INTRODUCTION

Of the many studies being published to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Ignatius and the 450th anniversary of the confirmation of the Society of Jesus, probably very few will take up the question of Ignatius' personal esteem for, and exercise in, the Church's catechetical ministry. Despite the growing awareness in the Church throughout the world, and especially in the Philippines, of the central importance of catechesis, the topic is hardly a favorite among Ignatian scholars.\(^1\) One reason may be that the contemporary ministries of catechesis and religious education have become more and more the preserve of experts in contemporary educational theory, the behavioral sciences, and communication arts. Since Ignatius had slight ties with these relatively new professional disciplines, it is not surprising that few Ignatian studies focus on catechesis.

Nevertheless, significant links between Ignatius and contemporary catechesis can be drawn. First of all, no historical study of Ignatius' own ministry can ignore his early catechetical work, and the instructions he gave to his first companions, and later to the members of his Compañía de Jesús.\(^2\) Secondly, given the long his-


tory and contemporary role of the Society of Jesus in Catholic education, it is natural to inquire into the contribution Ignatius' vision and ideals might offer to the present complex situation of catechesis/religious education. Our focus here is centered principally on the catechetical/Religious Education situation of the Philippines at present, and as far as can be projected into the decade of the '90s.

But a certain preliminary caution must be sounded against an overly simplistic identification of *Ignatian* with *Jesuit*. While it is certainly true that Ignatius was graced with the foundational charism that created the tiny band of ten men that formed the nucleus of the *Compañía de Jesús*, nevertheless the Ignatian vision or spirituality cannot simply be identified with "Jesuit." For the Society of Jesus represents one particular historical way of carrying forward the Ignatian vision, but by no means the only way. In brief, it is not necessary to be a Jesuit to share the Ignatian vision! His Christian experience, his unique, characteristic way of acting, his attitudes and principles of discernment, can be — and are — shared in any number of ways, especially in regard to educational methods and insights.³

Moreover it must be recognized that even among the Jesuits themselves, this Ignatian foundational charismatic vision has been imbibed, implemented, and exercised in many and diverse ways and degrees, particularly in the field of education. This is shown in the many diverse educational ventures carried on by Jesuits today the world over. Moreover, the sheer multiplicity of serious contemporary interpretative commentaries on Ignatius' life and vision, and especially on his little manual of spirituality, *The Spiritual Exercises*, warns us against any simplistic characterization that presumes to capture, in one genial synthesis, the vision of Ignacio of Loyola.⁴

³. This point is made in David Lonsdale, S.J., *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1990) 3-4. In the Philippines there are a number of religious congregations and institutes that claim close affinity to Ignatius.

⁴. For a brief sketch of some leading experts and their substantially different interpretations, see Harvey Egan, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976) 3-30. The author discusses Erich Przywara, Gaston Fessard, Karl Rahner, Hugo Rahner, Fridolin Marxer, Gilles Cusson, Daniel Gill, Leo Bakker, Ramón González de Mendoza — all of whom are representative of a distinct area (basic "Denkform") of interpretation.
In attempting to sketch Ignatius' vision and its application to Philippine catechesis today, we shall first present a summary account of the major stages in Ignatius' adult life-experience, in and through which his vision gradually took shape and matured. In the more developed second part, this vision will be specified more concretely by drawing more fully from Ignatius' major writings — *The Spiritual Exercises* and *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*. Rather than striving for any striking originality, this study, which makes use of the standard available sources, aims at the much more modest goal of presenting some basic factors within the total Ignatian legacy, factors which may help us appreciate both the Ignatian vision itself as well as its relationship to the ministry of catechesis/religious education in the Philippines today.

**PART I: IGNATIUS' ADULT LIFE**

*Conversion: Loyola 1521*. The turning point in Ignatius' life occurred during his convalescence at Loyola from wounds suffered in the unsuccessful defense of Pamplona in 1521. Ignatius read two books: the *Life of Christ* by the Carthusian Ludolf of Saxony (d. 1370), in the Spanish translation by the Franciscan Ambrosio de Montesinos, and the *Flos Sanctorum*, a Spanish version of lives of the Saints written by the Dominican Jacobus de Voragine (d. 1298), with a preface by the Cistercian Fray Gauberto Vagad. The effect on Ignatius of this very limited yet intensive contact with medieval devotional literature, channeled through Franciscan, Carthusian, Dominican and Cistercian sources, was exceptional. Almost every significant element of Ignatius' mature vision — for example his characteristic focus on Christ, his zeal to imitate the great Saints of old, and his goal of service — can be traced back to the influence of this initial stage in the long process of his conversion.


Moreover, not just the thematic content of his spiritual reflections originated from this period, but even a typical feature of Ignatius’ personal way of proceeding, namely, his diligent practice of keeping a notebook or spiritual diary. Describing himself in the third person in his *Autobiography*, Ignatius recounts that in:

Taking great pleasure in those books, the idea came to him to excerpt in brief some of the more essential things from the life of Christ and the saints; so with great diligence he set himself to write a book in good hand, using red ink for the words of Christ, and blue ink for those of Our Lady.\(^8\)

Thus was born a habit of careful note-taking, diary-keeping, and the like, that was indicative of Ignatius’ own well-ordered habits-of-mind which were manifested throughout his adult life. It clearly exercised a significant impact on the educational work of the early Jesuits, and has come into new prominence as a highly praised “student activity” in many contemporary educational methodologies.

*Manresa, 1522.* After setting out from Loyola, Ignatius arrived at the shrine of Our Lady of Montserrat, where he was introduced by his confessor to the *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* of Garcia Ximenez de Cisneros, a typical example of the *devotio moderna* of the times.\(^9\) After his vigil of arms before Our Lady of Montserrat, Ignatius went off to a small town called Manresa, apparently with the original intention of staying only a short time. But it was there, during a prolonged stay of almost a whole year, that, as Ignatius tells us in his *Autobiography*, “God treated him just as a school-master treats a child whom he is teaching.”\(^10\) Given Ignatius’ exceptional gift for discerning God’s action within him, this “process of conversion” experienced at Manresa surely influenced Ignatius’ own early catechizing efforts, as well as his instructions to his followers.

Ignatius then goes on to describe in his *Autobiography* the mystical experience he underwent in Manresa at the river Cardoner:

---

9. Ibid., note 4, p. 32.
10. Ibid., no. 27, p. 37.
He sat down for a little while with his face toward the river which was running deep. While seated there the eyes of his understanding began to be opened; though he did not see any vision, he understood and knew many things, both spiritual things and matters of faith and learning, and this was with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him . . . he cannot set forth the details that he understood then, except that he experienced a great clarity in his understanding. This was such that in the whole course of his life, through 62 years, even if he gathered all the many helps that he had from God and all the many things he knew and added them together, he does not think they would amount to as much as he had received at that one time.\textsuperscript{11}

This extraordinary mystical experience, best described perhaps as an “illumination,” undoubtedly exercised the single most powerful influence of his whole life on the vision of Ignatius. Commentators commonly classify it as an intellectual vision, as distinct from both corporeal and imaginative visions. By this they mean that the descriptive images Ignatius uses in speaking of the vision do not constitute but only reflect and signify the spiritual enlightenment experienced.\textsuperscript{12} Such a mystical experience is an extraordinary exemplification of that integration of the intellectual and the spiritual that constitutes an often unexpressed but ardently sought goal of contemporary catechesis and religious education.

