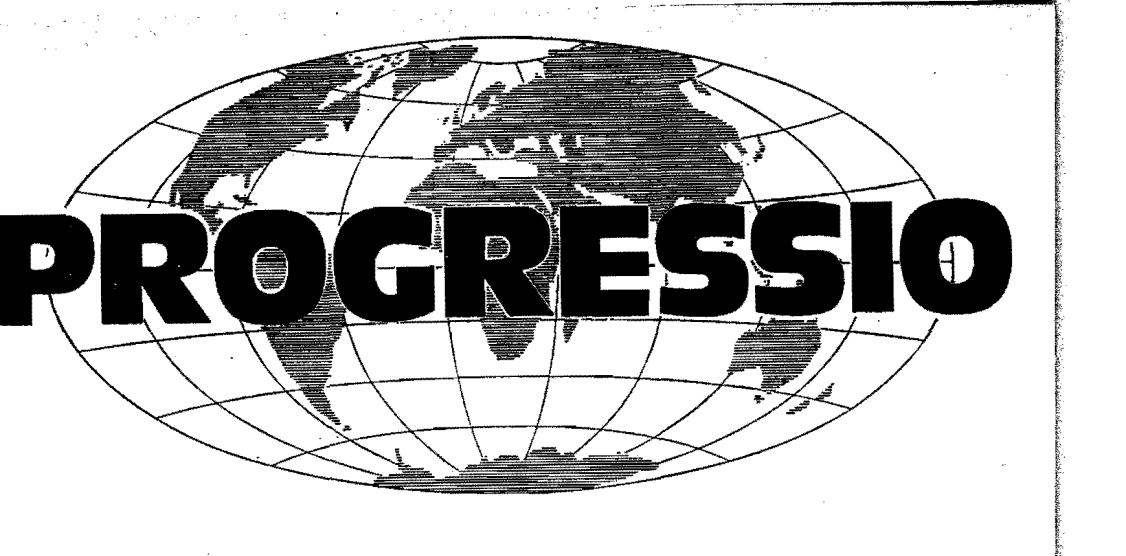




PROGRESSIO

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EASTER

"Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon" (Lk.24,34-35). How consoling for us! The reality of the Resurrection is experienced in this life. The God of life dwells among us. It is no ideal state to be in. As Saint Paul says: "For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God" (2 Cor. 5,21). We have just celebrated Easter: the passion, death and resurrection of Our Lord. Let us dwell a little longer on this mystery which we have celebrated.

As I said, it is not an ideal state to be in and we don't find it easy to listen for the Spirit of joy and hope in the midst of so many distractions and experiences which tempt us to discouragement. God sent His Son into the midst of this state of affairs. In the graphic language of the Second letter to the Corinthians "... God made the sinless one into sin,...". What does this mean? It is difficult to imagine. For example we tend to think of sin as opposed to sinless. This is fair enough, but then our imagination suggests that bad and good do not mix. There are drug pusher - they are bad; there are those who work for drug addicts - they are good. There are those people who are sent to our prisons for major crimes - they are bad; other people are innocent victims of these crimes - they are good. In so many ways we divide up the human family. We even say (with, I might say, some justification!) that a particular person's behaviour is bad, really bad and we sometimes make the judgment that that person is beyond redemption! We say a particular person is a no-hoper!.

But no matter how horrendous the crime, how depraved the person or group of persons or a society, the incredible truth of our faith tells us that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. This God, who is love, is Emmanuel - God with us. The shabbiness and destruction and lack of respect within the human family for fellow human beings and this world of ours, makes this truth unimaginable at times.

This brings us back to the simple statement: "...God made the sinless one into sin,...". There is a very basic truth in our spirituality which says that God in Jesus has definitively taken His place in our hearts. It is that place which St. Paul calls our hidden self (Eph.3,16). This truth tells us that nothing can remove God from this place within us, not even mortal sin. Such evil does not remove God, rather we move ourselves away from that hidden self or our true self. We can then define our sinfulness as the distance between where we live our lives and our true self which is hidden.

Notice too, that at the same time that we distance ourselves from our own true selves, we also distance ourselves from our neighbour. We ignore, we forget or are ignorant of that same place within our neighbour's heart. We cease being a sign, or certainly a less effective witness to the truth of God's Presence within the human family. We literally do not see what is before our eyes or block it out because the pain and evil and darkness is overwhelming. The torture of the Body of Christ goes on in our brothers and sister and in our own hearts too! We are so like the Pharisees because most of the evil that happens occurs while we are being so sincere and well intentioned. In the way they are portrayed, the pharisees seem to be utterly oblivious of the disfigurement within their hearts.

While we can state the truth that God in Jesus has taken His place definitively in our hearts, we must also state the corollary. It is a fact that the spirit of evil can infect our emotional life, our imaginative or phantasy life and our intellectual life, and our choices, but it can never overcome that inner core which is the Sovereign point of the Spirit. God in Jesus has expressed in His Passion, Death and Resurrection His triumph over evil.

So, in the language of St Paul, when "God made the sinless one into sin,..." God let evil come right up close to Himself so that He became vulnerable in Jesus to the power of evil and its expression within His feelings,

His imagination and His understanding. What they did to Jesus in all their destructiveness (wittingly and unwittingly) is a measure of what was happening within their own lives. We are really no different. God allowed the consequences of such destruction to wash over His Son, who through it all, remained in perfect union of love with the One He called Abba Father. When all seemed to be at an end, Jesus said: "It is accomplished" (John, 19,30). He was not talking about obliteration but the end of a passageway. The passageway is always open at the end, even though our feelings, our imagination and our reflections on experience and our choices might suggest the opposite. So what looked like a dead end to most of the people around Jesus meant in truth a decisive step on His journey. He said: "It is accomplished". Jesus is the first of many brothers and sisters on their way back to His Father and Our Father.

