him any potentiality whatsoever. God, therefore, could not be subject to any change either by way of diminution or by way of progress. “Therefore, since God is not susceptible to change in any of these different ways, it is proper to him to be absolutely immutable” (Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, q. 9, a. 2c). The same affirmation is found in Sacred Scripture with regard to God the Father, “in whom there is no variation or shadow due to change” (Jas 1:17). But this immutability of the living God is not opposed to his supreme liberty, something that the event of the Incarnation clearly demonstrates.

4.2. The affirmation of the impassibility of God supposes and implies this way of understanding his immutability, but this is not to be understood as though God remained indifferent to human events. God loves us with the love of friendship, and he wishes to be loved by us in return. When this love is offended, Sacred Scripture speaks of suffering on the part of God. On the other hand, it speaks of his joy when the sinner is converted (Lk 15:7). “To suffer is a more sane reaction and closer to immortality than complete insensibility” (Augustine, *En. in Ps.* 55, 6). The two aspects need each other. If one or the other is neglected, the concept of God as he reveals himself is not respected.

5. Modern and medieval Theology have underlined more the first of these aspects (cf. 4.1). In reality, the Catholic Faith today defends the essence and the liberty of God and opposes exaggerated theories (cf. above, B, 1). But the other aspect (cf. above, 4.2) merits further attention.

5.1. Today man desires and searches for a Divinity that will be omnipotent and certain but that does not appear indifferent; one, moreover, that is full of compassion for the miseries of man and in that sense “suffers with them”. Christian piety has always rejected the idea of a Divinity indifferent to the vicissitudes of creatures. It is even inclined to admit that, just as “compassion” is among the most noble human perfections, it can be said of God that he has a similar compassion without any imperfection and in an eminent degree, namely, the “inclination of commiseration ... and not the absence of power” (Leo I, DS 293).

It is maintained that this compassion can coexist with the eternal happiness itself. The Fathers called this total mercy toward human pain and suffering “the passion of love”, a love that in the Passion of Jesus Christ has vanquished these sufferings and made them perfect (cf. Greg. Thaum., *Ad Theopompum*; John Paul II, *Dives in misericordia*, 7; AAS 72 [1980]: 1199ff).

5.2. As far as the question of the “suffering of God” is concerned, there is undoubtedly something worth retaining in the expressions of Holy Scripture and the Fathers, as well as in some recent theologies, even though they require clarification as shown above. This should perhaps also be said with regard to the Trinitarian aspect of the Cross of Jesus Christ. The eternal generation of the Son and his role as the immaculate Lamb who would pour out his precious blood are equally eternal and precede the free creation of the world (cf. 1 Pet 1:19ff; Eph 1:7). In this sense, there is a very close correspondence between the gift of divinity that the Father gives to the Son and the gift by which the Father consigns his Son to the abandonment of the Cross. Since, however, the Resurrection is also present in the eternal plan of God, the suffering of “separation” (see above, B, 1.1) is always overcome by the joy of union; the compassion of the Trinitarian God for the suffering of the Word is properly understood as the work of most perfect love, which is normally a source of joy As for the Hegelian concept of “negativity”, this is radically excluded from our idea of God.

We have learned that in attempting to reflect on these matters human and theological reasoning encounter some of the greatest of all difficulties (such as “anthropomorphism”). But in a remarkable fashion they also encounter the ineffable mystery of the living God and realize the limits of thought itself.

CONCLUSION:

We neither can nor wish to deny that the picture we have presented of our researches is indebted to modern scientific Theology. All the same, the reality we have studied, i.e., the living Faith of the whole Church in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, tends—beyond the frontiers of particular cultures—to achieve an ever-greater universality in the knowledge and love of the mystery of Jesus Christ. As the Apostle Paul made himself “all things to all” (1 Cor 1:22), we in our turn must insert the evangelical message concerning Jesus Christ more deeply into all the languages and cultural models of different peoples. A task of the greatest difficulty!

We can accomplish it only if we can remain in continuous dialogue with the Holy Scripture, with the Faith, and with the Magisterium of the Church, but also with the riches of the Traditions of all the particular Churches and of human experience lived in every culture in which the action and effects of the Holy Spirit can be present (cf. GS 44; AG 15, 22; Paul VI, *EN* 64 [AAS 68 (1976): 54f.]; John Paul II, *FC* 10 [AAS 74 (1982): 90f.]). We are encouraged to press on toward this goal by recalling the words spoken to the Apostles: “You shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and in Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

[II] St. PAUL Shares in the Suffering of Jesus

THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS [Ph 3:10].

A Study of St. Paul's Doctrine on Christian Suffering.⁸⁷

[SYM-PASCHEIN]

Presentation:

Rm 8:17-18: ...*But, if we are children, we are heirs as well; heirs of God, heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him...*

2 Co 1: 4-5: ... *He comforts us in all our afflictions, and thus enables us to comfort those who are in trouble, with the same consolation we have received from Him. As we have shared much in the suffering of Christ, so through Christ do we share abundantly in His consolation...*

2 Co 4:8-10: ...*We are afflicted in every way possible, but we are not crushed: full of doubts, we never despair. We are persecuted but never abandoned, we are struck down but never destroyed. Continually we carry about in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that in our bodies the life of Jesus may be revealed...*

Ph 3:10:... *I wish to know Christ and the power following from His resurrection; likewise to know how to share in His sufferings by being formed in the pattern of His death... Thus do I hope that I may arrive at the resurrection from the dead.*

Ga 6:17: ... *for I bear the brand marks [the stigmata] of Jesus in my body...*

Col 1:24: ...*even now I find my joy in the suffering I endure for you. In my own flesh I fill up for what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of His body, the Church...*

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sym- Compounds and Equivalents

1 Co 12:26: ...*that all the members may be concerned for one another. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members share its joy...*

2 Co 7:3: ... *I do not condemn you. I have already said that you are in our hearts, even to the sharing of death and life together...*

⁸⁷ Barnabas Ahern, CP. "The power of His resurrection and the Fellowship of His Sufferings", in: "The Fellowship of His Sufferings. A Study of St. Paul's Doctrine on Christian Suffering." [Ph 3:10]. Extract from Doctoral Thesis. Catholic Biblical Quarterly. Vol. XXII, 1960, pp. 1-32

Ep 2:21-22: ... *Through Him the whole structure is fitted together and takes shape as a holy temple in the Lord. In Him you are being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for the Lord in the Spirit...*

Ep 3:6: ... *It is no less than this: in h Jesus the Gentiles are now co-heirs with the Jews. Members of the same body and sharers of the promise through the preaching of the Gospel...*

Ep 4:16: ...*Through Him the whole body grows with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament builds itself up in love...*

Col 2:19: ... *such a one should be in close contact with the head. The whole body, mutually supported and upheld by joints and sinews receives a growth from this course which comes from God...*

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"In Christ Jesus" ⁸⁸

In the writings of St. Paul there is a long series of unusual words, most of which can be translated into another language only by an uncouth expression, or a circumlocution. The Apostle has invented them, or revived them, in order to give a graphic expression to the ineffable union of Christians with Christ and in Christ.

