To address these pressing demands of evangelization, the NPCCR framed a response in its final message: "Behold I Make All Things New - Rev. 21:5" (54-61). Nine pastoral priorities are identified as a faith response to the changing historical and ecclesial context. The NPCCR realized that these are "general priorities that must be appropriated in and by local communities and made operational in concrete plans" (60). The message added: "And so we dare to begin again in the task of renewal" (Ibid.).

Pastoral workers, diocesan leaders, evangelizers and catechists, clergy and laity alike will find in Church Renewal a profound and inspiring vision; they will also realize with new urgency that "the doing remains." Church Renewal is a helpful sourcebook; concrete, concerted, and coordinated implementation must now follow. NPCCR participants affirmed: "We are all given the task of translating into reality what we have envisioned our Church to be" (257).

LOYOLA'S ACTS: THE RHETORIC OF THE SELF
By Marjorie O'Rourke-Boyle
Berkeley: University of California Press
Reviewed by Miguel A. Bernad

This is a commentary on what is popularly known as the "Autobiography" of St. Ignatius Loyola. The author contends that the word "autobiography" is, in this case, a mistranslation. The title of the critical edition (published in Rome in 1943) was Acta patris Ignatii. Hence, the title of the present book: "Loyola's Acts."

The book contends that the Ignatian Acta is not autobiographical but "epideictic," a work in praise of Ignatius written by Gonsalves da Canara. The Oxford dictionary defines "epideiktic" as "something meant to show." This contention is based on the (certainly undeniable) fact that the work was not written by Ignatius or dictated by him, but written from memory by someone to whom, some time previously, Ignatius had related certain episodes of his life. It is "five times removed"
from the saint's narration, and therefore written by and from the perspective not of Ignatius but of Gonsalves.

Furthermore, the work is "rhetorical," using the devices of classical rhetoric. With that presupposition, the Autobiography (or Acta) is examined in detail showing parallels and similarities and what we might call echoes in literature, history and myth.

The erudition displayed in this work is amazing, attested to by the meticulous documentation and the twelve-page bibliography. But one wonders how much of this plethora of information is really ad rem. Is this not pedantic ostentation, an imbalance in the literary field like cancer in the physical, which is an uncontrolled proliferation of cells?

There is, furthermore, a fallacy in the approach. The fact that a learned reader today can see many parallels and devices in the work does not necessarily mean that the one writing the work had these in mind. What a relief to turn from these extremely learned pages to the simplicity of the Ignatian text!

As for the suggestion that what is narrated in the Autobiography might not be historical but rhetorically contrived—because the text was written from memory by another person—this reviewer can speak from personal experience. In the 1970s in Washington D.C., I helped a Philippine ambassador write two books. He would speak to me at length. I would listen without taking notes. Afterwards, I would write it down, as much as possible in his own words.

It can be argued that the work was mine not the ambassador's. The words, the formulation, the arrangement may indeed have been mine, but it was genuinely the ambassador's work which I was trying conscientiously to transcribe as accurately as I could.

I think a similar case could be made for the Autobiography. It was written by Gonsalves, from his recollection of what the saint had said. Why not accord to it the historical value that such a work deserves? The denial of historicity and the claim of "rhetoric" is familiar to us with many commentaries on the Gospels.
This is Marjorie O’Rourke-Boyle’s fifth book on “the rhetoric of religion.” The Foreword to the present volume mentions some of her previous works. Her first book was *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* (University of Toronto Press, 1977). Other works: *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus’s Civil Dispute with Luther* (Harvard Historical Monograph, 1983); *Petrarch’s Genius: Pentimento and Prophecy* (University of California Press, 1991). She also contributed to a “Colloquy” of the Berkeley Center for Hermeneutical Studies (1987) an article entitled “Rhetorical Theology: Charity Seeking Charity.”