Tim Quinlan s.j.

* * * * *

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IGNATIAN MAN

The theoretical horizon in which we move, owing to its vastness and its concreteness, obliges us to have a personal idea about man, his characteristics, and the goals that he should strive for. It is therefore useful to specify them and to try to understand, between the lines, what St. Ignatius says, so as to discover what view of man he has. A pedagogy cannot be put together if there isn't as well an ideological horizon supporting it: ideas guide our concrete choices.

In order to catch something of Ignatius's

(*) Taken from "Cristiani nel Mondo", publication of the Italian CLC.

thought, I wish to underline a difficulty: Ignatius does not provide, whether explicitly or directly an anthropology, a philosophico-theological system, or a systematic treatment or exposition. He records experiences, reflections on those experiences, which, as happens for every human person, have many dimensions.

We could pause on one such dimension, that connects all the others: seeking and finding God, the mystique of service, or, in one of Nadal's formulas, contemplatives in action. These are all definitions or attributes that are given to man and that are, surely, central. By means of them, one may arrive at the core of the person.

Making now a sort of tracking shot, we note that the autobiography describes the life of Ignatius as a path, the history of a pilgrim, a history that serves to found the Jesuits. It's the story of a discernment for finding the will of God. Ignatius offers a description of himself, but not an abstract ideal of himself. His Spiritual Exercises are a means of preparing for and arranging the removal of the disorderly ties within oneself and then seeking out and finding the divine will in the organization of one's own life. It's a way of preparing and disposing the person, it is not a treatise on man as such.

Furthermore, the Exercises were completed over a number of years. From time to time Ignatius discovered something useful and added it to his original experience. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus too are not a code of law, but rather a key document for spiritual discernment. As P. Maurizio Costa s.j. states, they are a letter halfway between a previous experience which seeks to exercise an influence on experiences which follow after it. From the founder's experience one arrives today at the life of the Society of Jesus, and the Constitutions place themselves halfway, as a criterion for discernment.

I have wondered why Ignatius did not make a definition of man; probably because he didn't want to get into theological disputes over content. He especially, who had

lived in various universities and had seen various conflicts between the different schools, didn't want to take any theoretical positions.

What was important to him was something else: to grasp how we function and what are our structures. Ignatius is much more attentive to the organization of people, to their structure, to the dynamics that are implicit in their actions. It is precisely for this reason that the Exercises are a book that goes across the centuries and transcends nationalities. It is capable of capturing the structures of the meeting of man with God, by not tying itself down to a content that is transitory, or that is tied to some specific culture. Furthermore, Ignatius' work is more than anything else inductive, and starts from experience, and records his experiences and the experiences of those persons who have followed him. It must necessarily seem to become a fragmentary work, but, in it, every point and every phase of this itinerary has its importance.

We may speak of the first week of the Exercises, but this leads to the second; nor may one speak of the third week, without referring to the other earlier ones. Each one has a value in itself that must be respected, but each is mutually tied to all the others. We cannot say: this is the core, and the rest is ancillary. What is there instead, is a core that is broken down into many parts, and each part has its importance.

Who is man, for Ignatius?

We may now formulate a proposal for specifying the characteristics of the Ignatian man. Thomas suggests that, for Ignatius, man is a pilgrim in history. This statement is supported by the definition that Ignatius gives of himself in his autobiography: he in fact calls himself the pilgrim.

From the time he disembarks at Gaeta and starts off toward Rome and enters the city on Palm Sunday, as if it were the entrance into Jerusalem, he will continue to call himself a pilgrim, and go on doing so during the

period of his studies. He's a "pilgrim in history", and that is obtained from the Spiritual Exercises as well. How is it that we can get this definition or characteristic of man from the Exercises? There are many reasons:

- a. The Exercises are inserted in time and impregnated with it and with its rhythms. One is not told: "have this experience", but have it according to certain times and rhythms. That is, the day is defined by these times, and in the formulation of the Exercises there is a diversity of times. Then too, he has divided the Exercises up into weeks, which are a measure of time, considered as stages of growth.
- b. The Exercises are an introduction and method, so that each person may contemplate better and more fully. It's a method that calls for a development after which one may contemplate better. It's important to have a view of man, impregnated with time (as he is) and who develops in time.
- c. Another element is education towards freedom within a situation. Man's freedom is not something abstract, but operates in various situations. So it is a freedom which is offered. The Exercises begin in this way: "It will be profitable for the one who is to go through the Exercises to enter upon them with magnanimity and generosity towards his Creator and Lord, and to offer Him his entire will and liberty" (Ann.5). They end with the offering of freedom: "Take and receive, Lord, all my freedom". It's a freedom that must disentangle itself from pairs that appear to be in dialectical opposition (and in part are in fact so): wealth and poverty, health and sickness, life and death. It is between these situations that man must channel his freedom, and confronted by a still more specific situation, he finds that his freedom is tested.