Such are: *to suffer with Him; to be crucified with Him ; to die with Him; to be buried with Him ; to rise from the dead with Him; to live with Him; to be made alive with Him; to share His form; to share his glory; to sit with Him,, to reign with Him; to be conformed with him; united with Him, co-heir with Him.*

To these can be added: co-partner – con-corporate - built together – there are also other verbs designating the intimate union of Christians with one another and with Christ. Here is a list of verbs as found in the Vulgate:

- compati [Rm 8:17; 1 Co 12:26];
- simul crucifigi [Rm 6:6];
- configi cruci [Ga 2:20];
- commori [2 Tm1=2:11;cf. 2 Co 7:3];
- consepeliri [Rm 6:4; Col 2:12];
- conresuscitare [Ep 2:6; passive: Col 2:12 3:1];
- simul vivere cum [Rm 6:8];

⁸⁸ Ferdinand Prat, SJ, *The Theology of St. Paul*. Tr. By John L. Stoddard. Westminster MD: Newman 1927, Vol. II, pp. 18, ff.

- convivere [2 Tm 2:11];
- convivificare [Ep 2:5; Col 2:13];
- configurari [Ph 3:10]
- conglorificari [Rm 8:17];
- consedere facere [Ep 26];
- conregnare [2 Tm2:12; cf. 1 Co 4:8];
- coonformis [Rm 8:29; Ph 3:21];
- complantatus [Rm 6:5];
- coheres [Rm 8:17; Ep 3:16];
- comparticipes [Ep 3:6; 5:7];
- concorporealis [Ep 3:9];
- coaedificari [Ep 2:22];
- constructus [Ep 2:1; Col 2:19];.
- compactus [Ep 4:16];
- connexus [Ep 4:16].
- con-suffering [SYM-PASCHEIN]

The communicatio idiomatum between Christ and Christians is almost complete.

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Introduction:

[1] In conversion, Paul received new life – he received directly from the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, the messianic Gift of the Holy Spirit. He had come to “know” the Lord Jesus Ph 3:10] in the power of the resurrection. In conversion he also came to know the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. There is joined the basic thought joining death and resurrection – as two segments of the one mystery]”cf. the “Integral” Stigmata, i.e. the Sorrowful and Glorious aspects of the one mystery!– these are two inseparable aspects of the same salvific mystery [cf. 1 Th 4:14; 1 Co 15:3-4; 2 Co 5:15]. This holds true in the lives of Christians [Rm 6:4, 8, 11; 8:13; Ga 2:19; Col 3:3].

[2] It is not easy to determine the precise application of this theme, the fellowship of His sufferings – to which we believe are united by the intrinsic [sacramental identity] bond brought about by Baptism – strengthened in Confirmation, nourished in Eucharist. There are many opinions here:

- on one extreme there are those liberal scholars who would reject any and all intrinsic bond between the suffering of Christians and those of Christ;
- the other extreme would fuse the present sufferings of Christians with the historical sufferings of Christ, by claiming a lasting CONTEMPORANEITY⁸⁹ for Jesus' Passion.

[3] We will analyze here Paul's true meaning regarding the extent that the faithful participate, share in the meritorious sufferings of the Redeemer of the world.

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A. Suffering in 1 & 2 Th

1. The early Church was clear on this: Through many tribulations [thlipseon] we must enter the kingdom of God... The conviction is that the authentic Christian lives in a climate of real suffering. St. Paul mentions this often in Th [cf. 1 Th 1:3, 6; 2:19-20; 3:9; 5:16]. All of this is part of the looking forward eagerly to the coming of Jesus [cf. 1 Th 1:3, 10; 3:13]. This is an OT idea: those who please God must suffer [Ps 33:20; Si 21:1-11; Ws 2:12-20; 3:4-6]. This is the way traced out for all the *Anawim* [Zc 13:8-9; Mi 3:1-4; Zp 3:8-13]. The early Church lived this ideal the first Christian communities lived in expectation of the Messianic Kingdom and its fulfillment [cf. Ac 3:20-21; 1 Co 7:29-31; Rm 13:11-12].

2. Suffering is no accident it is a necessity for all to some extent – the struggle between good and evil, has begun – the mystery of iniquity is at work [cf. 1 Th 2:, 18; 3:5] is at work. Paul's central concern, however, are those trials that accompany the propagation of the faith – thus he suffers Christ's *stigmata* apostolically - [cf. 1 Th 1:4 6; 2:2, 14-15; 3:1-7]. For Paul, contemporaneity would mean there is no break between the sufferings of the present moment and the eschatological crisis.

3. Paul's auxiliary virtue for suffering is perseverance, as it is for Christian Hope [cf. 1 Th 1, 3, 10; Rm 2:7; 8:25; Col 1:11]. Patient endurance of trials fills the Christians with a hope-filled joy. It is not so much for its passing reality that Christian suffering is accepted –as the Messiah has come.

⁸⁹ cf. Kierkegaard's view. Cf. C. Fabro, CSS, and his reflection on St. Gemma Galgani sharing in the sufferings of Christ for sinners.

4. In the Christian mind, suffering is the CONTINUATION of the *thlipsis* that Jesus inaugurated – there is a most interior bond between the sufferings of the Christian and those of Jesus Himself, based on the intimate sacramental union of the Christian with the Christ.

