

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS



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**Principle and Foundation**

Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J.





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THE FUNDAMENTUM:  
CREATION  
IN THE PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

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### **For Your Information . . .**

Every year at this time I enjoy the happy opportunity to introduce to you, the readers of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, the new members of the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality. The Seminar, as you know, is the ultimate source of the material which appears as the issues of *Studies*. Our new members this year are R. Emmett Curran and James J. DiGiacomo.

Father Curran, a member of the Maryland Province of the Society, is an American historian, teaches at Georgetown University in Washington, and is most recently the editor of the book *American Jesuit Spirituality: The Maryland Tradition, 1634-1900*. It is published by the Paulist Press and is one of the volumes in the series, *Sources of American Spirituality*. Father DiGiacomo, a member of the New York Province, teaches theology at Regis High School in New York City. He has written extensively in both articles and books on faith and spirituality, especially of adolescents; among his publications are *Understanding Teenagers: A Guide for Parents* and *So You Want to Do Ministry*. Both Emmett and Jim are welcome additions to the Seminar and both bring special backgrounds and interests to the task of the Seminar, which "studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits and communicates the results to the members of the [Jesuit] provinces," to quote the charge given to us by the Society.

Every year, too, I have the bittersweet opportunity to say farewell to the members who have ended their three-year term on the Seminar. It is a pleasure publicly to recognize them for all that they have contributed to the Seminar and to *Studies*; it is sad to see them leave our company. This year they are two, Arthur McGovern of the Detroit Province and Paul Soukup of the California Province. To them both my thanks as Chairman of the Seminar and Editor of *Studies*. I am sure that you, our readers, share that expression of thanks.

Toward the end of July Jesuit ecumenists from around the world, some eighty participants, met at Chantilly outside Paris. The overall theme of the international meeting was the relationship of ecumenism and the hallowed Jesuit phrase "sentire cum ecclesia." Four major papers came from partici-



pants from Germany, the United States, Bolivia, and France. I was the author of the paper from the United States, on the *practice* of St. Ignatius in his relations with the Holy See from his early experiences to his time as General of the Society of Jesus. In addition to commenting on the papers, we all had the opportunity, too, for group discussions, the sharing of experiences from different countries, a meeting with French Protestant pastors involved in ecumenical relations, and a visit to the Center for Russian Studies which the Society of Jesus in France conducts. One of the high points of the meeting came on the Sunday morning on which we took a walking tour of the sites in the Latin Quarter of Paris at which Ignatius lived and worked in the 1530s. Even though that university area of the city has changed enormously, as much as or more than the rest of Paris, our imaginations, an excellent Jesuit guide, the historian Father Philippe Lécrivain, and his vivid and detailed remarks made for a memorable and moving experience. It was an apt prelude to the year of celebration in 1990-91 of the founding of the Society (1540) and the birth of St. Ignatius (1491).

**John W. Padberg, S.J.**  
**Editor**



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## THE FUNDAMENTUM

### Creation in the Principle and Foundation

Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J.\*

#### INTRODUCTION

Before Vatican II, Jesuit directors began retreats by talking about the Principle and Foundation. With bracing intellectual clarity we announced:

Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and so to save himself. All the other things on the face of the earth are created for man, as means to help him attain the end for which he is created.

We were following a great tradition, and those of us who studied these matters knew that our tradition went back to the official *Directory* of 1599. "The first step into the First Week is a consideration of the last end, a consideration called 'The Foundation' because it grounds the entire moral and spiritual enterprise."<sup>1</sup> Until the 1950s we had no reason to doubt the effectiveness of considering man's final end, the use of other creatures, indifference, and *tantum quantum*.

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1. "Directorium definitive approbatum," *Directoria (1540-1599)* ed., Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J. (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1955), vol. 76 of *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, [103], p. 642. Hereafter, I refer to this document as *Directory 1599* and to the volume containing it as *Directoria*. I refer to the entire *Monumenta* series as MHSI.



Rather promptly after Vatican II, however, particularly once we had begun directing the Spiritual Exercises one-on-one, we discovered that this philosophical Principle and Foundation had lost its immediacy and force.

Directors began hearing that the Principle and Foundation was not really intended as a meditation, and later, that it never had been intended as part of the experience of the thirty days. As the 1970s wore on, we began discovering that exercitants could more effectively begin the Spiritual Exercises by reflecting on their life history and by “learning to accept God’s acceptance of us.”

By the time directed retreats had become commonplace, we really differed about how to use the Principle and Foundation in both directed and preached retreats. Some have made it the subject for prayer periods or for talks; others recommended reading it as background material between prayer periods or talks. Some have insisted on using the “original”; others have used a paraphrase. Some began asking exercitants to write their own Principle and Foundation. A significant number of us have simply not been using it at all.