Thirty years later, in dictating his Autobiography, Ignatius provided a surprisingly clear and detailed account of the essential content of these illuminations of the mind and intense devotion in the will.\textsuperscript{13} One particularly relevant theme for present-day catechesis is his great attraction to the Most Holy Trinity.

One day his understanding began to be lifted up so that he perceived the Most Holy Trinity as a musical harmony from three organ keys . . . he could not stop talking about the Most Holy Trinity, using many different comparisons and with great joy and consolation (no. 28).

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., no. 30, pp. 39-40.


This special devotion of Ignatius to the Most Holy Trinity, which began in Manresa in 1522, is even more strikingly manifested in his *Spiritual Journal*, more than twenty years later (February 1544). There Ignatius records his tenacious seeking for confirmation from the Trinity while wrestling with the problem of the poverty of the Society of Jesus.\(^{14}\) Thus Ignatius’ devotion to the Trinity can contribute to today’s catechesis not only in its present “re-discovery” of the Trinity, but more importantly in integrating the most profound mysteries of the Faith to the ordinary challenges of daily Christian life.\(^{15}\)

*Years of Studies, 1524-1535.* Upon returning from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Ignatius was led to recognize his need to study. As he expresses it in his *Autobiography*, he had “the same desire to help souls, and for that reason to study first and to gather some others for the same purpose.”\(^{16}\) Much has been made — and rightly so — of the picture of Iñigo of Loyola, at the age of thirty-three, sitting with students less than half his age, taking up lessons in Latin grammar in Barcelona. But what is most significant is the insight this picture offers of two exceptional traits of Ignatius: (1) to fix on a definite goal or purpose, and (2) to find and adapt suitable means to attain that goal. These two characteristics will be treated below as indicative of a major contribution Ignatius can make to today’s catechetical methodology.

**TEACHING CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE**

During Ignatius’ years of study at Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca and finally Paris, he not only acquired the learning he had found indispensable to “help souls,” but also devoted himself to “teaching Christian doctrine and speaking about the things of God.”\(^{17}\) This

\(^{14}\) For example, Ignatius wrote: “Later, while preparing the altar and vesting, I had a strong impulse to say: ‘Eternal Father, confirm me; Eternal Son, confirm me; Eternal Spirit, confirm me; Holy Trinity, confirm me; my only God, confirm me!’ I said this with great earnestness and with much devotion and tears, very often repeated and very interiorly felt.” *Spiritual Journal*, no. 17, p. 12.

\(^{15}\) The principle of “integration” is the key factor in the National Catechetical Directory for the Philippines [NCDP]. For one exposition of its extent, see my “The NCDP’s Multiple Integrations,” *Docete* 10, no. 49 (1987) 2-11.

\(^{16}\) *Autobiography*, no. 78, p. 71.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., nos. 57, 60, 67 et passim.
got Ignatius into a series of troubles with the Inquisition, but intent on continuing his teaching despite numerous interrogations and even imprisonment, he moved from Alcalá to Salamanca and finally to Paris. At one summons before four judges in Salamanca, Ignatius comments, not without a certain sense of humor, describing himself in the third person:

he was asked to explain the first commandment the way he usually explained it. He started to do so and said so many things about the first commandment that they had no desire to ask him more. 18

The importance of this early catechetical experience of Ignatius is proven by the place teaching Christian doctrine and “the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity” has in the “Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus.” First composed by Ignatius and his companions in 1539, this “First Sketch” of the Society of Jesus was approved by Paul III’s bull “Regimini militantis Ecclesiae” in 1540, and again by Julius III’s bull “Exposcit debitum” of 1550. As Ganss remarks, “Few things better illustrate Ignatius’ sensitivity to the needs of his times than the importance he attached to the instruction of children and simple persons in the rudiments of Christian doctrine.” 19

Ignatius confirms this stress on teaching Christian doctrine in “The General Examen” wherein he legislates as the fifth “experiment” for Novices, “that of explaining the Christian doctrine or part of it in public to boys and other simple persons.” 20 This is carried a step further by Ignatius in the Constitutions, in his instructions on the training of scholastics in spiritual ministries.

They should likewise bestow appropriate study upon the method of teaching Christian doctrine and of adapting themselves to the capacities of children or simple persons. It will be helpful to have a written compendiary explanation of the matters necessary for the faith and Christian

18. Ibid., no. 69, p. 69.
20. The “General Examen” is subtitled “The First and General Examen which should be proposed to all who request admission into the Society of Jesus.” The quotation is from no. 14 of the “General Examen,” taken from Ganss, Constitutions, no. 69, p. 97.
Again in his instructions concerning colleges of the Society, Ignatius insists on both teaching Christian doctrine, and appropriate methodology. He directed that extern students should be "well instructed in what pertains to Christian doctrine," even to the extent that "the Rector ought himself to explain or teach Christian doctrine for forty days. He should also consider which of his subjects should deal with their neighbors... in preaching, or lecturing, or in teaching Christian doctrine." Actually Ignatius required that catechism classes be taught by a member of the Jesuit community, even if other courses were taught by lay teachers, because he was convinced that the 'new doctrines' were being disseminated among the people by school-teachers.

Catechetical conditions in the Philippines today surely do not reflect "the appalling religious ignorance of Ignatius' times" when many did not know how to recite the Our Father or Hail Mary, when it was almost unheard of that parish priests should preach, when bishops were more often than not absent from their dioceses, and hundreds of parishes were without even one priest to minister to them. Nevertheless, the National Catechetical Year has stressed the critical catechetical need, precisely among children and simple persons, as Ignatius put it. Despite all the heroic efforts thus far expended, it seems an ever-increasing proportion of Filipino Catholic youth lack any adequate catechesis in their faith. The realistic response of Ignatius to the needs of his times can well serve as an inspiring model for concerted work on the part of catechetical collaborators in the Philippines today.

School of Mature Experience, 1535-1556. Upon completion of

21. Ganss, Constitutions, nos. 410-11. This directive has raised the question: did Ignatius himself ever compose a "catechism"? Ravier quotes the "cautious opinion" of Fr. Lamolle, archivist of the Jesuit Generalate, that the "catechism of Ignatius" as such never existed, and that the few references to it probably refer to the "Summa doctrinae christianae", brief outlines on confession, published in MHSI, Epp. XII, 666 ff. See Ravier, "St. Ignatius and the Catechism," 90-91.
22. Ganss, Constitutions, nos. 395 and 437, pp. 199, 209. To this day, Jesuits making their public profession, vow together with perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, "special care for the instruction of children." See ibid., nos. 527, 532 and 536, pp. 238-40.
24. Ganss, Constitutions, 11-12; 203, footnote 7.
his studies in Paris, Ignatius entered fully into his apostolic work with his companions, was ordained in 1537 at the age of forty-six, and with Faber and Laynez journeyed to Rome. In the little chapel of La Storta at the outskirts of Rome, Ignatius “experienced such a change in his soul, and saw so clearly that God the Father placed him with His Son Christ that his mind could not doubt that God the Father had indeed placed him with His Son.”25 This famous vision of La Storta is rightly seen as the climax to Ignatius’ own desire to “serve God under the banner of Christ,” as expressed in key meditations in The Spiritual Exercises. For in this mystical experience was confirmed in a definitive manner, the outstanding Christocentric character of Ignatius’ vision.