5. The suffering Christians are IMITATORS of Christ. The key is suffering with some joy. The conformity between the suffering Christ and the suffering Christian arises from their common adherence to the designs of God that all who attain messianic glory must pass through the MESSIANIC TRIALS Paul's concept of imitating Christ involves a much more intimate bond.

6. The Greek word from which the English *mimic* is based always implies sustained moral effort. There is here the central theme: MASTER-DISCIPLE [cf. 1 Th 4:2-3; 5:18] The role that Christ plays in all this is reflected in Paul's: IN CHRIST JESUS [cf. 1 Th 1:1; 2:14; 3:8; 4:1, 2; 3:12, etc.] This refers more to an intrinsic bond, that Christ forms His disciples by actual, continuing influence from within. The imposed messianic suffering on the Savior, flows from the intrinsic necessity of living the pattern of life that flows [when unhindered] inevitably from inward communion with Him – with the One Who suffered messianic trials during His earthly sojourn.

7. In Paul's view, CRUCIFIED JOY with which the Christian imitates Jesus is a gift of the Holy Spirit [cf. 1 Th 1:6] – the Spirit is present in the Faithful as God's permanent Gift [ccv. 2 Th 2:13]. The Lord's role is to direct our hearts into the love and patience of Jesus Christ. The objective genitive of Christ's own suffering, becomes the object of the Christian's patient waiting, perseverance.

8. The subjective genitive of Christ's suffering would imply that Jesus' is not only the exemplar, but is the EFFICIENT CAUSE of Christ's patience. Christian PATIENCE, PERSEVERANCE is both inspired by the example of Jesus Christ and actually bestowed by Him.

9. Admittedly, in the style of this first Pauline composition, attention is the more fastened on the *parousia* and his through is strongly nuanced by the eschatological outlook of late Judaism and early Christianity.

[B] Suffering in Paul's 'Great' Epistles

1. 1 Co: there is found here the relationship between human weakness and the suffering responding to the *dynamis* of God.

a. Salvation is not some philosophy – it is based rather on a fact: the Son of God died in His human nature on the Cross. The resultant power presupposes that attitude of total dependence on God, in the *anawim* of the Psalms. With Isaiah [cf.

2:10-17; 7:3-7; 8:12-18; 12:1-6 30:1-5, 12-15, etc.] Paul sees salvation depending not so much on human strength, but on God, so that all glory is His.

b. God has chosen what is constitutionally 'weak' and 'foolish' to accomplish His greatest Mercy so that the Faithful might experience how fully the mystery of this plan fully of the power and wisdom of that salvific influence which is His [1 Co 1:17-35]. The paradox unfolded by Paul is that the faithful will find in tribulation a source for security – in despoiling themselves from all exaggerated self-confidence, the trusting Faithful finds support in God. There is throughout a constant mistrust of human means. Paul sees and shares his experience of "power-in-Weakness" in his own preaching used to confound, convert the learned [1 Co 1:21; 2:3-5].

2. Romans & Galatians: the role of suffering as the effect of BAPTISMAL UNION WITH CHRIST: throughout Paul manifests an enthusiasm for the anticipated resurrection [Rm 4:25].

a. The Christian's present union with Christ is the source of the dynamic activity of the Spirit within the Faithful bestowed by God. His constant allusion to Christian life as LIFE IN CHRIST is the basic kernel of his message that Paul effectively has handed on.

b. Equally fundamental to his thought is the truth that Christ died and rose again as the EMBODIMENT and REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL men and women. The CORPORATE PERSONALITY idea of OT mentality is essential also to understand Paul.

c. Thus for Paul, BAPTISM is both TOMB/ WOMB The *soma*- person of the Christian is untied to the soma- Person of Jesus Christ [cf. 1 Co 6:15; Ga 3:27-28]. For Paul, the Christian lives earthly life totally plunged, immersed into the Life, Death, resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. [cf. Rm 6].

d. Jesus' was a death of total love expressed as abject obedience. Jesus entire mentality is revealed as prompted and accompanied by AN INTERIOR ACT OF CONSUMMATE OBOEDIENCE to the Father and an ARDENT LOVE FOR HUMANITY INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. Sacramental death marks the 'point of departure' for an altogether new life – in which the Christian remains always 'dead to sin' but alive to God. [Rm 6:11].

e. This concept of BAPTISM influences the whole Pauline program of the Christian life. The Faithful Baptized remain members of the body of Christ – and the power of the Holy Spirit is ever in them to center life on God, to maintain death to sin and to self – to be alive to God in Christ Jesus [cf. Rm 6:11; Col 3:3].

f. Rm 8: penetrates deeply into this 'death principle' the Holy Spirit is always active within anyone in union with Jesus Christ. The Inclination of the Spirit is life and peace. All are led by the Spirit to be children of God, heirs of heaven. Unbridled flesh turns one away from God and leads to sin and death [Rm 6:5].

g. CON-CRUCIFIED [cf. Ga 2:19; Rm 6:6] – this is a description of the continuance of the Baptismal contact with the Risen Lord – they who belong to Jesus have crucified their flesh. Christian life an enduring paradox – the Christian lives on an eschatological plane – already sharing in the risen Lord, the Holy Spirit – thus the Faithful believer lives the life of Christ alive within [Ga 2:20]. The Holy Spirit has not transformed the WHOLE MAN, the WHOLE WORLD. Thus, as is evident the present Christian life shares only imperfectly in redemption, not yet 'integrally'. The "old self" lives crucified with Him.

h. The actual process of dying is always painful – it requires on-going separation from will that nature clings to. Christ came 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' [Rm 8:3] Love and obedience filled Jesus' human soul, gaining power to effect every good.

i. THE DAILY DYING OF THE CHRISTIAN IS A PROLONGATION OF CHRIST'S OWN DEATH – the abnegation of Christian service is truly a sacrifice. Such experiences renew in the member either state of death which love and obedience produced in Jesus. There is thus the intimate bond between the death of Jesus and the inevitable conflict and suffering of Christian life.

j. Paul affirms an intimate bond between the death of Christ and the inevitable conflict and suffering of the Christian life. This Baptismal Bond rests on the truth, so often repeated by Paul, that the Principle of Death in both Jesus and the Christian is one and the same. Because the faithful and the Redeemer are intimately united by Baptism as Body and member – both share the same Holy Spirit, whose activity inspires death which loving obedience enjoins to the Will of God

