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# THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AS A FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

Lecture  
Creighton University  
Omaha, Nebraska  
April 19, 1991

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I trust that the title of this address puzzles you. It is something of a paradox, an apparent contradiction. Two things simply do not seem to fit. Aren't the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola an experience of the spirit, a 30-day or eight-day retreat centered on the movement of the Christian soul to heaven, conducted in solitude, far from hustle and bustle, and preferably in silence? And isn't Creighton a citadel of the intellect, where the stress is on knowledge, on books, where minds meet in constant conflict, where ideas clash, where noise is in the air, where silence is reserved for a corner of the library?

I am not saying that the Spiritual Exercises and the groves of academe are interchangeable terms, that a college or university is a retreat experience, that the classroom is a chapel, that learning is worship. My thesis is that the Spiritual Exercises can be, indeed should be, an exciting **foundation** for education Jesuit-style. More specifically, I see the Spiritual Exercises as a process of conversion which in an educational institution aims at altering in students, faculty, and staff (1) their world of learning, i.e. the life of the mind; (2) their world of loving, i.e. their human and religious imagination and affection; (3) their world of living, i.e. the life of social realities.

So bold a claim demands more than a resounding affirmation. It reminds me that a prominent speaker once reached a paragraph in his manuscript where he had written in the margin, "Argument weak; talk louder." Let me take each of my declarations in order--quietly.

## I

First, the Spiritual Exercises should alter your world of learning, i.e. the life of your mind. You see, basic to the life of the mind, at the root of a university's existence, is a momentous monosyllable: Why? Why study art and the arts, physical science or political science, law or business or medicine? Now Ignatius does not ask that question in those terms. But "spiritual exercises" he defines as "every way of preparing and disposing" ourselves to remove "all disordered attachments and, after their removal, of seeking and finding God's will in the way we direct our lives...." <sup>1</sup> And there definitely are disordered approaches to the life of the

mind, strange reasons why some go to college or university or professional school.

I am not thinking of the more superficial reasons -- college as a four-year Hammer dance<sup>2</sup> interrupted by class. I am thinking of an approach to business education guided by a powerful principle: What makes the world go round is economics, and what makes the economy work is greed, the almighty dollar. I am thinking of gifted music and drama students whose aim is fame, the lust for applause, even the TV laugh machine. I am thinking of political-science students whose primary purpose is political power, the thrill in manipulating other men and women. A heart-rending example in this area is Lee Atwater, the manager of George Bush's 1988 presidential campaign who almost single-handedly turned the tide against Dukakis. Not long before his death at 40 from a brain tumor on March 29, this gifted man with an incredible instinct for the jugular made this poignant confession:

The '80s were about acquiring--acquiring wealth, power, prestige. I know, I acquired more wealth, power and prestige than most. But you can acquire all you want and still feel empty... It took a deadly illness to put me eye to eye with that truth, but it is a truth that the country, caught up in its ruthless ambitions and moral decay, can learn on my dime.<sup>3</sup>

Not that money, fame, power are immoral in themselves; they are not. Without money, Creighton would be a gigantic crater in the center of Omaha. Fame makes it easier for the deprived to know you, to beg for the crumbs that fall from your table. Political power makes possible not only a Persian Gulf war legislated housing for the poor. Ignatius forces on the retreatant that insistent monosyllable: Why?

Even more radically, the Spiritual Exercises can keep you from segregating learning into a pigeonhole of its own, divorced from the thrust of the spirit towards God. I do not mean that all of learning becomes a religious enterprise. Vatican II made that quite clear. With Vatican I, it distinguished "'two orders of knowledge' which are distinct," declared that "the Church does not indeed forbid that 'when the human arts and sciences practiced they use their own principles and their proper method, in its own domain.'" In consequence, the Council "affirms legitimate autonomy of human culture and especially of the sciences."<sup>4</sup>

My point is, the life of the mind is perilously impoverished if knowledge does not lead to wonder. Not sheer questioning: I wonder if Israel should continue populating the West Bank. In the grasp of wonder I marvel: I'm surprised, amazed, delighted, enraptured. It's Mary pregnant by God's Spirit: "My spirit finds delight in God my Savior" (Lk 1:47), It's Magdalen about to touch her risen Jesus: "Master!" (Jn 20:16). It's doubting Thomas discovering his God in the wounds of Jesus. It's Michelangelo striking his sculptured Moses: "Speak!" It's Alexander Fleming fascinated by the very first antibiotic, America thrilling to the first footsteps on the moon. It's Mother Teresa cradling a naked retarded child in the rubble of West Beirut, a crippled old man in the excrement of Calcutta. It's the wonder of a first kiss.