How do I move? What do I choose? Where is my inclination? Freedom within the situation is refined still more through the particular study of the Additions. Ignatius says: "Perform the Particular Examen on the

additions". We in fact know very well the minuteness of the Additions, and on these it is necessary to exercise oneself with the particular examen. This means that one is free to relate to even the smallest meanderings of the organization of a day within the Exercises. Thus is freedom exercised in the situation. It is not a freedom which, automatically, signifies progress, it is a freedom in which one may also go backwards. So it isn't to be taken for granted that by getting into the itinerary, into the range and order of the Exercises that one will necessarily grow. One may stall, or go backwards.

- d. So it is possible to see as a characteristic of this pilgrim an opening up to the more (*magis*). In fact, there is always one step more to be taken, since we are dealing with a God who is "*semper major*" ('always greater'), a "more" that leads us to the "all" at the end of the Exercises: "so that I may love and serve the Lord in everything" (Take and receive, Lord, all my freedom) (Sp.Ex.n.234).
- e. Another characteristic of the Exercises, which allows us to affirm that we are pilgrims in history, is a faithfulness to history which they try to foster in us. It's the faithfulness to the history of each day of the exercises with its own schedule. Then there's the discovery of one's own life story, and faithfulness to that. How often the Exercises make us look back at our own history and take it up again. Our own history is inserted in time within the larger movements of our own era. Over and above these there is a history which is the authentic expression of the whole history of man. The Exercises ask us to consider and to experience the meaning of Jesus in the history of salvation. The Exercises tell us to recall this story; whoever guides the Exercises gives the core of the story that becomes a mystery for us. This is the true story, the true warp and weave which the Exercises lead us to enter. We penetrate the history of Jesus the Lord through contemplation, and we even insert ourselves into it with our senses, so that our whole

person enters into what is the true story, the matrix of the whole history of mankind, the history of salvation.

- f. There's another element that the Exercises are continuously stimulating, and it is the idea of a path to be travelled, a path that we find in the composition of place (Sp.Ex.n.91), in the call of the eternal King. The first image that is offered us is to "place" the Lord in the places where He went to pray. We are then invited to see a Christ that walks along the roads of the world.

The first element of this setting which we are invited to imagine is where we are to walk; it lies in the contemplation of the Nativity, in the 3rd point (n.116): "see and consider what they are doing, for example, making the journey and labouring...". Within this same contemplation of the Nativity, seeing comes before everything else, it orients us towards "walking the path". Naturally, we tend to have a static image of the Nativity, but here we are told to see how they walk and work. So also, in other compositions of place, the idea of the path is brought forward (in Jesus' agony in the garden, in the last supper). And the mysteries of the passion too are seen as a path (from Anna's house to Caiphas', from Caiphas' house to Pilate's). These are all places of pilgrimage that end up at the cross. It's an itinerary that unfolds until we reach Calvary. All this confirms the idea that Ignatius has of man: he is a man walking through history.

A pilgrim in history

After having presented one fundamental description of a person according to Ignatius, I would now like to make explicit a number of other characteristics.

1.- Our pilgrimage, especially according to the Exercises, has God himself as its starting point. We are created (so begins the Principle and the Foundation); our

starting point is the being created by God, we start from God. When this formula is used, the reference is always to the starting point, from whence we have our origin, and our Creator. These Exercises are a path pursued in light of the one who has created us. The point of arrival is God himself. We start from God to reach God. We were created to praise, revere and serve God. We start from God and reach God in praising, reverencing and serving, and it is in this manner that we save our soul. The aim of the pilgrimage, in the first place is not to save ourselves but to praise, revere and serve God, and thus we are saved. There is here a coincidence of aims, and perhaps some subordination of one to another: our salvation is subordinate to praising, revering and serving God. All this corrects some views that we might have of ourselves, according to which, we are first of all engaged in saving ourselves, in our own self realization. So that whether God exists or not is secondary. But the Exercises say: First there is praise, reverence and service to God; first of all look outside yourself, towards God, then look within yourself and thus save yourself. Otherwise we fall into the temptation that Jesus was subject to on the cross: "if you are the son of God, save yourself".

We then see that the sense of this pilgrimage is open to a universal dimension, to the measure of God, to the measure of all creation. It's a pilgrimage that is realized within a particular history, that moves within a space, which space is God's space. The path is always God, going through Jesus the Lord. There are different stages that characterize this pilgrimage, but they all have, as their common reference point, the eternal King that we wish to acquaint ourselves with intimately, entering into His mystery through contemplation, until the third degree of humility is reached.

We start from God, and then we reach God, and the path is through Jesus the Lord, who manifests God to us, who incarnates God in our midst.

2.- What could be the fundamental attitudes that the Exercises want to form within our personalities? One

attitude to be lived out in this pilgrimage is the seeking and finding the will of God in all things. The formula that is often repeated here is "seek and find God in all things".

Every thing takes on an attitude of seeking, of questioning: what is God's will? The Exercises tend to evoke these questions: what have I done? What am I doing, what must I do, for Christ? Seek! The Exercises tend to excite a desire for seeking: to have in all things, whether interior or exterior, a universal view. Even through the position of the body in prayer we seek the will of God, with such an attitude we seek to find God in all created things. In this way we discover the will of God, and do not invent it.

3.- Another fundamental attitude is right intention. In the Exercises no.46, we read: "Ask for the grace, so that all my intentions, actions, operations, are purely ordered". Or, in those passages in which the Exercises say: "Only" or "solely". Let us consider the strength of these adverbs, which one must always pay close attention to, in reading Ignatian texts. I have before my eyes only God, I do not lead God to my plans, but I am the one to go towards God's plan. Thus, one must order one's affections, so that they are purely ordered towards this plan, the sole aim of my life. Right intention, furthermore, permits a universality of application since, with this universal outlook, that seeks only God, I can insert Him into every situation, and see Him in every thing.