Ignatius spent the last sixteen years of his life in Rome, elected as General of the newly formed Society of Jesus in 1541. Commentators note that for Ignatius, “these years were the most important for fixing the characteristic traits of his spirituality and the subsequent spirituality of the Society.”26 Part II will sketch some of these characteristic traits, drawing especially on the two major written expressions of Ignatius’ vision, The Spiritual Exercises and the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. Concurrently, we shall try to show that by working from a few outstanding characteristics of Ignatius’ vision, some basic connections with Philippine catechesis as understood today can be perceived.

PART II: DIMENSIONS OF THE IGNATIAN VISION AND PHILIPPINE CATECHESIS

To begin this part, we shall first take a brief look at Ignatius, the mature religious thinker, the product of the long conversion process described above. Only after a further look at Ignatius, the self-styled “pilgrim” who had developed a new mystical spirituality of service which created a new type of religious order, will some major objective traits of his vision be studied in greater detail.

IGNATIUS THE MATURE RELIGIOUS THINKER

From the summary of Ignatius’ adult life sketched above, what

can be said of Ignatius as a mature religious thinker? One way of picturing Ignatius’ abilities is to contrast them with certain typical deficiencies noted by some Christian educators today. Among the common weaknesses described in contemporary educational studies are: (1) an incapacity for objective reasoning, as opposed to relying on “my own” liking, thinking, and doing; (2) “an incapacity for awe or reverence before the natural world or before persons; and (3) an incapacity for creative suffering, despite much pain and anxiety.” All three point to “the importance of some objective and inclusive framework within which to view life and pursue its aims.”

In contrast, Ignatius’ thinking was marked precisely by such an inclusive framework, and consequently manifested these three capacities to an exceptional degree. *First*, his powers of objective reasoning, of an eminently practical nature, were constantly in evidence in his work of directing others, and especially in creating the *Constitutions* of the practical ways of acting — a “mystique of the end joined with practical wisdom for the road,” as one commentator expressed it.

*Secondly*, Ignatius’ awe and reverence before the world was a direct effect of his mystical experiences of God the Creator creating, and is graphically expressed in the Principle and Foundation and the Ad Amorem of *The Spiritual Exercises*.

*Thirdly*, the capacity for creative suffering is the inner core of Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*, whose basic principle is “to labor with Christ and thus enter into his glory.” This represents the center point of the *Exercises’* four “weeks,” for which the First Week “prepares” the retreatant, and the Second Week introduces Christ the King and His salvific plan and activity. The suffering dimension is expressed most clearly throughout the Third Week which focuses on Christ’s Passion and Death. But the strongest expression of “creative suffering” is found in the Third Degree of Humility in which the exercitant prays to choose poverty, insults

and suffering in order to follow more closely Christ the Crucified.29

This desiring to suffer for and with Christ actually exposes the deepest level of Ignatius' personal thinking on the nature of man, expressed within his burning, zealous love for his Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Ignatius was first and foremost a religious thinker, that is, one whose own deepest reflections originated from, concentrated on, and were ordered toward, our human relationship with God in Christ Jesus.

*Spiritual Discernment.* Besides these three characteristic traits, one further capacity of Ignatius must be cited. That is his extraordinary ability of spiritual discernment. This was manifested as early as his convalescence at Loyola, when he became aware of the different effects in him caused by worldly day-dreaming as contrasted with imagining a life dedicated to the service of Christ.30 Such rather primitive beginnings were developed all through the subsequent years of Ignatius' spiritual pilgrimage, producing an exceptional literary correspondence as spiritual counsellor and as General of the Society of Jesus. His famous "Rules for Discernment of Spirits" in *The Spiritual Exercises* are but the most manifest example of this priceless legacy left by Ignatius, offering written documentation of his remarkable reflective processes.31

Spiritual discernment is certainly a crying need in the catechetical ministry of the Philippines today. It is needed not only to inspire and guide new initiatives in responding to the ever growing challenge of seemingly numberless catechumens to be catechized. Even more crucial for improving the effectivity of our catechesis are the catechist formation programs throughout the nation. As the aftermath of Vatican II proved to those involved in seminaries

and religious houses of formation, sincerity and goodwill are no guarantee of successful spiritual formation. What is absolutely needed are those gifted by the Spirit who can spiritually discern how to form catechists who are truly

witnesses to the Gospel, fellow-workers for truth in the Lord, fulfilling their prophetic and missionary vocation, engaged in catechizing adults, youth, children, not only by instruction and good moral witness, but especially in sharing the joy, love, and enthusiasm that comes from an ever deepening relationship with Christ in prayer; and thus manifesting that fidelity to God and to man which is indicative of authentic commitment to the Church, in loving service of the community. 32

Jesuit Education. Ignatius' characteristic thinking can also be brought closer to Philippine catechesis by analyzing the Jesuit educational approach to learning, begun under Ignatius himself. Typical of this educational approach is the appreciation of the person being instructed. This is shown first, in the Jesuit educational principle of self-activity of the students. We all learn by doing, and this became a primary emphasis in all Jesuit schooling. Secondly, every thinking subject has built-in limitations and operates at certain discernible levels. Teaching, therefore, must be adapted to meet the students where they are at. Thirdly, to learn the student needs to be motivated. Besides academic rewards, there must be a cura personalis — a personal care and concern — wherein the student is not just someone carrying an ID with a computer number, but a unique person recognized and respected as such. 33 These are but a few of Jesuit educational principles, started by Ignatius himself and developed throughout the history of Jesuit education, that offer some tried and proven guidelines for catechetical methodology today.

THE IGNATIAN VISION

The objective content of Ignatius' vision has been the subject

32. This is the descriptive definition of a catechist given in the NCDP, no. 468, and based on John Paul II's "Address to Professionals and Catechists," no. 8, delivered during the Pope's visit to the Philippines at the Araneta Coliseum, Cubao, Quezon City, 18 February 1981.

33. See George E. Ganss, S.J., Saint Ignatius' Idea of a Jesuit University (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1954), esp. the "principles" listed as nos. 6, 7, 9, 11, and 13, pp. 187-91.
matter of innumerable books and studies through the past four centuries. The modest attempt here will focus on three main dimensions of the Ignatian vision: (1) the experience of the *magnalia Dei*, the great works of the Creating God, as experienced within the human faith-response of wonder, reverence and service; (2) its unique focus on Christ, or its Christo-centricity, in terms of both personal relationship and social mission; and finally (3) its basic context of a dramatic historical process of conflict, ordered toward a transforming union with the Triune God.\(^{34}\)

In describing each of these major dimensions, specific relationships to the Philippine catechetical situation will be brought out. In general, this will be done by relating the three dimensions of Ignatius’ vision to the triple aim for catechesis proposed by the Philippine Bishops in their Pastoral introducing 1990 as “National Catechetical Year.” The “new catechetical challenge” is described as creating a catechesis that is: (1) rooted in the living Word of God; (2) Christ-centered; and (3) authentically Filipino.\(^{35}\)

A. THE WORLD OF THE CREATING GOD

From the time of his mystical experience at the banks of the river Cardoner during his retreat at Manresa, Ignatius was fascinated by the vision of everything flowing immediately from the hands of the Creator. What Ignatius experienced in mystical illumination, he worked hard to formulate in acceptable terms for the good of souls. Thus we have the famous Principle and Foundation at the beginning of *The Spiritual Exercises*, together with the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God [*Ad Amorem*] at the conclusion. Major efforts have been made by commentators in recent times to grasp more fully and accurately the authentic meaning of Ignatius. From an earlier basically rationalistic interpretation based on a rather dry, theoretical understanding of creation, there has been a rather radical shift to a much more subjective view, even focusing in one case on the believer’s own

---

34. This basic interpretation is based on the seminal article of Jean Danielou, S.J., “The Ignatian Vision of the Universe and Man,” *Cross Currents* 4 (Fall 1954) 357-66.