Such, sooner or later, should be your reaction to the life of learning, such the wonder that should permeate the life of your mind. Not a new methodology for biology or psychology; simply awe in the presence of a fascinating four-letter reality: life. The multifaceted, myriad miracle of life. Amazement at what breadths and depths there are to being alive - - from the architectural artistry of the ant and the grace of a loping panther, through the blinding speed

of a white marlin and the majestic flight of bald eagle, to the beating heart of a unique fetus, the inspired imagery of Shakespeare, the fantastic 48 measures Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, the transforming insight of Einstein.

With such wonder you may hope to touch the pinnacle knowledge. For, as philosopher Jacques Maritain discovered, the height of human knowing is not conceptual; it is experiential. Man/woman feels God. Yes, **feels** God.

Am I ignoring Ignatius? Have I been distracted from Spiritual Exercises? Quite the contrary. The Spiritual Exercises are an adventure in experience, in wonder. With all the power of your mental faculties you enter the kingdom of contemplation - - what contemplative William McNamara called "a long loving look at the real." The real: all there is - -the things of God, the people of God, God's very self. And the high purpose of all this? To be struck, surprised, stunned by the wonder of it all - -from ecstasy of Eden unspoiled, through sin's rape of the earth earth's dwellers, to the unique love of God-in-our-flesh pinned to a cross, and our rebirth in his rising from the rock

The net effect? Ignatius' final contemplation, the acme of the Exercises: Learning to Love Like God. Here you touch the heart of Ignatius, his awareness of the ceaseless presence of Christ to our earth -- now. "Consider," he counsels, "how [Christ] labors for me in all creatures."<sup>5</sup>

Not a vague, ultrapious generality. Christ behaves like a worker, a laborer, in each and every creature of his creation. How is it that the Rockies still rise in breath-taking splendor, Venus shines brighter than any star, and oil gushes from the fields of Nebraska? Because a risen Christ gives them **being**. Not once for all; continuously, day after day. How is it that forsythia can herald the approach of spring, corn turn into hot buttered popcorn for your theater, giant redwoods stalk the California sky? Because an imaginative Christ gives them **life**. How is it that your Irish setter can smell the game beyond your ken, gulls scavenge your ocean, the shad ascend the waters? Because a sensitive Christ gives them **senses**. How is it that you, this wondrous wedding of molecules and spirit, can shape an idea or send a skyscraper soaring, unveil mystery in a microscope or telescope, join with another--man or woman or God--in deathless oneness? Because Christ labors in you to give you **intelligence and love**--intelligence that mimics the mind of God, love that stems from a cross on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

A thing of beauty and a joy for ever, this life of the mind. But only if the arts and sciences, if professions like law and medicine and business, that legitimately engross you open you to the still richer reality that surrounds you, invades you, transcends you, gives fresh life to the mind you treasure so rightly, the mind you accept so lightly. Ignatius, the Spiritual Exercises, are not the only "way to go." But for openers in two senses--a beginning and an opening--as a basis, a foundation, for the life of the mind, the Spiritual Exercises are an experience difficult to exceed.

## II

Second, the Spiritual Exercises should alter your world of loving, i.e. your human and religious imagination and affection. Basic to this affirmation is a realization: The life of the human spirit is not circumscribed by reason, by your ability to grasp ideas, to draw

conclusions from facts and premises. If your intellectual existence is simply a model of Cartesian clarity, you are limping along on one leg. What is the lamentable lacuna? Imagination.