Right intention has as its prerequisite indifference, which does not mean a negative attitude towards one's affections. It means being free with regard to these affections, because I am oriented towards the basic goal of my life, and there is no affection that determines me or makes me deviate from it. I assess and examine what affection is the most suitable one to follow, which will support me in reaching that basic goal.

4.- Another attitude is the discrete "more", as Maurizio Costa s.j. underlines, when he speaks of Ignatius's

autobiography. It isn't a matter of the "maximum" to be reached, but rather of a search that shows us how in the present situation we can make one more step towards the basic goal of my life which is God. This is what Ignatius tells us: "it is my earnest desire and my deliberated choice ...to imitate Thee in bearing all wrongs and all abuse and all poverty ... should Thy most Holy Majesty deign to choose and admit me" (Sp.Ex.n.98). It's true that this is the maximum that I wish to reach, but it must be according to the Will of God.

Furthermore, this "more" isn't such because of some comparison with others, but is rather a "more" arising out of comparison within myself.

The characteristics of the mature person

Now, I wish to talk to you about the characteristics of the mature person, of this mature pilgrim in the Exercises.

- a. It is said that the Exercises are a fundamental experience that is to be pursued. A segment of one's own history is being lived, is being sifted in all its details, so that it may become then a school, a way of living. The Exercises are only intended to be an introduction, a method for helping someone to contemplate properly and more fully. Within the fundamental experience of the Exercises, one characteristic of the capable person is that of being able to say: "I want and desire, and it is my firm decision".

A person who speaks in this way is master of himself or herself; this expression is used by Ignatius in his rules with regard to eating (no.216). This is already a special moment in which we see a person who has attained self mastery, who wants to love and serve the Divine Majesty in everything.

- b. This is a person, then, who is capable of progressing, since he/she cannot forget the dynamics of the "more" experienced during the Exercises. It's a style of

living, since God can never be praised enough, can never be revered or served enough; and the world will never be just or beautiful enough, or transparent enough to the presence of God. This person is a pilgrim, then, who has never arrived, who is never still, since there is always the possibility of something better. This can be seen in the commitment that he gives to prayer, where, even if he is desolate while contemplating, and would like to cut it short, he remains to the end of the hour, or even a minute longer. The same thing is seen in the rules with regard to eating, if he has set himself an amount of food and feels an appetite for more when he sees the portion, he takes less. If he acts in this manner, he will be capable of making decisions in everyday life, and thus he will not be torn this way and that by mere sentimentality.

- c. For a man of the Exercises who develops in this way, the will of God is felt, rather than laboriously discovered. He is capable of feeling what God's will is (and this is what the Exercises aim at). It is interesting to note how Ignatius, in his autobiography, during a time of scruples, says to God: "Give me the means of getting out of this, even if I have to follow a dog's scent" (n.23). This becomes a characteristic of knowing God's will, to have a scent for God's will, a felt will-of-God, putting oneself on guard against the first instinctive reactions, which make themselves into an absolute value and a single criterion for judging.
- d. He is a man capable of living in such a way so as to arrive at perfection in whatever state God proposes. Thomas provides a considerable contribution to this topic. In fact, he brings out the pivotal points of our human structure. He says that Ignatius is obsessed by the dialectical two-term relationship such as wealth and poverty, honour and dishonour. The work of the Exercises aims at creating freedom when faced by these situations, without being led by disorderly affections or attachments. For example in the two-term

relationship: wealth and poverty, one of the roots of our psychological structure is being touched on - the fear of lacking something, while the imagination is continually coming up with desires for possession. Don't let this fear be the determining factor in our life. In fact, how often decisions are taken on the basis of this fear of lacking something! It lies at the root of disorderly attachments!

There's another two-term relationship: honour and dishonour. We have a fundamental fear: that of not being acknowledged by others, or, worse, of being criticized by them, while naturally we have the fundamental desire to be desired, loved and that people think well of us. If we accept dishonour, we run the risk of no longer being loved, being desired, and this fear can condition our choices. Let us free ourselves of this fear so as to arrive at complete humility. This fear, can make reality and illusion change places, can make us appear acceptable, so that we need not remain alone, so that we don't have to run the risk of this failure of the insulted and misunderstood person.

Here, Ignatius touches the core of our disorderly affections, that which lies at the root of them, the fear of lacking something, and the fear of not being loved.

- e. There is another human dimension, it seems to me, that can be got out of the Exercises: the mature person is capable of establishing relationships with others. Considering the fact that each Exercise ends with a colloquy, this manifests the capacity to dialogue with God and with others.
- f. Finally, there is another dimension of the mature person according to the Exercises: a person capable of feeling and relishing. Here sentimentality and the capacity to feel are not confused, but rather feeling is an operation that integrates into itself thinking, desiring, loving, taking care of persons; the feelings

too are all integrated and harmonized with the will of God, in order to meet the Lord. Surely, success in achieving this interior harmony demands time and patience. The ability of feeling and relishing is a growing awareness, a personal assimilation of the reality of the Lord, until one succeeds in making it become a constitutive element of the person.

This is what brings to life in me a system of values, and manifests to every one a pattern for living.