35. See the CBCP Pastoral Letter Introducing 1990 as National Catechetical Year, “To Form Christians Mature in Their Faith,” *Docete* 13, no. 60 (Jan./March 1990) 55-56.
"spiritual freedom." To gain a more accurate understanding, let us look briefly at the text itself.

Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining the end for which he is created. Hence, man is to make use of them in so far as they help him in the attainment of this end . . . Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created.

What strikes one immediately is the sharp focus on the "end for which we are created" together with the means to attain that end. Ignatius most probably reworked his own spiritual experience in terms of the studies he did in the "Master of the Sentences," Peter Lombard, who described in similar terms how all things proceeded in a hierarchy of beings from God the Creator, by the divine creative act of sheer gratuitous love. This scholastic conceptualization is even much more evident in Ignatius' exposition of his Ad Amorem contemplation which reads as follows:

I will ponder with great affection how much God our Lord has done for me, and how much He has given me of what He possesses, and finally, how much, as far as He can, the same Lord desires to give Himself to me . . . Secondly, how God dwells in creatures: in the elements giving them existence, in the plants giving them life, in the animals conferring on them sensation, in man bestowing understanding. So He dwells in me and gives me being, life, sensation, intelligence; and makes a temple of me, besides having created me in the likeness and image of the Divine Majesty.

---


Here we see the typical scholastic hierarchy of being expressed in a devotional manner with the purpose of arousing personal love for God, our Creator and Lord. But Ignatius goes two steps further. First, he brings out “how God works and labors for me in all creatures upon the face of the earth, that is, he conducts Himself as one who labors.”

Secondly, he asks the exercitant to “consider all blessings and gifts as descending from above... from the supreme and infinite power from above, as the rays of light descend from the sun, and as waters flow from their fountains.”

What is clear from these two classic texts of The Spiritual Exercises is that Ignatius envisions man, his life and meaning, as grounded on God as his Creator and Final Goal. Everything depends on “being directed and ordered toward the greater service and praise of God our Lord.” This foundational, controlling view of human life obviously rests on the Christian mystery of Creation.

Creation in Catechesis. Today “Creation” is an “in subject” in catechesis, given the world-wide interest and concern in ecology, in human creativity, especially in science and technology, and the like. Stress on creation is especially important for Philippine catechesis since for most Filipinos, the central image of God still remains “Creator.” The present Philippine catechetical task, then, is to bring this basic “cultural belief” to a personally grasped mature Filipino Christian conviction.

But the catechetical relevance of this characteristic of the Ignatian vision goes far deeper than the present stress on creation. Its real import is Ignatius’ use of sources: his natural facility in weaving Scripture and Tradition together with his own spiritual experience. This is apparently what is sought by the proposed catechetical goal: “rooted in the living Word of God,” namely “in Sacred Scripture as proclaimed in the Filipino Catholic community, under the teaching authority of the Church.” A number of

40. Ibid., no. 236, p. 103.
41. Ibid., no. 237, p. 103. See the excellent commentary by Michael Buckley, S.J., “The Contemplation to Attain Love,” The Way Supplement no. 24 (1975) 92-104.
42. See, for one example, the conclusion of the “General Examen,” in Gansi Constitutions, no. 133, p. 118. The topic is handled in a series of exceptional articles by Maurice Giuliani, François Couriel, André Lefèvre and Yves Raguin in Finding God in All Things, tr. William Young, S.J. (Chicago: Regnery, 1958) 3-56.
fine essays on the Bible and catechesis have been published, explaining this goal, yet the serious challenge from various Fundamentalist groups has uncovered a deep felt-need among Filipino Catholics for much more Scripture. Some catechetical authors have shown how the whole catechetical methodology can follow the "divine pedagogy" in the Bible. But current Scripture studies are so varied and nuanced, while catechetical needs are so diverse, that any one suggested method is bound to fall short of satisfying all. As Christ himself taught: "Every scribe who is learned in the reign of God is like the head of a household who can bring from his storeroom both the new and the old" (Mt 13: 52).

In translating his experience of the magnalia Dei into the Principle and Foundation's form of man's final end and the means to attain it, Ignatius provides a much needed model for creating a practical, down-to-earth methodology for any particular catechetical situation. For it is surprising how often there is no clear grasp of "what we want to achieve," and "how are we going to accomplish it"? But in view of the multiple catechetical approaches in common use throughout the Philippines, two typical Ignatian cautions must be added.

First, the effectivity of any methodology depends upon its intelligent use. Many young catechists are trained in a particular methodology, but lack sufficient understanding to use it creatively. Secondly, method in catechesis should never be allowed to diminish the spiritual sense of God's presence and mystery. The end-means strategy in catechesis cannot be reduced to the economic principle: "management by objectives." Ignatius' inner sense of the Creating God protected him from such abuse. This is

43. See, for example, the three articles focusing on the Bible in catechesis by Bishop Teodoro C. Bacani, Fr. Noe de los Santos and Mrs. Aurora Aquino, in Docete 12, no. 59 (Oct./Dec. 1999) 3-17. Also, commenting directly on the Pastoral Letter, Broderick Pabilio, S.D.B., "The Bible and Catechesis," Ibid. 13, no. 60 (Jan./March 1990) 10-12.
45. The NCDP sets down as its second directive regarding catechetical methodology: "there is no single best method of catechizing," and explains this in terms of both the subjective side of the hearers, as well as the nature of the objective message itself. See NCDP, nos. 406-7.
46. Ibid., no. 405.
best shown by contrasting the so-called “social science approach” in catechesis with the prayer Ignatius made his own, printed at the beginning of The Spiritual Exercises, the Anima Christi: “Soul of Christ, sanctify me, Body of Christ, save me, Blood of Christ, inebriate me. . . .”

Further Sources. But one of Ignatius’ “Rules for Thinking with the Church” gives a further insight into how Ignatius used this heritage and conceived this universal ordination of all things to our Creator and Lord. Ignatius distinguished between positive theology and that of the Scholastics. He praised the former, represented by Sts. Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory, as “arousing the affections so that we are moved to love and serve God our Lord in all things.” He then goes on to say:

It is more characteristic of the scholastic doctors, such as St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, and the Master of the Sentences, and others, to define and state clearly, according to the needs of our times, the doctrines that are necessary for eternal salvation, and that help refute and expose more efficaciously all errors and fallacies.

Three aspects of this “rule” are particularly pertinent to the Philippine catechetical scene. The first is Ignatius’ high respect for the serious, critical intellectual approach to the Faith represented by St. Thomas. Secondly, he recognizes the importance of properly situating the message, or “contextualization,” to use our present term. That is, the study and definition of even the eternal truths of the Faith must be related directly to the “needs of our times” and the refutation of errors and fallacies of the day. Thirdly, in clearly distinguishing between the more speculative theology from the more affective, Ignatius gave due value to both. He thus would appreciate the current catechetical emphasis on a wholistic, “evaluative knowledge” that owes much to the affec-

47. Ravier brings out Ignatius’ “feel” for mystery and his over-riding concern for precisely the spiritual transformation of his hearers. Ravier, “St. Ignatius and the Catechism,” 93. This needs to be stressed today, when the social and behavioral sciences have such an impact on catechesis. For one local example, see my “Value Education/Moral Recovery and the Catholic Educator,” Landas 3 (1989) 175-86.
49. Ibid., no. 363, p. 159.
tions and imagination. Such is the thrust of many present-day catechetical approaches, such as the "Human Evocative Approach" (HEAP), that emphasize various dimensions of the experiential, like "loving knowledge," or "performative faith."