3. Rm 8:17-18 Suffering with Christ:

a. The theme of Rm is on union with Christ in SUFFERING AS WELL AS DEATH - as the earlier 1 & 2 Tm emphasize union with Him in the eschatological ordeal. The Death Principle is identified by Paul as the activity of the Holy Spirit Who infuses the life and love of the glorious Son of God [cf. Rm 8:2, 5-9, 12-23 – insuring by His very presence the certainty of glorious resurrection [Rm 8] . Since we SUFFER WITH HIM we are to be GLORIFIED WITH HIM, heirs with Him.

b. The sufferings that are endured are intimately, sacramentally connected with the life of Christ. The struggles of the Christian life are all a necessary consequence of union with Christ. We live in eschatological tension of trial between

the two appearances of Christ. The SUFFERINGS OF THE PRESENT TIME are a SUFFERING WITH CHRIST.

c. Some rather blandly interpret suffering with Christ by focusing attention on a bond between the sufferings of the Christian and the Historical Passion of the Savior. However, Paul has not fully developed this theme here – Paul was much taken up with Christ's Death – because it constituted with the resurrection the unique cause of salvation. Jesus is not thought of by Paul as some heroic individual – rather, it was Christ's dying and rising as ONE WHO BORE IN HIS OWN PERSON THE DESTINY OF GOD'S CHOSEN FAITHFUL.

d. The living Christ, our Lord and Spirit, is On in Whom we share and reproduce - His death and resurrection within our own experience. Paul emphasizes union with Christ in the salvific mysteries of death and risen life – it is interesting to note that Paul does not explicitly invent terms for co-praying, co-fasting, co-fighting temptations: although he constantly presents the life of the Baptized as IN CHRIST JESUS.

e. For Paul, SALVIFIC BAPTISM unites the Christian to Christ – thus conferring a share in the death-resurrection constituting the essential salvific experience of Christ, the CORPORATE PERSONALITY – we are not only IN CHRIST and in grace, CONSTANTLY WITH HIM. In the Mystical Body, both Head and Member share the same principle of life and death. Each of the Faithful is endowed, gift with a true share in the salvific death-resurrection of the Savior. While he does not IDENTIFY Christian suffering and the salvific suffering of Christ – he does constantly applies these expressions to INNER UNION with Christ's salvific efficacy. The references to the historical sufferings of Christ are quite numerous [cf. 1 Th 1:6; 2:14; 1 Co 11:23; 2 Co 8:9; Rm 15:3-4; Ph 2:5-11; 1 Tm 6:13; Rm 5:8-10].

f. For many interpreters, Christ's death, a unique experience, must be applied repeatedly as a daily dying to all that is evil. Suffering with Christ and the same formula as putting to death. Paul's thought includes a BOND OF RESEMBLANCE between Christian suffering and the Savior's Passion. Christians are called to manifest the dispositions of Christ in meeting their trials in life. Paul was much aware of the BOND OF RESEMBLANCE between Christians and the suffering of Christ.

g. However, this theme indicates the INTIMATE BOND that unites the Christian to Christ – as the Faithful undergo the ordeal of the Christian life that opened with the Savior's death. This theme dominates Paul's Christology.

4. 2 Co [very personal response to Paul's critics doubting his Apostolic 'credentials'] : Conjoined Themes of Rm & 1 Co:

a. Because of BAPTISMAL UNION Paul's sufferings, his apostolic 'stigmata' [Ga 6:7] also allude to a NEW CREATION. Because of the Sacramental Baptismal Union and its effects, Paul's sufferings truly belong to Christ not only through some extrinsic reference – but there remains an INTRINSIC, Sacramental BOND which unites the Member to the Body of Christ – the Savior's Death is truly the effective principle of all Christian suffering.

b. Apostolic Labor, like the entire Christian life, needs to follow the rule of all divine activity: Power through Weakness, that all glory belong to God alone [cf. 2 Co 1:9; 4:7; 1 Co 1:31]. The Apostolic life involves struggle and suffering – leads to tension, persecution. Paul could glory only in the Cross of Jesus Christ and in his own infirmities [cf. 2 Co 12:5, vv. 9, f.].

c. Among Paul's weaknesses was a painful personal experience, his THORN IN THE FLESH. it is in this challenging back-ground in which the true power of God is at work – there will be a fruitful result of the sufferings undergone, when lived with patience. Paul learns to glory in his weakness [2 Co 12:9-10; cf. v. 5]. Jesus was crucified through weakness but lives through the power of God [cf. 2 Co 13:4]. Ordeals abound in the Christian life especially in the ministry. All of this is sharing in the sufferings of Christ.

5. 2 Co 1:4-7: s the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also through Him will comfort abound. Whether we are afflicted, or comforted, the serves to strengthen the Corinthians for the endurance of His sufferings.

a. As has been seen it seems unlikely to many interpreters that the Corinthian sufferings are to be identified with those of the historical sufferings of Calvary. Others emphasize rather that all our sufferings are accepted in love and obedience these sufferings are truly "His" – thorough His Spirit, He is the efficient cause of all Christian experience. This is the IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCE of baptismal union with Christ – this is the quality which provides the richest value to a;; sufferings – those of converts, those of the Apostles.

b. The Christian life in a sacramental way is the union with Christ in His death-resurrection. This SACRMAENTAL, BAPTISMAL UNION between the Body and the Head involves a LIFE-PROCESS – since the Holy Spirit leads the Christian to renew constantly the death of Christ in order to continue living HIS life [Rm 8:3]. The sufferings OF Christ: those He Himself endured are a source of infinite grace and redemption of all - – those shared by the Baptized.

c. In union with Christ, His death is the source of both apostolic sufferings and apostolic comfort. This is far more than an EXTERNAL BOND – that links the weakness, the 'thorns in the flesh' of the Apostles to Christ The DAILY TRIALS are

identified as bearing on the Dying of Jesus. Through the death of Christ, His Spirit is the effective principle who constantly renews the Savior's death in all the members of His body.

d. The apostolate is an extension to others of the life of Christ who already lives in His Apostle. To make Christ live in His converts the Apostle himself has to endure the death of Christ.