Francesco Tata, s.j.

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One of the workshops at the last Assembly in Loyola was "Mission and countries with Christian minorities" (cf. Progressio 5-6, 1986). This next article shows us an actual experience in this context. The authors are happy to share further details with whoever would like to contact them.

KURUKSHETRA

THE BATTLE OF VALUES IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

Part I
(By Daphne Stockman)

Introduction

In introducing this account I would like to begin by explaining the significance of 'Kurukshetra'. In the context of the Bhagavad Gita (the Holy Book of the Hindus translated as 'The Song of the Lord') Kurukshetra is the battle place for the fight between the Pandavas and the Kauravas: a family feud between cousins, where one side was repressed by the other. The battle is for a Kingdom.

The Gita is symbolic and the battle is for the Kingdom, without doubt the Kingdom of God, of Heaven, Kurukshetra - the battle ground in each person's soul.

The battle then is real and all men and women are called to fight for self harmony and control in the Kurukshetra of their hearts, not alone, but with the Lord.

This is a message for the whole world and especially for India caught as it is in preserving values in a modern society of disvalues, in fighting against fanaticism towards faith in one Father of whom we are all children and therefore brothers and sisters. It fights the fancy and illusion of the materialistic ego-centric success prone culture that is spreading its cancer in the younger generation who are losing their equipoise in neurosis, resulting in drugs and other escapism.

With this background let me reflect my experiences with Leadership Training Service and how I see it as a part of my CLC mission and service.

The Leadership Training Service (LTS) was started by a group of five non-christian boys at Goethals Memorial School, Kurseong in July 1959 under the Leadership of Fr. Briffa s.j. This pioneering group were impressed with the then Sodality that existed for the Catholics in the school and wanted to start something similar.

Today there are over 120 groups scattered throughout India and Nepal with a National Promotor, Fr. Robert Wirth s.j., who has had a deep sodality/CLC experience himself. Today there also exist several adult groups, members who from school and college are now married and are faithful to the LTS spirit in their daily life.

All these LTS members are those young Indians who pass through Catholic schools and colleges. This movement gives them the way of life of the Gita described above and even more.

LTS is a leadership of SERVICE to the Country and

to fellowmen especially to the poor and that is emphasized. Leadership comes from God, Our Father and Leader. The leadership is a call to be patriotic and shun mediocrity. Its foundations are Prayer... Action (Service)... Perseverance and its motto is for God and Country - so let your light shine!

In the LTS one of the most striking qualities is the integration of peoples and cultures. We have Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Jains, sitting together and praying to one Father. They use texts of different religions including the Bible in their prayer services and reflections and this is the great gift of the LTS to its members. It challenges them to cut across prejudices. The LTS puts before its members a Vision to help them move from illusion and fancy.

I give the vision in summary: God is the Creator of the Universe and of all men and women. He created the Universe with all its resources and He created men and women in his own image and gave them great gifts of intelligence and freedom because He created them out of love. He gave them intelligence so that they could study and research and use these resources in the universe for the benefit of all men and women. He also endowed them with feelings, reason and urges so that they could use these in a balance and freedom to join this partnership with His Creator to praise Him and work for all people. Men and women however used their freedom wrongly and instead of integrating their feelings/reason/urges to become mature and responsible, they became greedy, lustful and proud (imbalance of integration) and thus became disintegrated. Individuals, through their greed, lust and pride, usurped for themselves the universe's resources which were intended for all men and women. Thus we have today roughly 25% of the world's people enjoying 75% of the earth's resources and 75% of the world's people struggling with 25% of the earth's resources. This is Injustice. God's plan for a just world together in a partnership with Him seemed to have failed. He is pained and wants to save man whom He loves. He goes through a deep and painful AGONY... THE AGONY OF GOD but He never

gives up. He trusts men and women of goodwill and invites them to become with Him, His agents of change in the world, to fight to become integrated and to serve His poor and suffering people, to work with Him to restore His plan of peace, love and joy.

The LTSer is one of these people of goodwill whom God calls or invites. Does the LTSer want to answer this invitation? If yes, he commits himself through a promise. He listens to His Creator and Leader in prayer, which moves out into Service and is strengthened in his faith in God.

The best way in which I can share LTS with you is through my own personal experience. It was in 1971 when a few of us CLCers made our first Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius as a small community.

The period preceding this event was for me one of great suffering and confusion. My husband, Willie, had taken very seriously ill with an ailment which paralyzed him and it was a long 'desert' experience for both of us from 1967 especially when we were told we could never have a family. The idea of adoption came up but was not fully accepted by both of us. Therefore it was with a great heaviness and that I came to make the Spiritual Exercises.

As always the Lord builds on our humanness, as I now reflect on how he built on Ignatius' great desire to 'serve'... at first his country then his lady and finally His Lord.

This experience of the Spiritual Exercises, which I termed then a process of hot and cold baths, was very good for healing. It was a great time of grace and change for me. At the end my attitudes and life took on a different meaning and I felt called to serve, yes, serve YOUTH. This call was very clear. I continued my work with CLC Youth and slowly and with the help of my Spiritual Director saw the call moving into service of young working women living in hostels and then LTS (apostolate of the non-christians). Since 1971, I have received great abundance

of new life in working with youth. The Lord gave me a "spiritual motherhood" for these young people who had contact with me.

Thus my work as a Guide in LTS is my CLC Mission and Service. As a Guide (a Mother) of the third generation of Town Unit members and several College groups in the past, I find that this is a way of disposing these young people to hear the call of Christ.