What is this strange creature we call imagination?<sup>6</sup> To begin with, what is imagination not? It is not the same thing as fantasy. Fantasy has come to mean the grotesque, the bizarre. That is fantastic which is unreal, irrational, wild, unrestrained. We speak of "pure fantasy": It has no connection with reality. It is imagination run wild, on the loose, unbridled, uncontained.<sup>7</sup>

What is it, then? Imagination is the capacity we have "to make the material an image of the immaterial or spiritual."<sup>8</sup> It is a creative power. You find it in Rembrandt's self-portraits, in Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, in the odor of a new rose or the flavor of an old wine. You find it in dramatists like Aeschylus and Shakespeare, in poets from Sappho to Gerard Manley Hopkins, in storytellers like C. S. Lewis and Stephen King,

Now, when I say "capacity," I do not mean a "faculty" like intellect or will. I mean rather a posture of my whole person towards my experience.<sup>9</sup> It is a way of seeing. It is, as with Castaneda, looking for the holes in the world or listening to the space between sounds. It is a breaking through the obvious, the surface, the superficial, to the reality beneath and beyond. It is the world of wonder and intuition, of amazement and delight, of festivity and play. How does imagination come to expression? Let me focus on specifically religious imagination. I sketch five ways

1. A vision. I mean "the emergence either in dreams, trance, or ecstasy, of a pattern of images, words, or dreamlike dramas which are experienced then, and upon later reflection, as having revelatory significance."<sup>10</sup> Examples? Isaiah's vision of the Lord in the temple (Isa 6); Moses and Elijah appearing to Jesus and the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt 17:1&emdash;9); Joan of Arc's "voices"; St. Margaret Mary's vision of the Sacred Heart.
2. Ritual. The form of ritual is action--public, dramatic, patterned. A group enacts the presence of the sacred and participates in that presence, usually through some combination of dance, chant, sacrifice, or sacrament.<sup>11</sup>
3. Story. I mean a narrative, a constellation of images, that recounts incidents or events. As Sallie TeSelle put it, "We all love a good story because of the basic narrative quality of human experience: in a sense any story is about ourselves, and a good story is good precisely because somehow it rings true to human life.... We recognize our pilgrimage from here to there in a good story."<sup>12</sup> For the religious imagination, three types of stories are particularly important: parable, allegory, and myth; the parables of Jesus, Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*, and the Creation myth.<sup>13</sup>
4. The fine arts. I mean painting and poetry, sculpture and architecture, music, dancing, and dramatic arts. I mean da Vinci and John Donne, the *Pieta* and Chartres, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, David Whirling and skipping before the Ark of the Covenant, the mystery dramas of the Middle Ages. I mean films.
5. Symbol. What symbol means is not easy to say; for even within theology it does not have a univocal sense. Let me define it, with Avery Dulles, as "an externally perceived sign that works mysteriously on the human consciousness so as to suggest

more than it can clearly describe or define.<sup>14</sup> Not every sign is a symbol. A mere indicator ("This way to Lincoln") is not a symbol. "The symbol is a sign pregnant with a depth of meaning which is evoked rather than explicitly stated."<sup>15</sup> It might be an artifact, a person, an event, words, a story-parable, allegory, myth.

The importance of symbols, of imagination, at Creighton? I make three points. First, imagination is not at odds with knowledge; imagination is a form of cognition. In Whitehead's words, "Imagination is not to be divorced from the facts; it is a way of illuminating the facts."<sup>16</sup> True, it is not a process of reasoning; it is not abstract thought, conceptual analysis, rational demonstration, syllogistic proof. Notre Dame of Paris is not a thesis in theology; Lewis' famous trilogy does not demonstrate the origin of evil; Hopkins is not analyzing God's image in us when he sings that "Christ plays in ten thousand places,/ Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his/ [plays] To Father through the features of men's faces."<sup>17</sup> And still, imaging and imagining is a work of our intellectual nature; through it our spirit reaches the true, the beautiful, and the good.