6. 2 Co 5:14-21: there is likewise a PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF SACRAMENTAL UNION WITH CHRIST. Paul has already shown that Christians must endure ONTOLOGICALLY is the dynamic love-principle of Christ's on-going activity through the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.. Here Paul shares the working of the APOTLE'S MIND: the love of Christ impels us – Christ died for all so that those who are alive may no longer for themselves, but for Him Who died and rose again. Therefore, this bond with Jesus Christ in suffering: is both in some way ONTOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL - in this sense, as ambassadors of Christ are His appeal acting through us. [5:18-20].

7. 2 Co 13:3-4: The 'power-weakness' theme of 1 Co is the basic Law of Christian Life: identified with the INTRINSIC BOND which unites Christians [the Members] to the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ. We are weak in Him yet, we shall live with Him through the power of God in your regard.

III. Suffering in the Captivity and Other Epistles

For Paul, then, there is a kind of inevitability of suffering [cf. 2 Tm 3:12. This is a consequence of the Christian's share in the life and power of Jesus Christ to live for God is to die for all that is hostile toward Him. The SACRAMENTAL DEATH OF BAPTISM is also called in OT terms the circumcision of the heart it consists in putting off the "body of flesh", through incorporation INTO Christ. There is a consequent life-long war which ensues – SPIRITUAL COMBAT. The power of Christ can always be counted on to sustain loyalty to strengthen patience, long-suffering, perseverance.

1. Col 1:24: to make up for what is lacking in the suffering of Jesus Christ: The perennial mystery here is Paul's real, total meaning of what is lacking: objectively the Redemption is super-abundant [Rm 5; 8:17] – subjectively, through the apostolic mission this must reach into every missionary's life, and in the lives of all to which each one is sent on the mission of Jesus Christ Himself, personally received from His Father in the Holy Spirit.

2. Crucified Joy in life-long suffering is a characteristic trait of all Christian spirituality [1 Th 1:6; 2 Co 1:5; 7:4; Ph 1:18, 29; 2:17, etc.]. There is a verbal affinity here with 2 Co 1:4-5: Paul cooperates with the redemption of Christ already brought

to the Colossians, in his own body. All is interpreted in the light of the BAPTISMAL BOND between Christ and the baptized. Apostolic Labor and trials are truly the sufferings of Christ – they are endured in His service and because His Spirit is the life-principle of the members of the Body of the Lord, under its Head, in its Spirit.

IV. The Fellowship of His Sufferings

1. Paul singles out the Second Coming – resurrection as his ultimate ‘gain’ One attains this glory fully only through perseverance in suffering. In Judaism suffering was seen in order to achieve glory – for Paul, in Christianity all are called to suffer WITH Christ –in order to be glorified WITH Christ. The Faithful enter on this Mission through conversion-baptism – every new member is united to the Body Christ and all receive the Gift of the Spirit.

2. The other gain’ in this is to engage in FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS. All suffering is already a sign of salvation, as the Gift of God. For many interpreters, the reproduction in the Christian [e.g., the Stigmata, crowning with thorns, scourging, etc.] do not seem to be high-lighted in Paul’s writings. Each one is called to a CONFORMITY to Christ’s death – and this Conformity is realized by the Holy Spirit.

3. Yet, the Pauline truth is that Christian suffering has deep theological roots in his teaching on UNION with Christ. Every one of the Faithful receives this at Baptism – the efficacy of the salvific death and resurrection once accomplished in the physical body of Christ is perpetuated through the centuries in the Mystical Body of Christ. All have been baptized INTO the death of Christ [cf. Rm 6:3]. The ideal is that the first moment of one’s conversion to Christ will be perpetuated in the lives of the Faithful and all are called to persevere into it through the deaths, in union with that of Christ.

3. The BOND between Christian suffering and Christ Himself is rooted in the EMINENT BOND that unites Body – Member and Head. The close Bond which is meant to unite Christians among themselves flowing from their initial bond with the one Christ, engage in a close bond [*koinonia*]. Paul speaks of his sufferings as a *kononia* with Christ – the daily lived experiences of ‘dying’ forms a share, participation in the vast enduring *agony* – the call is to bring these to full measure. Fellowship in Christ’s sufferings is a reality in all Christian living.

SUMMARY:

There is a parallel phrase in 1 P 4:13 – the author comforts [impending] Christian suffering in union with the living Christ – in this sense, many interpret Paul’s interest is not so much the historical sufferings of Christ’s Passion, but rather the life that is lived as one of the Faithful until death. The teaching unites the Christians’ share in the sufferings of Christ with the presence of the Indwelling Holy Spirit. The call is one of PERSEVERING HOPE.

[III] St. Gaspar Bertoni and suffering according to Prof Simonato

SUFFERING IN GDLB – contemplated by

Ruggero SIMONATO

pp. 219-234: The *Cathedra* of Suffering

pp. 357-365: Abandonment in Hope

[Punishment; Purification; Pedagogy; Redemption; Eschatology –

JESUS CHRIST

[cf. St. Gaspar, Mss B. ## 2126-2179; 4239-4312; 4384-4434]

[Two extremes to be avoided:

- Jansenistic Dolorism – exaggeration
- Sentimental Pietism – unrealistic]

His was the Mysticism, the Wisdom of the School of the

Crucified/ Risen Lord

Recurring illnesses all his earthly life – provides a privileged key to understanding GLDB's spirituality. This was his *Cathedra* [School of God – putting on the mind of J.C.] teaching that daily formed his mind and heart over long and challenging years. There seems to have been a mystical root joining his varied agonies, such as family troubles, deaths. From his ascetic suffering, he was drawn toward a mysticism of love for others, their spiritual, intellectual needs. Suffering is the ultimate 'school' where the final exam is an assignment to a deeper love for others. Bertoni's bed was his ultimate assignment in the university for holiness in which he was divinely called, enrolled. Transformation, conformity into Christ teaches one how to love, live, die!

The long hours in a bed of pain became for him a *Cathedra of Wisdom*. The silence of the Father, experienced by Christ [Ps 22] lived in Gethsemane, also invites us to remember GS 22: in some way, Jesus is untied to each and every human being, an 'upper-classman, a 'pre-fect', formator. This can be shared with each one suffering.