We as guides are called to put before them the facts, to help them balance reason and emotion, so that the Holy Spirit works. It is a service of faith, for apparently, we do not see and yet we know that they are slowly moving towards Him. We help them to "get up and fight" with the Lord in the Kurukshetra of their own hearts and against disvalues in their society. I can assure you it is really a 'fight' for them for their family traditions are numerous and impossible to combat like the Kauravas. For this they need the loving compassionate God. We try to introduce them to Him.

There is a deep hunger and longing in their hearts. They are in need of deep relationship with the Lord, since their own religion uses mostly rituals which they do not understand. It is here that prayer is a great means for them to develop and strengthen this relationship.

The leadership of SERVICE is another value which is emphasized. It is not a leadership of power and prestige but of service of the poor. Town Unit at present which consists of Hindues, Muslims, Sikhs and Punjabis, are together serving the poor children who live on the pavements on a road in Calcutta. They teach them and conscientize them through stories and role-plays to help them slowly find their own solution to their problems. It is a wonderful work for most of the LTSers are from rich middle class homes and it is not easy for them to give this care and time.

They organized a walk in Calcutta to raise money

to buy 2 blackboards, some chalk and slates with which they teach the children. Other LTSers have prepared charts with the alphabets in Hindi and Bengali. We have taught them songs and every class ends with a prayer to God in Hindi. Recently the LTSer observed that on one side of the road there were no trees. So they contacted the municipality and got them to plant trees all along the road. One or two of these trees have been planted near the shacks of the children and we have put them in charge to see that it is watered etc. As a guide we take the personal interview of the member and it is during this time that one can really witness to them who are in doubt and darkness.

We have also shared Ignatian prayer methods and retreats on Ignatian themes and parts of the Spiritual Exercises with these young people. The result has been and experience of God, and openness and healing, desire to listen more and serve more. This will be cover in the second part of this article.

Part II

(By Daphne Stockman and R. Wirth s.j.)

Why would we like to share the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius with our non-christians brothers and sisters?. It is a way of disposing them to listen, to be open, to be more generous. It calls them to a spiritual freedom to accept the Truth and follow the path of Truth. It is a process between them and the Spirit of God and does not in any way impose on them. It is the way of the pilgrim... the true sanyasi to use an Indian term.

In this spirit we would like to share how we have endeavored to do this. We are always prompted and helped by the Holy Spirit and St Ignatius whom we love and reverence.

Preparation for retreat

We offered to College and Working Youth (both young men and women) methods of prayer and how to enter prayer. First, we offered and introductory Course on Prayer followed by an experience of prayer.

Pre-requisites
for praying:

Place... Time... Posture

Requisites:

Exercises for proper disposition or normalization (Breathing... Sensations), Awareness, Yogic prayer exercises, all leading to an awareness of the Presence of God

Methods of prayer

Different methods including meditation, contemplation and 5 senses prayer. Colloquy

Review of prayer

Journal writing and meeting the Guide

Experience of prayer was followed by sharing.

This preparation was followed by the RETREAT using 8 themes as follows:

Themes

Passages from

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. This is a beautiful world | Koran, Bible, Gita |
| 2. God speaks to me about India | Gandhi, Bible, Vivekanda |
| 3. The Heart of Man is Selfish | Gita, Tagore's Gitanjali No. 31 |
| 4. My own Story | Gita, A passage from Unknown Author. Exercise on 'Turning points in my life'. |

NB. A penitential service takes place where in deep faith the retreatants write their sins on paper which is burnt in an urn, asking the Lord's forgiveness and help for the future. Fr. Wirth blesses them as a sign of this forgiveness. Prayer is on the Story of the Prodigal Son.

5. Agony of God (part of the LTS Vision)	Nyerere and Al Ghasali
6. God's Call	Koran, Gita, Vivekananda
7. My Responses	Words of a Bhajan
8. The Promise: (Service)	Bible, Gitanjali, Gita and inspiring words of Great Men

This was a great experience for most of the LTSers who attended, resulting in a change of attitudes, deep renewal of life and closer relationship with God through a prayer life.

Later after a period of two years when we helped them to deepen their prayer life we offered them a second RETREAT in which we will try to share the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. Here are the texts we offered them for prayer side by side with the Exercises.

<u>Spiritual Exercises</u>	<u>Texts offered for reflection and prayer</u>
Disposition days	-Preparation: * 'War Game' followed by reflection and prayer. * Exercises in self-discovery or where I am... with prayer. * Role-plays. * I am in need...'The begging bowl'
Principle & Foundation	-Nature walk: Prayer on 'I am a Child of the Universe'
1st Week: Indifference vs my attachments Sorrow and forgiveness	-Exercises: * Seeing life in perspective * Saying 'good-bye to your body' * 'The ladder of fall' -Repetition of the whole... Personal prayer.

-Penitential Service

NB Although exercises are used, they are always followed by reflection/choice of points for prayer and experience of prayer with review and journal writing.

Call of the Earth-
ly King and the
Heavenly King

-The Call to fight or not to fight
-The Two Manifestos: World Vs God

Response to the
call

-The Surrender to God in the words
of Tagore "I want thee only thee"
-God loves me - I respond

What have I done
for Christ etc?

-LTS Vision and Guidelines.
-What have I done all this time to
the call God gave me in LTS Way of
life to be integrated and at the
service of others?