Second, imagination does not so much teach as evoke; it calls something forth from you. And so it is often ambiguous; the image can be understood in different ways. Do you remember the reporters who asked Martha Graham, "Miss Graham, what does your dance mean?" She replied: "Darlings, if I could tell you, I would not have danced it!" Something is lost when we move from imagining to thinking, from art to conceptual clarity. Not that imagination is arbitrary, that *Swan Lake* or the Infancy Narrative or *Hamlet* or the Transfiguration is whatever anyone wants to make of it, my gut feeling. Hostile to a valid imagination is "the cult of imagination for itself alone; vision, phantasy, ecstasy for their own sakes; creativity, spontaneity on their own without roots, without tradition, without discipline."<sup>18</sup> Amos Wilder was right: "Inebriation is no substitute for paideia."<sup>19</sup> And still it is true, the image is more open-ended than the concept, less confining, less imprisoning. The image evokes our own imagining.

Third, religion itself is a system of symbols. As sociologist Andrew Greeley saw, "religion was symbol and story long before it became theology and philosophy and . . . the poetry of religion was not inferior to its prose but rather anterior to it and, in terms of the whole human person, in some ways superior to it."<sup>20</sup>

Biblical revelation is highly symbolic. Skim the Hebrew Scriptures: a burning bush, the miracles of the Exodus, the theophanies of Sinai, the "still small voice" heard by Elijah, the visions of the prophets and seers. Scan the New Testament: the circumstances surrounding Jesus' conception and birth, the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove, the Transfiguration, Calvary, the resurrection. Take key themes like the kingdom of God, its expression in Jesus' proverbial sayings, in the Lord's Prayer, in the Gospel parables. The kingdom is not a clear concept with a univocal significance. It is a symbol that "can represent or evoke a whole range or series of conceptions or ideas."<sup>21</sup>

Turn from Scripture to the Catholic-Protestant problematic. Greeley's research persuades him that "the fundamental differences between Catholicism and Protestantism are not doctrinal or ethical" but "differing sets of symbols."<sup>22</sup> Take the central symbol: God.<sup>23</sup> The classical literature of the Catholic tradition

assume[s] a God who is present in the world, disclosing Himself in and through creation. The world and all its events, objects, and people tend to be somewhat

like God. The Protestant classics, on the other hand, assume a God who is radically absent from the world and who discloses Herself only on rare occasions (especially in Jesus Christ and Him crucified). The world and all its events, objects, and people tend to be radically different from God.<sup>24</sup>

Even more concretely, Greeley insists, their different images of God account for different religious behavior between Catholics and Protestants. In the Protestant imagination God is perceived as distant (father, judge, king, master); in the Catholic imagination God is perceived as present (mother, lover, friend spouse).<sup>25</sup>

Another crucial example: two approaches to human society shaped by different imaginative pictures

The Catholic tends to see society as a "sacrament" of God, a set of ordered relationships, governed by both justice and love, that reveal, however imperfectly, the presence of God. Society is "natural" and "good," therefore, for humans and their natural response to God is social. The Protestant, on the other hand, tends to see human society as "God-forsaken" and therefore unnatural and oppressive. The individual stands over against society and not integrated into it. The human becomes fully human only when he is able to break away **from social oppression and relate to the absent God** as a completely free individual.<sup>26</sup>

A final example from Greeley's sociological research: The image that most sharply distinguishes the Catholic tradition from other Christian traditions is Mary the mother of Jesus.

No one else has Madonna statues in church. Mary is essential to Catholicism, not perhaps on the level of doctrine but surely on the level of imagination, because she more than any other image blatantly confirms the sacramental instinct: the whole of creation and all its processes, especially its life-giving and life-nurturing processes, reveal the lurking and passionate love of God.<sup>27</sup>

Once again, have I been distracted from Ignatius and his Spiritual Exercises? Not really. The Exercises, for all their appeal to the Christian intelligence, are not a head trip. They are first and foremost an experience. An experience of Catholic symbols: Adam and Eve and Eden, angels and Satan, hell-fire, a virgin and a crib, Egypt and Jerusalem, the Transfiguration, bread and wine, blood and water from the side of Christ, nail marks in risen hands, an ascension into heaven.