His was a life-long following, imitation of Christ, largely in darkness: failures, frequent relapses, stage fright. His was a life-long conversion, intensification to conformity to God's will. In handing himself over continuously to his doctors, reflected that he intensely offered himself to God. He overcame his natural fears –

and may have learned from Fr. Galvani, an expiatory, clarifying suffering. *In the depths of one's own nothingness, one finds God!* [MP: 24,8.1808].

From heroic acceptance of what 'is', he discovered profound inner peace. In his daily commitment to God's will he developed admirable interiority, but non isolation, nor was he ever a 'loner' – yearned for the company of others for counsel [giving and receiving]. He lived to heal the wounds of others: physical, spiritual intellectual.

His agonizing frustrations, constantly demanding adjustments of his own time, reconciling his own 'plans' for what simply had to be, for what proved to adjust to a new necessity, limitation. Life was a vocation to follow close after the Crucified One with the Cross on His shoulders, on the way to healing of the stigmata of life, toward sharing in the resurrection of Jesus in the fullness of God's Plan.

Nothing happens by chance – the call is to co-relate, identify one's personal Cross to the redeeming Cross of Christ. The long, sleepless hours of suffering allowed him to review his life, prayer – he suggests that in the spiritual life *one begin with the Passion, then let the Lord draw one's free spirit to Himself – Who has been already raised up – He now is drawing all to Himself*. Our prayer is 'disarming' to God. We need to stand on the sure footing of Hope – 'today' is slowly becoming always [MssB # 4277]. The painful visitations of His scourging are really favors in the long run. The Cross of Jesus stands, spans the bridge over the chasm between the inexorably passing of time toward eternity. The call is to place all one's pre-occupation, worry in the love of the Crucified WHO HAS RISEN.

The handing of oneself over to God, in the cutting lances of physical suffering: bed sores, the discomfort of long hours of immobility, night sweat, thirst. This is the wisdom of a divine insight – suffering is transformed into conformity with Christ through a loving sense of acceptance. This is the life vocation toward the Crucified toward refining the capacity to communicate, to be in union with Jesus, His Father – with, as well as without any words.

The irresolvable emergence of pain, general discomfort opens outward through an inspiring Hope of eternal healing. Pain can enable one to de-centralize from one's own limited horizon, 'centri-fugal' 'space', and one's apostolic, eternal interests are intensified through being part of the world wide, Church-wide community of suffering servants. Extended infirmity is transformed by the divine healing mercy into a blessing. Without any sentimental self-pity, or allowing thoughts of being a 'victim soul', the call of life is seeing in the inevitable crosses our chance, a grace, of becoming more united at ever greater depth deeply to the Cross of Christ.

Suffering in grace can bring one to an ever more full, intense conformity with the Crucified/ Risen Lord. The Cross is the tangible sign, seal, of the Covenant of Mercy. *How few are those who grasp what God would achieve in them were He not impeded by them* [Epist. p. 61]. The Wisdom of the Cross leads one to entrust, hand over, one's pain to the love of God, epitomized in the open arms of His Most beloved Son. Pain purifies one, empowers one – transforms wounds in order to the transformed, conformed, espoused to the Crucified/ RISEN Lord Jesus and healed by Him.

There is an urgency to re-discover the heart of Christianity – [remember Ghandi: Christianity is like a rock in the Ganges River; the water of Christ's teaching has flowed over, around, them for centuries, and never penetrated – too bad Christianity has never been really tried! There is an urgent appeal to be Christian indeed, in life, daily experience and not in name only! The new Law of life is to be transformed into the Crucified/ Risen Lord – the Mysticism of the spiritual life is to be conformed to Him in love. The Cross of Jesus transforms the frightening darkness of pain into a revealing splendor of the Crown of Hope.

Contemplating the Suffering Christ leads many to love Him – Christ converted many by His wondrous 'signs', miracles – but draws all to the Father, and calls all to the Father to pass through the sacred wounds of His Crucified body to the Heart of the Redeemer. The Stigmata are the New Law of love written, engraved, sculptured, imprinted, pierced into one's flesh and mind and heart – in suffering one may find the unmistakable sign of the presence of God. Let us pray for the graced healing of the Crucified/ Risen Christ to be empowered to carry His Cross in our members like St. Paul and never to put it down.

The Throne of Glory is reached by penetrating through the Stigmata. The Wounds of Christ imply an ever fuller participation in the Passion of Jesus Christ. This is the most perfect charism, the most divine, sublime Gift [cf. 1 Co12:31]. *How much needs to be suffered for His Name!* [Ac 9:16]. Courage! This is the 'better portion' that God reserves for His own most dear.

Suffering is an experience of the divine – suffering dilates one's capacity to be evermore committed immersed into the substance of divine love. Human suffering can transform through grace one's daily struggles into a faith-filled participation [spiritual identification] in the Stigmata of Christ – all are called 'to make up for what is lacking' [to apply here and now] of the sufferings of Christ. IN one's daily Cross, God's Mercy penetrates ones heart the more through grace.

The sense of 'mission' is not reduced to 'what we do for the Lord' – it deeply presupposes the handing of oneself over in that interior structure of making of your bodies [lives] an oblation to God's Mercy [cf. Rm 12:1, ff.] into one's interior

structure, rooting all of one's life ever more in the grace of the same filiation of the Crucified/ Risen Lord. The call is to live the sufferings of Jesus Christ, render one a part of the Mission of mediation between God and sinners. Suffering has its own capacity of a bestowing on more and more of one's daily life a 'Christic' sense. IN the call of suffering, there is not much of a temptation to triumphalism of accomplishments: the emphasis seems more on the loving acceptance of hope-filled daily experience, striving for the healing of others. Sufferings are the life-long pathway leading to a more committed Christianity.

A rather privileged manner of re-discovering a personal intimate relationship with God is an ascetic ascent toward the mysticism of an intensifying conformity with the Crucified/risen Lord.

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[IV] Fr. Cornelio FABRO, CSS and Suffering in St. Gaspar

More striking and perhaps more pleasing are those saints who experienced a clamorous conversion – who enjoyed a universal sway of influence, and were geniuses in religious organization and social activity. Fr. Bertoni, however, was nothing like any of these, or at least does not seem cut from the same cloth. The incisive motto that he had heard from his old teacher and benefactor, Fr. Nicholas Galvani, and which he often repeated [from the old Veronese dialect]: *buseta e taneta* [live as in a little den, an unnoticed lair]. This dialectic turn of phrase would be a rendition of St. Paul's description: *the hidden life with Christ in God* [Col 3:3].