For Ignatius, this ordination to God our Creator and Lord was not a dry, abstract theological truth. In his writings, Creator and Lord often means Jesus Christ, that is, a personal Creator become man in Jesus Christ, calling for a personal response. So Ignatius advises one who is about to make the "Spiritual Exercises" "to enter upon them with magnanimity and generosity toward the Creator and Lord, and to offer Him his entire will and liberty, that His Divine Majesty may dispose of him and all he possesses according to His most holy will." Moreover in the Constitutions Ignatius presents this personal direct focus on God the Creator and Lord as the abiding spiritual principle which controls everything the Jesuit does.

All should make diligent efforts to keep their intention right, not only in regard to their state in life but also in all particular details. In these they should always aim at serving and pleasing the Divine Goodness for its own sake . . . to seek God our Lord in all things, stripping off from themselves the love of creatures to the extent that this is possible, in order to turn their love upon the Creator of them, by loving Him in all creatures and all of them in Him, in conformity with His holy and divine will.

Jesuit Education. This orientation of Jesuits and their fellowmen "to attain the ultimate end for which they were created" included for Ignatius very specific means. "To achieve this purpose, in addition to the example of one's life, learning and a method of expounding it are also necessary . . . Toward achieving this purpose the Society takes charge of the colleges and also of some

51. The Spiritual Exercises, no. 5, p. 3. Typical of the vision upon which this experience of magnanimity is grounded is the article of Edward Ryan, "Charged with the Grandeur of God," American Ecclesiastical Review 119 (1948) 328-35.
52. Constitutions, no. 288, in chap. 1 of Pt. III, dealing with the preservation and progress of those who have entered the Society.
universities." 53 Thus the beginnings of the Jesuit educational apostolate were initiated with its characteristic of adaptation of means to end. In fact, one outstanding educator, Gilbert Highet, suggests that the key to the great success of Jesuit education was its careful planning, and its great concern for adaptation to persons and circumstances. 54

The "learning" Ignatius had in mind as an indispensable means for attaining the end proposed, is spelled out in greater detail in Pt. IV of the Constitutions. Ganss summarizes Ignatius position in eleven propositions, of which the first, fourth, and fifth touch our present concerns. 55 The first enunciates the educator's "ultimate objective of stimulating the student to relate his activity to his final end: knowledge and love of God and the salvation of his soul." From this ultimate objective, the fourth principle proceeds to a more proximate goal. "The branches of study should be so integrated that each makes its proper contribution to the goal of the curriculum as a whole: a critically reasoned Christian outlook on life, enabling the student to live well and meaningfully for this world and the next." Finally, within this critically reasoned Christian outlook, the fifth principle states that "Theology is the most important branch since the light it offers is the chief means of gaining a Christian outlook, and of tying matters treated elsewhere into a unity by showing how all creation can be consecrated to God's greater glory."

Program Integration. Comment has been made above on the relevance of proper use of Ignatius' "end-means" strategy for catechetical methodology. There it was basically a question of integration of Sources. Here we must add another type needed in catechesis, namely, Program integration. Ignatius' interest in the learning, method of expounding, adaptation of means to end, student stimulation, and integration of branches of study — all come together in designing and executing a program of studies, in

53. Ibid., no. 307, the Preamble of Pt. IV which treats of the instruction and learning needed to help others.
55. From Ganss, Constitutions, 210-11, n. 3, commenting on no. 440, chap. 11 of Pt. IV.
this case religious studies or catechesis. During the past decade, in school, parish, and diocese, a new appreciation has arisen for the need of clear, well-worked out programs, syllabi, and the like. This is just the sort of thing that allowed the Jesuit educational system "to work!"

Moreover, it could well be argued that the functions of "gaining a Christian outlook" and "tying matters into a unity" in terms of creation — roles which Ignatius assigned to theology — pertain equally well in today's world to adult catechesis. For given the percentage of Filipino Catholics who never receive any formal theological formation, the only access to such a dynamic Christian view of creation is through the Church's catechetical ministry. In addition, given the growing modernization throughout the Philippines, often with secularistic overtones, such a critically reasoned Christian outlook will become more and more imperative simply to sustain a vibrant Faith attitude and practice.

What Ignatius personally experienced and clearly perceived was the incontestable need for learning to develop a well-balanced, critically reasoned Christian vision. It is toward just such a vision and life that adult catechesis strives. More specifically still, Ignatius would undoubtedly consider today's adult catechesis to be exercising the very double function he had set down: creating a Christian outlook, and unifying the disparate elements of life into an integrated whole.

Such, then, are a few of the links between contemporary Philippine catechesis/religious education and the first dimension of Ignatius' vision: his experience of the magnalia Dei and faith's response of wonder, reverence, and service. This dimension constitutes at once the foundation for his whole personal religious outlook on life, as well as a universal, perennial source of religious inspiration through the ages. Now we move on to the second dimension of the

56. See the NCDP, no 482. For one concrete practical implementation, see Mother of Life Research Team, "A Basic Formation Program for Catechists According to the NCDP," Doco 10, no. 52 (Jan./March 1988) 27-28; also my "On the Training of Catechists," ibid. 10, no. 51 (Oct./Dec. 1987) 15-22; and "Toward Greater Cooperation Among Catechetical Centers," ibid. 11, no. 56 (Jan./March 1989) 2-6.

57. One of the problems of contemporary Jesuit education on the college level, particularly in a religious culture such as the Philippines, is to create a "college theology" that truly responds to the needs of the students. To distinguish such theology from the graduate, professional theology of the seminaries, some have formulated this ideal in terms of "adult catechesis in a school context."
Ignatian vision: its Christ-centered character.

B. THE CENTER: CHRIST OUR LORD

The central place of Christ for Ignatius is already evident from the account of his spiritual conversion and growth in mystical prayer.\(^{58}\) He recounts in his Autobiography how "often and for a long time, while at prayer, he saw with interior eyes the humanity of Christ, and with deeper understanding how he was present in that most holy sacrament of the Eucharist . . . He saw this at Manresa many times."\(^{59}\) This experience was confirmed twenty years later by his vision at La Storta in which he saw that "God the Father had placed him with His Son Christ."\(^{60}\) Christ is clearly the Mediator in whom Ignatius' spirituality is centered, the glorified Christ who is present and active in and through His mystical body and His Vicar, the pope, and in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist.