But the experience is not cold reason. Take the experience of sin's devastating impact on angels and humans, sin's ravishing of God's good earth. When you go through the Spiritual Exercises, you do not simply define sin, recall a traditional definition: any thought, word, or action against God's law. Your senses get into the act: You smell sin's stench. Even more importantly, you see sin's cost, image it, weep over it; for sin's cost is a cross, the pierced hands of a God-man

The God-man. The Exercises are a constant contemplation--contemplation of Christ. Never abstract theology, though theology informs it all. In Bethlehem's cave you are a servant; you not only listen to Mary and Joseph, you "smell the infinite fragrance taste the infinite

sweetness of the divinity."<sup>28</sup> You flee that unique family into Egypt, feel what it means to be a refugee in the Middle East. In a decisive meditation you not only contrast "two standards," two scenarios for orienting your life. The standards take flesh in two persons: in a Saddam-like Satan who inspires "horror and terror," who makes you lust for riches, for honor, for pride; and in a living Christ who attracts you to poverty, insults, and humility.<sup>29</sup> It is not only Jesus who is tempted in the wilderness; you wrestle with your personal devils, sweat through the temptations that jolted Jesus: Use your powers, your gifts, your possessions just for your own fantastic self, for the sweet smell of success. Like the sinful woman, you wash our Lord's feet with your tears, feel your sins forgiven because you too have "loved much" (Lk 7:47).

And so into Christ's passion, which you no longer study with scholarly detachment, comparing different traditions, reconciling inconsistencies. Ignatius wants you to feel: grief and shame indeed, "because the Lord is going to his suffering for (your) sins,"<sup>30</sup> but even, if possible, the kiss that betrayed him, the nails that held him fast. And finally, joy in the risen Christ. Not simply a sense of relief; rather your whole being bursting with new life, his life, as you share his rising with his mother, to touch him with Magdalen, munch seafood with him and the Eleven.

This is not simply your own picture show, on a level with Kevin Costner *Dancing with Wolves*.<sup>31</sup> Ignatius playing with your capacity to imagine is attempting something terribly significant psychologically and spiritually. This "application of the senses" goes back to a medieval tradition that reached Ignatius through a book he read while convalescing from cannon wounds back at Loyola.<sup>32</sup> The unknown Franciscan author had written:

If you wish to draw profit from these meditations....make everything that the Lord Jesus said and did present to yourself, just as though you were hearing it with your ears and seeing it with your eyes. . And even when it is related in the past tense you should contemplate it all as though present today...<sup>33</sup>

Why is this highly significant for an intelligent spirituality? Because you are no longer looking at the life of Christ sheerly as history, something that took place in the past. The events of Jesus' earthly existence must be seen as a "today," the historical happenings drawn into your own world here and now. That is how you achieve not abstract knowledge but what the medievals called "familiarity with Christ," an understanding that takes hold not only of discursive reasoning but of the whole person. Imagination leads to love--a direct experience of love. Ignatius films in living color what Aquinas phrased in attractive abstraction:

There are two ways of desiring knowledge. One way is to desire it as a perfection of one's self; and that is the way philosophers desire it. The other way is to desire it not (merely) as a perfection of one's self but because through this knowledge the one we love becomes present to us; and that is the way saints desire it.<sup>34</sup>

### III

Third, the Spiritual Exercises should alter your world of living, i.e. the life of social realities. Here three facets call for clarification: social realities, the Exercises, and you.

What do I mean by social realities? I mean the life of a society &ndash; in this case, the society we inhabit within the United States; the life that moves beyond the individual in isolation to community, people interacting, impacting one on another, human persons depending on one another.

How do the Spiritual Exercises touch social realities? After all, did not Ignatius himself describe the Exercises as "every way of preparing and disposing" ourselves to remove "all disordered attachments and, after their removal, of seeking and finding God's will in the way we direct our lives ...."?<sup>35</sup>

I am aware that in 1985 the 32nd General Congregation of Jesuits declared, "The mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement."<sup>36</sup> And it went on to assert a bit later:

Every sector of our educational works should be subjected to constant review, so that they will not only continue to form young people and adults able and willing to build a more just social order, but do so ever more effectively. Especially should we help form our Christian students as "men [and women]-for-others" in a mature faith and in personal attachment to Jesus Christ, persons whose lively faith impels them to seek and find Christ in the service of their fellow men [and women]. Thus we shall contribute to forming persons who will themselves multiply the work of worldwide education.<sup>37</sup>

But our specific question remains: Granted that our colleges should prepare women and men to construct a more just social order, how do the Spiritual Exercises lay a foundation for the social-justice component of Jesuit education?