A contemporary author has written of him with some intuition that he had been attracted by the contemplative life of Fr. Bertoni as this comes across the pages of his personal spiritual diary and his letters to L. Naudet:

"... The true greatness of God's work in him is often not revealed externally, as one that would shine through the success of his undertakings, or in the importance of the Institute which came to light through him. God certainly does not deceive but works most especially in the depths of his soul and perhaps made of him one of the greatest saints of the past century..."⁹⁰

This was a life, that of Fr. Bertoni, about half of which was spent on the Cross, with his long and painful illnesses, "... *under the irons and the knives of the doctors* ..." as he himself often preferred to write, in a joking manner, especially to Fr. Bragato. This seems to demonstrate a capacity of endurance that amazed and moved even to tears the surgeons themselves. The documents speak of some 300 inflictions

⁹⁰ Divo Barsotti, *Magistero dei Santi*, Roma: 1971, p. 17.

of deep lancing and incisions on his flesh in order to diminish a kind of cancerous growth which had invaded his right leg.

This piercing of his flesh which afflicted him debilitated him noticeably as he got older even up until his death. The medical specialist who in our own times, is required under the direction of the ecclesiastical superiors, was present for the recognition of his body [as part of the process of canonization]. He noted a pronounced curvature, and a severe calcification of the vertebrae in his spinal column. This phenomenon must have cost him – in the judgment of the specialist who examined his exhumed body - spasms of considerable pain.

And it was from his bed of pain, in which he had been confined for long months and even entire years, he continued his teaching by example and offering counsel to those souls who had recourse to him: bishops would seek him out, prelates, princes, members of noble families, priests as well as the humble and simple people of his time. He also continued to give courses of spiritual exercises and conferences. He continued to study and to write – and especially did he suffer and pray during the many interminable nights of insomnia, very often meditating for an entire hour – as he once manifested - the words of the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the individual mysteries of the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross.

Through all this, the question arose as to whether or not he had reached the level of infused prayer. Would it have been that his soul had advanced with giant steps forward along the mysterious paths of active and passive purification? That which is certain that in approaching Fr. Bertoni, this constituted for all a special experience as of finding a solid footing in a world of certainties and of supreme hope. The very sight of his person, even prior to hearing the comfort of his word, placed one in tranquility and in greater harmony with the will of God, and enkindled in so many a genuine love for the Cross of Christ.

Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove justly wrote for the second centenary of the birth of Fr. Bertoni, observing that this Act of Abandonment “...can be compared to that which had been offered as a Victim to the Merciful Love of St.. Therese of the Child Jesus and to that prayer in which Elizabeth of the Trinity synthesizes her Trinitarian doctrine...” He also observes that this is a matter of the traditional doctrine which can be noted in St. Francis de Sales [especially in his *Theotimus*, Books VIII & IX].

Bossuet had already written a *Discours sur l’acte d’abandon a Dieu*, in which the author takes his inspiration the classic on the doctrine of the abandonment which is that of DeCaussade: but one can also remember the great Fenelon, who was well known to Fr. Bertoni, in which he recalls precisely the image of the baby in its mother’s arms, as Fr. Stofella also noted.

In fact, Fr. Bertoni had recommended to Leopoldina Naudet:

“... Blessed is the one who would lose himself in this abyss! the one who would cast himself courageously and ship-wrecked into this great ocean! A child is never more secure as when asleep holding on to its mother’s neck, he abandons every other thought and concern for himself. The infant does not see, nor hear nor does he speak. But the Mother sees for him, hears and speaks and works. And whenever she wants to, she may awaken the child, and remain nearby...”

Fr. Bertoni’s beloved disciple, Fr. Marani states: “... We must always go behind God and never ahead of him... my most beloved Father and Founder said this frequently and constantly practiced it...” Fr. Gaspar’s first biographer, Fr. Giaccobbe, who remained close to him in his last years, noted: “... This practice of allowing all to God and nothing to man, was something in him that was so ordinary and habitual that it might be said ... that this was like the identification card and norm for all of his thoughts and affections, as it was of his every operation and plan...”⁹¹

And Fr. Bertoni wrote further to L. Naudet:

“... What a blessed virtue abandoning oneself is, when we cannot act we entrust ourselves to the omnipotent arms of divine Providence: but it is a more perfect and consummate virtue when indeed we can, and in fact we are called upon to do something [according to the order established by Divine Providence] – and yet never cease to be equally and totally abandoned into His ...” [Lettera 38].

This is a doctrine, that of holy abandonment, which finds its way back to the probable source in the Ignatian spirituality in that complete indifference presented in the *Doctrine spirituelle*, of Fr. Lallemant and of the Jesuits of his kind. But one would have to seek from sources prior to that of the Benedictine Abbot, Dom Columba Marmion, confessor of Cardinal Mercier. This has come to the fore again in the publishing of his master-piece, *Christ the Ideal of the Monk* [c.13], and also in the Italian edition of his *Letters of Spiritual Direction* [p.161] .

Another noted Benedictine, Fr. Eugene Vandeur, has written a commentary on the Lord’s Prayer, with the title: *L’abandon à Dieu*. There is nothing in this doctrine - which is the sum of ascetical mortification of nature, and the elevation of the soul, to the point of mystical death, through the active and passive purifications - that would bespeak of fatalism, or Eastern, or Protestant or pantheistic quietism. What this ideal means is a participation in the abandonment of Jesus Christ to the Will of His Father in Garden of Gethsemane [“not My will be done, but Yours!” – Lk 22:42] – even to the His invocation on the Cross [“Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit!” – Lk

⁹¹ cf. Nello Dalle Vedove, *Un modello di santo abbandono*. Verona 1951, pp, 210,ff.

23:46]. This is that total turning upside down of life, like the transferal, one might say, of human freedom into the total subjection to God according to that incisive expression of Bossuet: “.. If there is anything that is capable of rendering free a heart and to place it completely at free, it is the perfect abandonment to God and to His will...”⁹²

The characteristic or the authentic originality of Fr. Bertoni's grasp of this seems to be that of being more lived than theorized. It seems to spring from that unconditional self-emptying of his soul into the Mystery of the Incarnation. This derives from that interior thrust of his of transcending every adherence to creatures, which is at the same time, as a placing of himself at the total disposition of the will of God for the salvation of his brothers and sisters, in every occasion and at all times.