This centering on Christ is manifested in all Ignatius' writings, especially in The Spiritual Exercises. Already in the "First Week," in the colloquy of the First Exercise on the triple sin, we read: "Imagine Christ our Lord present before you upon the cross, and begin to speak with him, asking how it is that though He is Creator, He has stooped to become man . . . I shall also reflect upon myself and ask: 'What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?''\(^{61}\)

The Kingdom of Christ. But this Christocentrism is most evident in the "second Foundation" of the Exercises, the "Contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ." Here Christ is pictured as the

---


61. The Spiritual Exercises, no. 53, p. 28.
eternal King who explains how his will is "to conquer the whole world and all my enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of my Father. Therefore whoever wishes to join me in this enterprise must be willing to labor with me, that by following me in suffering, he may follow me in glory." Ignatius then goes on to describe the "oblation" of "those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves in whatever concerns the service of the eternal King and Lord of all." They will "not only offer themselves entirely for the work, but will act against their sensuality and carnal and worldly love, and make offerings of greater value and of more importance."62

This contemplation on Christ as King seems to represent the central core of Ignatius' own conversion experience at Manresa. He develops this in the Exercises in the consideration of the "Three Kinds of Humility." The first two degrees reflect the first two parts of the Principle and Foundation. But in the third degree, intelligible only in view of the Kingdom contemplation, Ignatius has the excercitant pray that

when the praise and glory of the Divine Majesty would be equally served, and in order to imitate and be in reality more like Christ our Lord — I desire and choose poverty with Christ poor, rather than riches; insults with Christ loaded with them, rather than honors; to be accounted as worthless and a fool for Christ, rather than to be esteemed as wise and prudent in this world.63

It is this extraordinary focus on Christ that led Ignatius to his particular anthropology. Ignatius' own experience and writings clearly manifest that Christology is the key source for the Christian view of the human person.64 In his growing personal relationship to Christ, Ignatius' own understanding of human nature, and

---

62. Ibid., nos. 95-96, p. 44. Hugo Rahner shows convincingly how the "more" of Ignatius' Principle and Foundation can be understood adequately only in view of the Call of Christ the King. See his "Christology of the Exercises," 182-83.

63. The Spiritual Exercises, no. 167, p. 69. Hugo Rahner shows how the "Three Degrees" of humility correspond to the triple structure of the Foundation: salvation, indifference, and the "more."

his discernment of the actual forces moving men to action, were immeasurably deepened.

*Christ-centered Catechesis.* As the first quality of the Philippine new catechetical challenge, this corresponds perfectly with Ignatius’ vision. Some inspiring studies have developed John Paul II’s famous description that

at the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. . . . Accordingly, the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.  

The mystery of Christ is not only the subject to be taught in catechesis; Christ himself is also the principal teacher, the Way to the Father, and the sender of the Holy Spirit who animates, guides and inspires all the ministries of the Word. It is in the Person of Christ that the three essential dimensions of the faith — doctrine, moral, and worship — are integrated.

One further small point should be made here: the danger of over-doing even such a fundamental principle such as Christ-centeredness. For just as we have, from certain fundamentalist groups, unfortunate experience of an exaggerated, abusive “rootedness in the living Word of God” — the first new catechetical challenge treated above — so there has been a type of “Christomonism” that so focuses on Jesus as to neglect the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the role of the Church. (The quote from John Paul II cited above clearly links Christ-centeredness directly with the Holy Trinity.) This is particularly important for Philippine catechesis which has to face, on one side, the strong challenge from the *Iglesia ni Cristo* sect, which rejects both the divinity of Christ and the Trinity as well, and on the other, certain Charismatic groups that equivalently separate the Spirit from Christ. Christ-

65. John Paul II, *Catechesis in Our Time* (Vatican, 1979) no. 5. See the application to the Philippine scene by Bishop Teodoro Bacani, “The Christ-centeredness of Catechesis,” *Docete* 12, no. 60 (Jan./March 1990) 13-16.

centeredness for Ignatius was grounded firmly on Scripture, Church tradition and his own mystical experience, thus escaping such pitfalls and offering a sound model for catechetical work today.

**Personal and Social Dimensions.** With his intense and intimate relationship with Christ, Ignatius, like his divine Lord and Master, “did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well” (Jn 2:25). What he did have to learn, however, was the essential need for “companions” to accomplish the “greater glory of God.” This lesson was learned from direct experience of the severe limitations of his own early solitary apostolic efforts. It modified radically the sharp focus in his early conversion on the heroic deeds of individual great Saints: ‘What if I should do what St. Francis did, what St. Dominic did?’67 This initial conversion was marked by a romantic ideal of an individual knight distinguishing himself in service of his eternal King, like some troubadour in Don Quixote style.

But Ignatius’ natural shrewdness, sharpened by divine grace, gradually came to discern what authentic service of Christ the King demanded. He gathered around him a group of like-minded followers: Faber, Xavier, Laynez, Salmeron, Bobadilla, Rodrigues, Jay, Broet and Codure. Each was singled out by name in the papal Bull establishing the Society of Jesus, and were noteworthy for quite exceptional qualities, not the least of which was their distinct individual personalities. But what is significant for our study is Ignatius’ clear insight that he needed others to “help souls.” With all his insistence on perfecting the individual as an *instrumentum conjunctum* with the divine, Ignatius perceived that any lasting apostolic endeavor demanded a team effort, a group that would extend and sustain the good work of the single individual.

In the Philippine catechetical scene one urgent need is greater cooperation and collaboration among the catechetical agencies. Such a need is directly confirmed by Ignatius’ grasp of the basic social dimension of all sound apostolic activity. Serious renewed efforts are being made to initiate real, practical collaboration and unified effort among those engaged in the catechetical ministry.

The tremendous need for more and better trained catechists is so great — some have put the figure at 45,000 as compared to the actual national yearly increase in the hundreds — that for years little effective action has been taken. But this has slowly begun to change, as the awareness of the extent and centrality of the catechetical challenge has come to clearer realization under both local pressures from actively proselytizing sects, and Church-wide projects such as the "universal catechism."

This desire for greater collaboration and cooperation among catechetical agencies can actually be based on catechetical methodology itself. The Directory suggests "interpersonal and communitarian catechesis," or fidelity to the Church, as the third major characteristic of methods in catechesis. "The proper context of catechesis is the community of believers. Catechesis is essentially an ecclesial activity conducted by the Church, in the Church, and for the Church." Thus the "team concept" of catechetical work simply witnesses to the community-building nature intrinsic to Christian faith itself.

**Catechesis as Communication.** But other key dimensions of Ignatius' Christian anthropology also resonate with contemporary catechesis. Ignatius displayed a sharp and realistic insight into human freedom, recognized today as the human value most universally sought. But balancing this appreciation for personal freedom, Ignatius had an intuitive grasp of the essential place of communication and dialogue for personal life and apostolic effectiveness. Here the new understanding of "catechesis as communication," and the present-day phenomenal growth of the mass media and "communication arts," have outstripped not only Ignatius' own intuition, but also the traditional Jesuit educational stress on eloquentia, exercised in school dramas, public speaking contests, and the like.

Yet in one line, Ignatius has not been outstripped, namely, in his

---

68. See the analysis created by Fr. Cornelio Lagerway, M.S.C., of the Communications Foundation for Asia (CFA), presented to the CBCP in July 1990 and appearing in *Docete* 13, no. 61 (April/June 1990) 42-44.
69. *NCDP*, nos. 434-35.
grasp of the essential inter-dependence of love and obedience. Actually Ignatius’ Christ-centeredness was in no small measure the source of his practical insistence on obedience as the key to becoming an *instrumentum conjunctum* with the Divine.\(^{71}\) Ignatius was eminently realistic here. The “desire to labor for Christ and thus enter into glory,” presented as the ideal in the Kingdom contemplation of the *Exercises*, must be pursued with adequate means. These means must be able to stand up against the constant strain of human sinfulness, pride, and the temptations of the world. For Ignatius, obedience to the will of God in and through the structures of the Society — in imitation of Christ’s own uniquely self-defining obedience to the Father — would be the primary means for the Jesuit to pursue his individual and corporate goal.