Almost a half century ago, a young Jesuit who had not yet taken his final vows in the Society was asked by his provincial to direct the annual eight-day retreat for the Jesuit theology students at Alma in California. In the course of the retreat, director Fr. George H. Dunne reflected on a number of social issues. Dealing with the Sermon on the Mount, for example, and the two great commandments, he "talked about poverty, peace, war, not in the abstract but in the concrete." He "talked about anti-Semitism, Hitler's holocaust, racial segregation, the rat-infested tenements in New York, the exploitation of migrant farm workers, the Spanish Civil War, the anguish of the world's poor."<sup>38</sup> Not long after, he received a letter from the representative of the Jesuit Father General for the American provinces during World War I. Fr. Zacheus J. Maher charged Fr. Dunne with substituting for the Spiritual Exercises a series of "brilliant talks on social subjects." "Such subjects," he declared, "have no place in the Spiritual Exercises."<sup>39</sup>

Let's begin with an admission: Our neighbor, the wider society, is not explicit in the text of the Exercises. Not surprising; for the Exercises<sup>40</sup> are addressed to individuals, and they seek to enable a person to have the interior freedom to serve God ....<sup>41</sup> But if you delve more deeply, you discover how profoundly social, societal, the Exercises are.

You see, the Ignatian meditations point you ceaselessly to Christ, to the Christ of the Gospels, in that way to absorb the mind of Christ. And so you focus on the programmatic scene in Nazareth's synagogue, where Jesus makes his own the announcement in Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and sight for the blind, to set at liberty



those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the Lord's year of favor" (Lk 4:18~19)<sup>42</sup> Through the Exercises that program ceases to be peculiarly Jesus'; it becomes your own. What Second Isaiah announced to the people of his day Jesus announces to the poor and imprisoned, the blind and deprived of his day. And this is what Christians in the mold of Ignatius announce to the downtrodden of their day.

With Ignatius in the final Contemplation for Learning to Love Like God, you ponder profoundly how Christ "labors for [you] in all creatures on the face of the earth, that is, he behaves like one who labors. In the heavens, the elements, the plants, the fruits, the cattle, [man and woman], he gives being, conserves them in existence, confers life and sensation, and so on."<sup>43</sup> you ask to labor with Christ as he ceaselessly creates, re-creates, redeems a fallen world.

Recently a conservative Catholic professor of history ended his regular column in a diocesan newspaper with two puzzling sentences: "When Jesus rose from the dead, he did not go about lecturing on the social problems of his day. Instead manifested himself in glory to his disciples in a manner that empowered them to go forth as his courageous emissaries."<sup>44</sup> neither did the risen Jesus go about celebrating the Eucharist and fingering his rosary. And what did he empower them to forth to do? To baptize indeed; to preach what he preached. did he not preach loving your sisters and brothers as Jesus loved you? And such loving has nothing to do with war on the womb or war in the Middle East? Nothing to do with inhuman poverty child abuse? Nothing to do with racism or the rape of earth?

What you should **experience** through the Exercises is that by God's design and initiative human existence is fundamentally social, societal<sup>45</sup> : We are "we" before we are "I" and "thou." This is central in Christian revelation and of primary importance for our contemporary culture of individualism, where we think first of self and then how we can join with others in community--as though community did not precede the individual genetically, psychically, socially, and spiritually.<sup>46</sup> Even Catholic social teaching frequently fails to position this fact front and center, because it lays down as primary in its social ethics the "dignity of the human person, who is made to the image of God." From there the teaching argues to the God-invested rights of the individual which other individuals and institutions must respect. This misses the point of the Genesis story (on which it is often based) that the "Adam" who is given such dignity is not an individual but "the human," our whole race in personification.<sup>47</sup>