If it may be permitted to an obstinate reader and translator of Soren Kierkegaard, a contemporary of Fr. Bertoni, in discerning a certain consonance here with the mystical life of abandonment. In his *Great Diary*, Kierkegaard observes that in the life of the Spirit, it is not so much a matter of becoming ‘adults’, as happens in natural life, but that of becoming children once again, and to “pray like children”. This demands considering oneself less than nothing before God but as babies. Obviously, the terms ‘baby, children’ here do not indicate that bio-psychological infancy but rather that of the spirit which consists in the total self-giving of one's own freedom to God and with all the strength of one's soul. In a commentary on Ga 1:7, Kierkegaard observes:

“... For us, to progress in the interiority of our relationship to God, this is manifested as a kind of proceeding backward. In other words, one does not approach God directly but if only if one comes to grasp ever more profoundly our infinite distance from Him...”

As a result, one does not begin to become ever more like children, so that then one might be more confident with increasing age: in order to then to become [spiritual]children. It is not this one simply becomes more child-like [Diary, Ital. N. 2722]. In an earlier text, which seems to be a kind of poetic compendium of the Augustinian-Thomistic doctrine of Grace, he wrote: “... It is like when we give something to a child: and, in order to make the child content, we suppose that it is really he who instead is giving to us that which we have given to him and therefore it is ours. Thus, our relationship really is not like this, because God at the same is the One Who is giving the complement. Therefore it must always be when a father or a mother have helped the child to write a little letter of well-wishes for one's birthday, and then they accept this as his gift for that day...” [n. 1533].

⁹² This is a text from the classic by the Cistercian, V. Lehodey, *Le saint Abandon*. Tr. It. Firenze 1954, p. 520.

A stronger expression of his is of a metaphysical nature, from a text of 1850: In the context of sensible and exterior realities, the object is something other than the manner: there are several manners to do something – and a person might succeed in finding the best possible manner.... In relationship to God, the ‘how’ is the ‘what’. Whoever does not place himself on relationship in the manner of the most absolute abandonment, does not place himself in relationship with God. With respect to God one cannot use as his principle only to try ‘up to a given point’ because God is precisely the negation of all that is ‘up to the certain point’. The text begins with the affirmation: “...To place oneself in relationship with God, to be genuinely religious without ever experiencing a wound – and I confess that I find this inexplicable...” [n.2936].

There is, then this consonance of Kirkegaard with Fr. Bertoni which goes back to their common font, the New Testament. Furthermore there are traces of common readings of Catholic mystics, such as *The Imitation of Christ*, St. Therese, St. John of the Cross, Fenelon, St. Alphonsus de Liguori ...⁹³

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Conclusion:

A Life totally for the Church

The actuality of the figure and the undertakings of Fr. Bertoni can be summarized in two simple phrases: ...A Man totally Evangelical and totally ecclesial. His was a soul permeated with the spirit of the Gospel, and devoured by his zeal for without boundaries. We learn from Fr. Lenotti that his principal study was Sacred Scripture, of which he knew much by memory. As a result his ordinary manner of speaking was fully scriptural. In the nearly iconoclastic fury which has attacked the sacred text on the part of some modern criticism, the docility of the Saints to the Word of God from which they drew for the light to overcome the arduous trials of spirit and to develop their grand enterprises for the glory of God.

It was from the sacred text that Fr. Bertoni traced also that basic imperative, or that Christian distinctive characteristic of contrast with this world: “... *I have chosen you out of this world...!*” In explaining this passage in the Spiritual Exercises he preached to the clergy, he applied to the priest that which Bourdaloue had directed to religious:

“... he [the priest] has to be detached from and crucified to the world, one needs to repeat that which the Apostle St. Paul writes; ‘...*The world is crucified to me and I to the world...!*’ For since I am a priest, if the world does not permit coming in harmony

⁹³ Translator’s Note: in these last few paragraphs, Fr. Fabro offers a real theological presentation of Holy Abandonment, and provides excellent sources for further reflection.

with my principles - and I very easily find agreement with its maxims, then I am a priest only in name. *"... If I should please men, I am not Christ's servant...!"* "In order to be as priest indeed, and in truth, it is required that I should be in the world as in a state of suffering. It is necessary that the world should be my Cross, as I will infallibly be a cross to this world. The reason is due to the contrariety of sentiments and of principles that will be found between the world and me, as long as I want to comport myself as a genuine priest ..." ⁹⁴

These are sublime words, especially for today.

Fr. Bertoni's times, as was stated at the outset, were quite different from ours. However, the sufferings of humanity, the crisis of faith, the situation of the Christian on this world ... seem to intensify all the more as these realities impact every age, at every turn of human progress. The manners of thinking change, and also the prospects of civility: the trajectory of life towards the gulf of death, and being overwhelmed by the same enigmas, no matter what the number and the qualities of elements that work in its mutating arch.

Today hope is much magnified and this is good: however, for us, it has to be a Christian hope, it needs to address believers upward toward those immutable goods and yearn for that Augustinian Sabbath that will never end. Therefore hope must be nourished by faith, and must flow forth within its certainties', and not get diverted into the earthly swamps rivet itself in some kind of a "foolish flight." This needs to be a hope which enkindles one toward the elevation toward God and in the service of one's neighbor.

Fr. Bertoni was one who was malleable, but firm at the same time. He knew how to ponder the signs of his times, he read and had others read the daily newspapers as something most useful from which one might draw new avenues for the apostolate. However, he observed in his Diary: *"... It is necessary to enter into the house of another in a manner so that what we might learn then to lead others to ours."* This is a rule of realism and of boldness, it seems to us and not just another form of *aggiornamento* of the Church in this world, or some other format of 'dialogue with this world', which have often amounted tactics of equivocal compromises. What needs to be concluded from all this is a service of fidelity to the salvific Truth with respect to the mystery of freedom.

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⁹⁴ R. P. Bourdaloue, *Ritiramento spirituale ad uso delle comunita' religiose*, presso Niccolo' Pezzana 1742, p. 28.