This Ignatian approach stands in contrast with a common tendency today in moral catechetical literature to play-down the commandments, obedience, moral obligation and reward, while instead stressing virtue, character and love. Perhaps Ignatius’ Christ-centeredness can incite contemporary moralists to work out a more balanced and more fully Biblical integration of commandment and virtue, obligation and love, law and freedom, action and character.

*Jesuit Education.* This centering on Jesus Christ led Ignatius, then, to a distinctive image of the goal of Jesuit education. The “critically reasoned Catholic outlook in life,” grounded in Ignatius’ view of the world as immediately flowing from God’s creative hands, was now centered on the *person* of Christ. Ignatius’ personal insight into and total commitment to Christ, Creator (true God) and Lord (true man), would seem to be the key inspirational source of Jesuit education’s insistence on development of the *whole person*, all human faculties, both natural and supernatural. This entails “a conscious effort to make education both intellectual and moral,” precisely because this is what the following of Christ demands.\(^{72}\) In contemporary terms, the religious conversion to Christ necessarily involves both an intellectual and a moral con-

---

\(^{71}\) See Ganss’ introduction to the *Constitutions*, 22, on “Ignatius’ inheritance: his personalized concept of God’s plan of creation and redemption.”

version. No authentic catechesis today can be satisfied with anything less; but the more effective means for Philippine catechesis might well be the liturgical and prayer/worship dimensions of the Faith.

This Christo-centric focus of Ignatius’ vision was, therefore, ordered precisely to that full religious faith commitment to which catechesis is totally oriented. As such, Christ-centeredness grounds a number of radical implications and consequences. But this can be shown to greater advantage by proceeding to a third essential dimension of the Ignatian vision.

C. THE DRAMATIC HISTORICAL PROCESS OF CONFLICT

This third dimension of Ignatius’ outlook puts his focus on the following of Christ in terms of the actual powers and forces, activities and tensions, in the world. We are speaking of powers and forces that are constitutive of the very historical process of human life. For Ignatius perceived human life as not only flowing from the creating hand of God, and centered in Christ Jesus, the Lord and Mediator, but also as a dramatic history of conflict between good and evil.

Like the first two, this third fundamental dimension of the Ignatian vision is also drawn directly from key meditations in The Spiritual Exercises. The preceding two sections have indicated how the “Principle and Foundation” together with the “Contemplatio ad Amorem” express the first dimension in presenting the creating God as the origin and destiny of all, while the “Kingdom” contemplation, intensified in the “Three Degrees of Humility,” supplies the source for the second dimension, Christ-centeredness. Now the meditations on the “Two Standards” and the “Three Classes of Men” express this third dimension, the dramatic conflict perspective of history. Ignatius was much too realistic to envision life in this world as anything else but a “spiritual combat” in which the forces of good and evil were far greater than the individual’s own private problems and tensions.

73. The different types of conversion as self-transcendence, based on the theological approach of Bernard Lonergan, S.J., are well explained by Edward Braxton, The Wisdom Community (New York: Paulist, 1980) 75-94.
Presuppositions of the Exercises. Actually the whole purpose of the Spiritual Exercises presupposes this dramatic conflict. This is clearly indicated by Ignatius when he begins by describing spiritual exercises as “every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, and after their removal, of seeking and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul.” This idea is repeated in describing the goal of the Spiritual Exercises as “the conquest of self and the regulation of one’s life in such a way that no decision is made under the influence of any inordinate attachment.” This goal is immediately pursued by the practical prayerful activities of the “Daily Examination of Conscience,” the “General Examination” and “General Confession.” Thus the whole enterprise set forth in The Spiritual Exercises presumes that human life is inescapably marked by a conflict between the drive toward authentic salvific good, and the opposite tendency inspired by inordinate attachments, leading to self destruction.

Moreover to make sure the retreatant does not conceive this “conquest of self” as a private, once-and-for-all act, Ignatius immediately follows his opening instructions with the First Exercise on the “Triple Sin,” followed by the Second Exercise on the history of our sins. Thus the contesting forces are seen from the start as far more extensive and comprehensive than our personal individual weaknesses and faults. This insight is developed most fully in Ignatius’ famous meditation on the “Two Standards” in which the “strategies” of Lucifer and of Christ are laid out and contrasted.

The Two Standards. Ignatius introduces this key meditation with: “let us consider the intention of Christ our Lord, and on the other hand, that of the enemy of our human nature.” The

75. The Spiritual Exercises, no. 1, p. 1.
76. Ibid., no. 21, p. 11.
77. Ibid., nos. 24-44, pp. 15-24. Ignatius placed particular stress on the “Particular Examen,” a type of prayer whose popularity has notably increased due to a number of recent interesting interpretations and new applications.
“Two Standards” therefore represent two basic intentions, mind sets, mentalities, ideologies, value systems, and ultimately two cultures.”  

Thus Ignatius describes how the Evil one lays out his “battle plan”: tempts men “to covet riches, to attain the empty honors of this world, and come to overweening pride.” Christ in contrast attracts men “to the highest spiritual poverty, leading them to a desire for insults and contempt, for from these springs humility.”

Like the “Kingdom” contemplation, this meditation on the “Two Standards” had its direct source in the personal conversion experience of Ignatius, especially at Manresa. But through the centuries it has proven to be extraordinary in its power and adaptability. This is undoubtedly due in part to its firm Biblical grounding, both in the Gospel narratives of Christ’s temptations, and in St. Paul’s sharp contrast between the gift of transforming love and God’s wisdom in Jesus, on the one side, and the thrust of the “flesh,” the “unspiritual,” and the deceitful wiles and cunning of man’s “wisdom,” on the other.

Ignatius’ Sources. A second fundamental source for Ignatius’ vision of two basic conflicting forces was the Church’s long tradition of scholastic and spiritual authors’ reflection on the history of the human condition. Recent work has brought out the many close affinities which Ignatius’ contrasting triads of riches, honors, and pride, against poverty, insults, and humility, have with St. Augustine, and especially with St. Thomas Aquinas’ treatment of covetousness (cupiditas) and pride (superbia) as the roots of all sin. St. Thomas explains how both covetousness and pride can be the root of all evil: covetousness in the order of execution and pride in the order of intention. This helps to clarify the meaning of Ignatius’ triad: temptation to material riches, leading

80. The Spiritual Exercises, nos. 142, 146, pp. 61-62.
83. See St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologicae, I-II, q. 84, aa. 1-2. He also treats covetousness itself in II-II, q. 119, a. 2 ad 1m, and pride in II-II, q. 162, a. 3.
to worldly *honors* and to *pride* as selfish, ambitious, arrogant will-to-power. In contrast, Ignatius proposes for his fellow Jesuits: "poverty" as the firm wall of religion, the rejection of all civil and ecclesiastical honors, and the Third Degree of Humility in following the crucified Christ.84

Among the classic *spiritual* writers, Ignatius' vision is supported by Cassian who groups the traditional "capital sins" into three categories: pride, vain glory ("honors") and covetousness ("riches").85 What Ignatius' use of both scholastic and spiritual traditions shows is his own genial capacity: (1) to grasp and interiorize key aspects of the great Catholic intellectual and spiritual traditions; (2) consequently to understand and appreciate his own spiritual pilgrimage much more deeply and perceive the univeral elements within his experience; and (3) to creatively use these insights to communicate this experience to help others.86

This may constitute the Ignatian contribution to the third characteristic of the new catechesis envisioned, namely, "authentically Filipino." For this means a catechesis that is truly inculcated. "On the one hand, the Christian message must be expressed through the images, symbols, rites that are indigenous to Philippine culture, and on the other, authentic Filipino cultural values, attitudes and practices must be analyzed for their basic Christian dimensions."87 What the Ignatian stress on historical drama can offer is its insistence on concrete life as it is actually lived personally and socially. Thus far most of the explicit attempts at inculcation in catechesis have involved linguistic studies and some general descriptions of typical Filipino values and attitudes. Further research is needed to delve into Filipino culture precisely as marked by the Ignatian view of the "dramatic conflict between good and evil."