How does all this touch you now, here at Creighton? Very simply, Creighton ought to be not only the seedbed of learning and imagination; it should be the "boot camp" of your societal existence. The Jesuit educational ideal is not the intellectual mole who lives almost entirely underground, surfaces occasionally for fresh air and a Big Mac, burrows back down to the earthworms before people can distract him. No. Here is where young men and women who may one day profoundly influence America's way of life touch, some for the first time, the ruptures that sever us from our earth, from our sisters and brothers, from our very selves. Not simply in an antiseptic classroom, for all its high importance for understanding. Even more importantly, **experience** of rupture: experience not only of ecology but of an earth irreparably ravaged, not only abstract poverty but the stomach-bloated poor, not only the words "child abuse" but the vacant stare of the child abused, not only a book on racism but the hopelessness or hatred in human hearts. To yearn for such experience, I know no better introduction that experiencing the Christ of the Spiritual Exercises, the conversion consequent on seeing Christ more clearly, loving him more dearly.

Can you get a 4.0, be learned, a scholar, without such a conversion? Undoubtedly. Can you make megabucks in business or law, in medicine or government without such a conversion? Undoubtedly. Can you marry well, raise two and a half children treat them to an Ivy school education without such a conversion? Undoubtedly. Can you be deliriously happy without such a conversion? Undoubtedly. Can you live an integrated human and Christian existence without such a conversion? I doubt it.

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<sup>1</sup> Spiritual Exercises 1; translation partially mine.

<sup>2</sup> Reference to a type of dancing currently in high favor with the young and involving amazing hyperactivity.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas B. Edsall, "GOP Battler Lee Atwater Dies at 40," *Washington Post*, March 30, 1991, 1 and 7.

<sup>4</sup> Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Spiritual Exercises 236. For Christ as the "creator and Lord" of this contemplation, see Hugo Rahner, S.J., *Ignatius the Theologian* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968) 134.

<sup>6</sup> Here I am drawing largely, but not entirely, on material in my book *Preaching: The Art and the Craft* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1987) 19-25.

<sup>7</sup> I am aware that fantasy does not have to mean the bizarre; I am speaking of a common current usage. The development was concisely expressed in *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* (2nd ed. Unabridged; Springfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1958) 918: "From the conception of fantasy as the faculty of mentally reproducing sensible objects, the meaning appears to have developed into: first, false or delusive mental creation; and second, any senselike representation in mind, equivalent to the less strict use of **imagination** and **fancy**. Later **fantasy** acquired, also, a somewhat distinctive usage, taking over the sense of whimsical, grotesque, or bizarre image making. This latter sense, however, did not attain itself to the variant **phantasy**, which is used for visionary or phantasmic imagination." See also Urban T. Holmes, III, *Ministry and Imagination* (New York: Seabury, 1976) 100-103.

<sup>8</sup> Holmes, *ibid.* 97-98. Here Holmes is admittedly borrowing from Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, n.d.)

<sup>9</sup> See Holmes, *ibid.* 88.

<sup>10</sup> Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., *Introduction to Theology: An Invitation to Reflection upon the Christian Mythos* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 49.

<sup>11</sup> See *ibid.* 52.

<sup>12</sup> Sallie M. TeSelle, cited by Holmes, *Ministry and Imagination* 166, from the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 42 (1974) 635.

<sup>13</sup> Lest reader or hearer be unduly disturbed, myth is not opposed to fact or to fancy. Its raw

material may be fact or it may be fancy; in either case it intends "to narrate the fundamental structure of human being in the world. By the concreteness of its imagery, the universality of its intention, its narrative or story form, the myth evokes the identification and participation of those for whom it functions as revelatory" (Jennings, *Introduction to Theology* 51-52).

<sup>14</sup> Avery Dulles, S.J. "The Symbolic Structure of Revelation," *Theological Studies* 41 (1980) 55-56. Dulles studies the five dominant approaches to revelation; the propositional, historical, mystical, dialectical, and symbolic—with greatest stress on the symbolic. He asks how in each theory revelation is mediated and what kind of truth it has. He concludes that in Christ the five aspects coalesce in a kind of unity, but insists that the first four are reconciled and held in unity through the symbolic facet.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 56.