Reform of life

-Reform:
* What is He calling for?
* What changes in attitudes, values,
behavior, etc.?

-Reform, sealed with a Promise to God

Thus far we took them in faith. We will now discern once more whether we need to deepen this experience or take them further.

* * * * *

The following article is a part of the document "Course for the preparation of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius". The Author, National Assistant of the CLC of Mexico, has written it as the result of his long-standing experience in the preparation of university students for the abridged eight-day version.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES WHAT TYPE OF PREPARATION?

1. Why the preparation for the Exercises of St. Ignatius?

The more contact we have with persons who have made the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (SE) in depth and the more we reflect on our own personal experience, it is increasingly clear that "making the Exercises", in order to benefit from the power they contain, it is necessary to realize that they are not merely a passing experience, but initiate us into a permanent dynamic for a new "style of life". This entails the acceptance of a new series of values, the acquisition of criteria of judgment and evaluation of one's own life and of the society in which one is living. In this way we can fill our hearts with longing and affection for what we really want to do in our lives. It means, in short, immersing ourselves in a permanent process of conversion to God, which is expressed in a real conversion towards our fellow human beings.

The Spiritual Exercises are seemingly less the experience of an agreeable or disastrous voyage, than the beginning of our vocational training. This presumes a preparation for them which is strong, lucid, well-adjusted, exacting and, at the same time, helping the person get in touch with their deepest desires.

Time, strength and imagination are devoted to the preparation of an examination, a course, or a sporting competition. The nature of these events calls for a selection of people fit to pass them. On the other hand, a

person is believed to be ready for the Spiritual Exercises by the mere fact of being a "practising" Christian. This practice can be highly ambivalent, and one's religious and theological formation may leave much to be desired, and concern about social problems and social analyses substantiating it, may be absent. This means that the Spiritual Exercises may be changed merely into a "good experience", good for anything and anyone and, therefore, with rather ambiguous and meagre results. This may explain why the Exercises were, and in some circles still are, subject to a loss of prestige. Saint Ignatius' concern that the Spiritual Exercises be given to those who are really ready for them, was forgotten. Experience turns out to be the best counsellor, as revealed by the results obtained. It tells us that good results require a good preparation.

2. WHAT IS THE PREPARATION FOR THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES?

It is not a question of isolated tasks, but of an integral preparation which takes into account all the important aspects of a person's life, both in its individual and communitarian dimensions. The person, or the team in charge of the preparation, will take care of the needs of the candidates; they will be helped by what we are suggesting in the following.

2.1. Theoretical Preparation: Its principal ingredients are only three:

- a. **UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE**: it is not a question of an erudite, detailed understanding of the Bible which of itself wouldn't help much, but rather of "receiving" it as the history of a people's liberation. In it we discover God's initiative and participation in our liberation. Neither would an anecdotal knowledge of the Bible - in the way of the old "sacred stories" - be of great help, if we did not understand what the events were narrating in connection with and as a continuation of the history of our peoples, in our time. This preparation presupposes also an understanding of the most important aspects of a rudimentary biblical culture: the history of its compilation, classes of

literature, inspiration, etc.

- b. THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING: in recent years the rate of theological change has accelerated and some changes in attitude and interpretation are making it difficult to approach the revealed message. This is particularly so if a person has ignored these recent developments. Especially as far as Christology and Ecclesiology are concerned, there is an urgent need of finding where we are - and this goes for the retreatant as well as for the guide. This is important if we want to avoid the blind alleys which faces us in the manifold challenges and events of the modern Church. This refers specifically to topics that cannot be regarded as unimportant emerging during the Exercises, e.g. preference for the poor and liberation theology within the Church.
- c. THE ANALYSIS OF REALITY: the question is not that the S.E. be given only to specialized sociologists. However it is also necessary to give them to persons preoccupied with carrying to the world the message of justice within the Gospel, who have a clear view of the dynamics of injustice and of the causes generating it. This applies also to people who have overcome their fear of social involvement, their rationalisations and their overly simplistic judgements, and who have become aware of the evil at the roots of social suffering. Making the Spiritual Exercises without these abilities means to expose oneself to the danger of forfeiting a real involvement in life.

2.2. Preparation by Experience

- a. THE EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER: having a daily prayer experience for a certain time before starting the SE is certainly indispensable. This helps the retreatant to avoid a haphazard approach to the Exercises and the many difficulties we all have when we first start to pray seriously. In this way he will lose as little time as possible in overcoming them. But what we want to emphasize together with this preceding experience of prayer, is the presence or absence of psychological

difficulties which could assist or impede a deep experience of prayer, as required by the SE. This implies a proven ability to meditate; to be oneself in loneliness (in that kind of loneliness that is neither escape nor retreat, but an opening and an encounter); a serious attitude towards existence; an experience of the kind of human communication that implies that one knows how to listen and to disclose one's innermost self.