84. Ignatius praises the essential place of poverty in religious life in the *Constitutions*, nos. 553-54. See the long explanatory note by Ganss, *ibid.*, 251-52.
86. This again brings to mind Lonergan's "functional specialties," indicative of his theological method.
Promotion of Justice. Due perhaps to its solid basis in the living Scriptural Word of God and in the Catholic intellectual tradition, the Two Standards' depiction of human history as a dramatic conflict between good and evil has undergone exceptional development in contemporary Catholic social doctrine, and in liberation theology. The over-riding social orientation of the post-Vatican II Church, and the world-wide liberation movements have focused the conflict of good and evil in terms of social structures and movements. This focus has officially been assumed by the Society founded by St. Ignatius, which sees the "crucial struggle of our time [in] the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes . . . [and] chooses participation in this struggle as the focus that identifies in our time what Jesuits are and do." 88

Interpreted within the present social approaches to all reality, the contradictory climaxes of pride and humility of the Two Standards have each taken on social meanings that were unsuspected in Ignatius' time. Pride in its social import can refer to the presumption of basic human inequality, judged according to a "ladder" view of society and its attendant status symbols. Contrariwise, humility can be viewed as the capacity to identify with the poor and the outcasts, creating an authentic solidarity. 89 This social view, based on the very spiritual values of Christ's "Standard," also empowers catechetical agents to raise questions concerning the Christian evaluation of the social class configuration of Philippine society, and even of the Church.

The Three Classes of Men. Commentators of the Exercises tell us that the meditation on the "Three Classes of Men" constitutes the psychological complement of the Two Standards. 90 It presents the inner aspect of the struggle between the forces of good and evil, and aims to prepare the retreatant for the coming "election"

of choosing the "magis," i.e. what is more conducive to following Christ our Lord. Today’s behavioral sciences have greatly influenced catechetical methodology, especially in helping toward a more concrete, realistic appreciation of the progressive development of the Christian Faith. We have learned to clearly distinguish adult catechesis from children’s. But for Ignatius, the religious thinker, the basic question was "where and how do the Kingdom of God and that of the devil begin to take hold in the soul?" 91 One response is to render "Deliver us from the evil one" of St. Matthew’s "Our Father" as "do not let us think we can go it alone" — another contemporary version of pride. 92

Within the Ignatian vision, the full objective of these two meditations on the dramatic history of conflicting forces can be described adequately only by a host of key Ignatian formulas: "the glory, praise and service of God, the divine Majesty," "finding God in all things," "the service of God with discreet charity, or discerning love," "contemplative in action," and the like. 93 These traditional expressions reflect Ignatius’ stress on action, a preference which finds multiple echoes in contemporary catechesis, theology and spirituality. 94 In fact the deeper appreciation today of the place and role of dialectic throughout all the levels of human life has helped to regain a more accurate grasp of Ignatius’ original vision.

Prayer and Action. A case in point is the familiar adage attributed to Ignatius on prayer and action, which has usually been rendered: "work as if everything depended on you, and pray as if everything depended on God." Actually Ignatius’ intention was dialectical and more challenging: "work as if all depends on God,

92. Quoted in English, Spiritual Freedom, 173.
and pray as if all depends on you.’’ A recent commentator explains:

Ignatius would implore God for a particular grace like a soldier storming a fortress. He insisted, begged, asked the intercessory help of Mary and Jesus, fasted, wept, and offered Masses . . . Yet when he came to his work and to accepting God’s will, Ignatius demonstrated great inner peace. Not that he failed to work hard and to use all possible human means . . . but his approach to apostolic work was suffused by a lively sense of God’s closeness, a sense that he was cooperating with the movement of the Spirit, and with a practical acknowledgment of the limitations, compromises, and frustrations that delay or halt the holiest of human efforts.\(^95\)

The point here is simply that Ignatius, the human instrument linked to God, intuitively grasped the real forces actually at work in human affairs, and responded accordingly. In this Ignigo seems surprisingly contemporary and “at home” with a number of re-discovered educational priorities. Thus the traditional Jesuit educational stress on adaptability and flexibility has gained new prominence. Such, for example, are the emphases on: (1) devising adequate means to achieve the particular ends envisaged, (2) adaptation to persons, times, and places, (3) care to preserve, discard and add according to contemporary needs, and (4) a courageous but prudent spirit of experimentation and discussion.\(^96\) These are priorities that Philippine catechesis today is earnestly pursuing, whether by direct, well-ordered means, or through more round-about, good-intentioned efforts.

CONCLUSION

This essay has tried to sketch in broad strokes some ways in which Ignatius, the man and his vision, can be related to today’s Philippine catechetical scene. The brief initial summary of his adult life showed how Ignatius’ vision was a direct outgrowth of his personal conversion experience, his early ministry in teaching


Christian doctrine, and the subsequent long years of "service" as Superior General of the Society of Jesus and eminent director of souls through The Spiritual Exercises. These experiences have been shown to offer valuable hints to Philippine catechesis: regarding Trinitarian content, the integration of doctrine with daily concerns, sensitivity to and realistic response to the needs of the times, and proper methodology and adaptation to children and the simple.

There followed a sketch of Ignatius, the mature religious thinker, whose capacity for objective reasoning, reverence before God's creation, and creative suffering, together with his ability for spiritual discernment, makes him an ideal model for the type of catechetical leadership so badly needed today in the Philippines.

Finally the vision of Ignatius was presented as marked by three central traits, each linked with a major characteristic of the "new catechetical challenge" in the Philippines. First, Ignatius perceived the world as flowing immediately from the creative hands of God, the magnalia Dei, and thus calling for a faith response of praise, reverence and service in love. This relates not only to the catechetical theme of creation, but especially to "rooted in the living Word of God," that is, the integration of the basic sources of catechesis: Scripture, tradition, and spiritual experience.

Second, for Ignatius, both the gift of grace-filled creation and our response are Christ-centered, that is, made possible, actualized, clarified, exemplified and shared in Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Lord. This brought a number of insights to catechesis' own Christ-centeredness: the inclusion of both personal and social dimensions, the "team approach" and principles of dialogue and collaboration, and the intellectual and moral dimensions involved in religious conversion.

Third, Ignatius envisioned all this as taking place through an historical process that manifests a dramatic conflict of forces. This can help to concretize the "authentically Filipino" principle of the new catechetical challenge, by bringing out the personal, psychological and social dimensions of today's Philippine catechetical methodology. Finally, certain principles and practices of Jesuit education have been cited to help bring out the relevance of the living Ignatian vision for Philippine catechesis.