### **The thesis**

In this paper I suggest that there is an experience of the Principle and Foundation that is crucial in the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises. That experience takes us back to our roots, into the experience that Iñigo had early in his conversion, particularly at the Cardoner, where he was wrapped in the vision of all things coming from God, participating in the divine life, and going back to God. My principal thesis is this: The elegantly spare sentences of the “Principle and Foundation” both express and conceal a religious experience crucial to the Spiritual Exercises—the experience of my intensely personal relationship with God my Creator and Lord, not only as the One who loves and cherishes and forgives me, but also and even more as the One who is at every moment making me, my life world, and my self. To say that another way, the authentic Principle and Foundation elicits in each exercitant the experience of God creating



—not creating *in globo*, but continually creating my self, in concrete particulars even down to my authentic desiring.

Why take so much trouble about a single point in the Spiritual Exercises? The reasons cluster into three points.

First, the history of the Spiritual Exercises suggests that a much more intimate experience than we now elicit of God actually creating the self belongs integrally to their dynamic. This is a matter of our return to our roots.

Second and more urgently, exercitants very much need this intimate experience today. We conceive the self as incomplete and coming to be at every moment, like a pulsing magnetic field, and not as minted once for all, like a coin. Consequently, a God who created our souls once at our conception seems a God long gone; we need contact with an ongoing Maker. Further, we find ourselves struggling simultaneously with alienation from the self and with narcissistic absorption in the self. In this cultural climate, we need some secure grounding for genuine self-respect and ultimately for the self-love mandated by the last phrase of the Second Great Commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Third, we need to recover the authentic experience of the Principle and Foundation because our apprehension of “God’s will” and of “divine providence” has faded in an era of concentration on the subjective, on self-realization, and on the immanence of God. What can we embrace in the place of the objective “God’s will” and the transcendent “God’s providence”? I will suggest that the authentic Exercises have always postulated a realization that God-with-us has hopes from within our self-realization for ourselves and for our life world, all of which God transcends.

### **The paper’s outline**

If this experience of God momentarily creating is so crucial, how has the Principle and Foundation come both to express and to conceal it? The full answer to that question requires a careful use of some key words and a longish look at the history of the practice of



the Spiritual Exercises that we are just beginning to learn.

The paper begins, therefore, by simply defining some terms. It then notes a couple of things in Iñigo's conversion experience and in his early lay apostolate. At that point we are in a position to describe the experience of the Principle and Foundation.

That description will raise the question of how we got from Iñigo's annotations to the Principle and Foundation of the official *Directory* of 1599 and the one we preached before Vatican II. The paper therefore surveys that history in three parts: during Iñigo's lifetime, during the intervening centuries, and then during the twentieth century. Finally, the paper sums up what we are doing and need to do in order to recapture the fully authentic experience of the Principle and Foundation.

## I. FOUR SPECIAL TERMS

Four words or phrases have special meaning when they describe the experience of the Principle and Foundation: creation, *Fundamentum*, God's project, and Iñigo de Loyola's name.

### "Creation"

When I talk here about "creation," I do not mean the broad term that used to include God's unique act of creation and also divine providence or governance. I do not, therefore, mean God's "loving us as we are" or our "accepting God's acceptance of us." Neither am I talking here about the first chapters of Genesis, or about the "big bang" in which scientists currently believe all things "began."

When I talk about creation here, I have in mind the *In principio* of John's prologue and the first chapter of Ephesians. Hence, I mean a different beginning, a beginning in no way limited by time or place but always ongoing in specific time and concrete place. When I talk about creation in these pages, I refer to God's constantly making



each creature out of nothing at each moment of its existence, antecedent and causing all secondary causes. "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things come and for whom we exist; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come and through whom we exist" (1 Cor. 8:6). Not "came" but "come."

I take in this paper a very different tack from that taken by Roger Haight, whose understanding of the Principle and Foundation moves him to place God at the primordial start and at the eschatological end, with everything in the middle "placed in our corporate and personal hands."<sup>2</sup> I tend to think that Haight's paper would have been unlikely if the Church had a more adequate theology of creation. He illustrates the fact that, when we falter in the foundational experience of God's continuing creation, we have cut out from under us the religious ground on which we can believe that an intimately detailed and urgent invitation to labor for peace and justice can indeed come directly from God.

I also take a different tack concerning the Principle and Foundation from that taken by many current books on the Exercises.<sup>3</sup> In explaining the Principle and Foundation, books today tend to stress God's faithful love, our spiritual freedom, or indifference. *Place Me With Your Son*, since it is a book by Jesuits for Jesuits, is particularly instructive. It cites Cándido de Dalmases's opinion (mentioned below) that the Principle and Foundation gives "God's plan of creation." It makes "spiritual freedom" the theme for the week of prayer on the

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2. Roger Haight, S.J., "Foundational Issues in Jesuit Spirituality," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 19, no. 4 (September 1987): 25.