- b. EXPERIENTIAL AWARENESS OF INJUSTICE: This means the injustice suffered by the poor and by those disadvantaged by the social system, by the outcasts. A contact with the miserable and their misery presents more of a challenge and more questions for our faith and to our way of living than our closest friend could ever confront us with. Those entering the SE with the mark of this type of experience will hardly fail to live up to it and to plan their future commitment by it. For those who are desiring God's Kingdom and His justice, as is the case of those who want to do the SE, previous direct contact with the kingdom of darkness and injustice will serve as a highly adequate experience.
- c. EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH TO COMMUNITARIAN LIFE: the inclusion of a certain communitarian experience as a component of preparation for the Spiritual Exercises may seem strange. It is certain that these Exercises are a personal experience. Just the same, we would like to underline that, although the "intense moment" of the Exercises is a personal event, the process of their continuation and the dynamics they are liberating cannot be lived without a community: a fraternal sharing community which offers support and raises questions, looks for insights and assists in achieving them. Without these means it is very difficult to preserve the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises and have them bear all the fruits one might expect them to give. Though it may be sufficient to offer this kind of experience after the Spiritual Exercises, nevertheless, a previous awareness and experience of the meaning of "community" will make the experience of

the Spiritual Exercises easier. It avoids discouragement, opens horizons and helps towards a better focusing on plans for the future, with the certainty that what is not possible alone is possible in a community.

* * *

Together with these dimensions, false or faulty motivations and/or attitudes for entering the Spiritual Exercises must be uncovered. For instance: the wish to escape reality, an exaggerated spiritualism or intellectualism, superficiality etc., may be counterindications for the Exercises. Therefore a thorough previous acquaintance with the retreatants is important, so that all of them can be given the right kind of help. In some cases other types of retreat, or a postponement of the Spiritual Exercises until the right preparation is achieved, may be suggested.

It is recommended that retreatants attend at least six preparatory sessions. During this period a personal interview with the future retreatants by one or other of the guides (the Spiritual Exercises are usually guided by a team of directors) will help both sides to evaluate the experience and to foresee possible problems.

Luis Valdés Castellanos s.j.

ECHOES . . . ECHOES . . . ECHOES . . .

XAVIER CENTER FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, MALAGA

1. AIM

To create, in university circles, groups and communities for the formation of men and women who are able to struggle for the promotion of justice in the world, and who are doing so in order to fulfill a requirement of their Christian Faith.

2. FOUR CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS

- a. Men and women at the service of the Gospel: based on that love which radicalizes the demands for justice and is endowing them with a new motivation.
- b. A new kind of men and women: transformed by the message of Christ and witness of his Death and Resurrection.
- c. Men and women open to their time and to the future, conscious of tradition, of a special sensitivity, first of all concerning attempts against the value of the human being.
- d. Level-headed men and women: neither sterile intellectuals, nor devout faithful allergic to the world, but serene and constant persons open to anything human and humanizing.

THIS AIM SHALL BE ATTAINED by means of the University Communities of Christian Life.

3. THE PECULIARITY OF SUCH COMMUNITIES

They are a form of Christian Life characterized by the style of the exercises of Ignatius of Loyola.

It includes three fundamental dimensions:

- Community life: this implies human relations of friendship, living together, sincerity and development of the mature person.
- Spiritual life, typical for these communities, with the proper characteristics of Ignatius.
- Mission-service, with the specification of the concrete commitment to the Community, to the Center and to society as a whole, as an everlasting vocation.

These three dimensions shall be present at any one meeting, and one or other of them, shall be used

according to the group's needs. Mary, Mother of Jesus and of the Church, shall be the model of the Community, of its spirit and its serving.

4. BASIC LINES OF THIS SPIRITUALITY

- a. customary prayer: courses to help people pray are offered at the Centre;
- b. practice of the exercises of St. Ignatius;
- c. Discernment, in its profoundest meaning, for the searching of what God wants for each one of us and for the group;
- d. Permanent evaluation of goals and activities;
- e. spiritual guidance as criterion, help and service;
- f. attendance at the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion, as a source of the Christian life.

5. THE HARMONIOUS UNION OF FAITH AND JUSTICE

Faith gives us the motivation to fight for justice, at a time when this struggle helps us to deepen the meaning and the experience of faith.

JUSTICE MEANS FOR US the creation and the maintenance of a social order in which men and women can, as a subject or as a protagonist, develop their own dignity. This means, in a Christian key, the type of love that is efficiently searching for humanization, for giving life, a plentitude of life to mankind, to anyone, without any discrimination, especially to the poor and oppressed majorities.

6. THREE WAYS TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF JUSTICE

- a. The task of denouncing: in order to enliven society's conscience towards any type of injustice and marginalization culpably ignored by it.
- b. The task of assisting: of involving ourselves where society, its organized efforts notwithstanding, does not care. This will not resolve the problem at its roots, but it helps to get through to the most urgent needs.

c. The task of long-term transformation: to contribute directly or indirectly to the renewal of social structures, so that they will contribute towards a society having living space for all its members.

7. THE DYNAMICS OF THE UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES:

Their dynamics pursue the following steps and are devoted to three fundamental dimensions:

1st. step Initiation: great insistence is given to the development of a group of people as they move towards becoming a Christian community.

2nd. step Deepening: great insistence is given to the spirit that shall guide and rule whatever we do.

3rd. step Commitment: great insistence is given to mission-service; both on an individual and community level.

ONLY AT THE END OF THIS PROCESS and by judgment of all of the members of the group can one speak of a University Christian Life Community.

AT THAT MOMENT, by one's own choice discerned within the community, one can speak of personal consecration. THIS MEANS a serious and final commitment to serve and to struggle in favour of justice as a requirement of our faith, and pursuing this specific Christian path. This consecration shall be declared publicly, to one's own community and to the communities of the Center.

These communities are the essence of the Xavier University Center. Other groups and cultural activities may be developed in the Centre, as a complement to the integral development of the individual. These communities are incorporated into the World Christian Life Community.