<sup>16</sup> A.N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York: Macmillan, 1929) 139.

<sup>17</sup> Gerard Manley Hopkins, "As kingfishers catch fire . . .," Poem 57 in W.H. Gardner and N.H. Mackenzie, eds., *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Oxford University, 1970) 90.

<sup>18</sup> Amos Niven Wilder, *Theopetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 57.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew M. Greeley, *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics* (New York: Scribner's, 1990) 37.

<sup>21</sup> Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 33.

<sup>22</sup> Greeley, *The Catholic Myth* 44.

<sup>23</sup> Here Greeley (45) admits his dependence on David Tracy's *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

<sup>24</sup> Greeley, *The Catholic Myth* 45.

<sup>25</sup> See *ibid.* 55.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 45. Here, too, Greeley is indebted to David Tracy. Note Greeley's warning to his readers that the word "tend" is "used advisedly. Zero-sum relationships do not exist in the world of the preconscious" (*ibid.*).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 253. See 254: "I argue . . . that the obvious functional role of Mary the mother of Jesus in the Catholic tradition is to reflect the mother love of God." For detailed presentation of the origins and function of the Mary symbol, see Greeley's *The Mary Myth* (New York: Seabury, 1977).

<sup>28</sup> Spiritual Exercises 124; text from Louis J. Puhl, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St.*

*Ignatius* (Chicago: Loyola University, 1951) 55.

<sup>29</sup> Spiritual Exercises 140, 146 (Puhl 60, 62).

<sup>30</sup> Spiritual Exercises 193 (Puhl 81).

<sup>31</sup> A current film that made off with a number of Academy Awards.

<sup>32</sup> The book was *Meditationes vitae Christi*, long attributed to St. Bonaventure but actually composed by an unknown Franciscan of the 14th century; see Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian* (n. 5 above) 192-93.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted from Rahner, *ibid.* 193.

<sup>34</sup> I have not been able as yet to document this text.

<sup>35</sup> Spiritual Exercises 1; translation partially mine.

<sup>36</sup> *Documents of the Thirty-second General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, December 2, 1974&mdash;March 7, 1975* I, 4 (Washington, D.C.: Jesuit Conference, [1975]) 17.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* I, 4, 35-36.

<sup>38</sup> *King's Pawn: The Memoirs of George H. Dunne*, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University, 1990) 70.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 69, 70.

<sup>40</sup> See useful material in Dena Brackley, S.J., "Downward Mobility: Social Implications of St. Ignatius's Two Standards," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 20, no. 4 (January 1988) 53 pp.; also in Thomas E. Clarke, S.J. "Ignatian Spirituality and Societal Consciousness," *ibid.* 7, no. 4 (September 1975) 127-50.

<sup>41</sup> Brackley, "Downward Mobility" 12.

<sup>42</sup> On this episode see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Gospel according to Luke* (I-IX) (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981) 529: "Luke has deliberately put this story [4:16-30] at the beginning of the public ministry to encapsulate the entire ministry of Jesus and the reaction to it."

<sup>43</sup> Spiritual Exercises 236; translation partially mine.

<sup>44</sup> James Hitchcock in *St. Louis Review*, March 29, 1991, 11.

<sup>45</sup> See Clarke (n. 40 above) 128-29 for the advantages of the adjective "societal" over "social" in reference to apostolate and ministry. "Social" efforts "seek immediately and personally to alleviate the misery of those individuals who are deprived." "Societal" activity "concerns itself immediately with the healing and transformation of those human structures, institutions, processes and environments which draw persons into misery or make it difficult

for them to emerge from it."

<sup>46</sup> See Matthew Lamb, "The Social and Political Dimensions of Lonergan's Theology," in Vernon Gregson, ed., *The Desires of the Human Heart* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1988) 270.

<sup>47</sup> I owe this paragraph to notes of James L. Connor, S.J., director of the Woodstock Theological Center, Washington, D.C., prepared for the inaugural retreat of my project *Preaching the Just Word*, an effort to move the preaching of social-justice issues more effectively into the Catholic pulpits of the United States.



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