3. On Annotation 19 retreats, see Maurice Giuliani, S.J., "The Exercises in Daily Life," *Progressio*, Supplement No. 18-19 (Rome: The World Federation of Christian Life Communities, November 1981); Charles A. Bernard, S.J., *Pour mieux donner les Exercices Ignatiens* (Rome: Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, 1979); Juan Antonio Goyoaga, S.J., *An Experience of the Spiritual Exercises*, 2nd ed. rev. (Manila: Cardinal Bea Institute, 1985); John A. Veltri, S.J., *Orientations*, 2 vols. (privately published by Guelph, Ontario, Canada: Loyola House: 1979 and 1981); and the five volumes of the Take and Receive Series by Jacqueline Bergan and S. Marie Schwan (Winona, Minn.: Christian Brothers Publications, 1985-).



Principle and Foundation, selecting scripture passages that refer to creation as an event in the past. Then the book recommends this prayer for the one day it assigns to a consideration of the text of the Principle and Foundation: "Lord, I want to be unbiased and free in my service of you and your people," as though the text began and ended in the question of indifference.<sup>4</sup>

### "Fundamentum"

This begins to touch on what I mean by "Fundamentum." I use the Latin word found in all of the sixteenth-century directories in order to differentiate what I am talking about here from what other authors talk about as the "Principle and Foundation." Some have called it a philosophical statement. Some have pronounced it "God's plan," or a basic plan of life.<sup>5</sup> In his recent life of St. Ignatius, Cándido de Dalmases wrote a lucid exposition of the "traditional" Principle and Foundation. He depicted Iñigo going through the Exercises as though they had already been formulated—a device entailing more than a literary conceit. He imagined him starting this way: "Before all else, he placed before his eyes God's plan of creation: 'Man is created . . .'"<sup>6</sup> This traditional appreciation of the Principle and Foundation treats it as a statement of The Truth, not as a directive toward an experience. It not only separates humankind from all other creatures; it also distinguishes humankind from other creatures. It places creation exclusively in the past and makes God's "plan" an eternally preexistent, fixed idea.

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4. *Place Me with Your Son: The Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1986), 5-9.

5. Among usages still in print are: a precis of fundamental Christian doctrine; a vision of the whole of the faith but without detail; a statement made up of a series of truths and principles that are basic to a serious Christian life; a statement of the basic human condition before God; the basis of ascetical theology; a dated theology of creation; or, finally, a description of the radical spiritual stance of indifference.

6. Cándido de Dalmases, S.J., *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits*, trans. Jerome Aixalá, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), 67.



By Fundamentum I mean a good deal more and something very different from all that, because I believe that Iñigo did. So does Gilles Cusson, the most significant commentator on the Exercises in some time.<sup>7</sup> As he does, I consider the Principle and Foundation primarily a process, but I give a slightly more circumscribed meaning to “Fundamentum” than he gives to “Fondement.” His explanation: “The Foundation will be, first of all, the occasion of initiating the exercitant into an inspiring perspective, a vision of the whole—one which includes the chief elements of the Christian faith, though not in detail.”<sup>8</sup>

I do not think of the Fundamentum as an occasion, but as an experience, and I prefer “hearing” to “perspective and vision.” Vision, as Walter J. Ong has taught us, removes things from us and objectifies them, placing before us the ideal, always distant and unreachable. Hearing internalizes the real without reducing its objectivity, and harmonizes us within and with what transcends us. This latter is the experience of the Fundamentum.

Further, in these pages I concentrate on this one experience in the Fundamentum, that we are being created momentarily by our God and Lord in all concrete particulars and that we are listening to God’s summons into life when we let ourselves hear our most authentic desires, which rise out of God’s passionate, creative love in us. Of course, God creates us in the concrete particular of revelation in Christ Jesus, our *fides ex auditu*. For us, therefore, any experience of God’s continuing creation implicates an experience of coming to be in Christ Jesus and in the Church.

But I focus specifically on continuing creation because I believe

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7. Gilles Cusson, S.J., *Biblical Theology and the Spiritual Exercises*, trans. M. A. Roduit, R.C., and George Ganss, S.J., ed. George Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1987). The French original of this book is entitled *Pédagogie de l'expérience spirituelle personnelle: Bible et Exercices Spirituels*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: Les Editions Bellarmin, 1976). Ganss, arguably the best-informed scholar on this subject in the country, considers this book the fullest and richest commentary on the Exercises in English. I will refer to this work as Cusson, *Biblical Theology*.

8. Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 50.



Iñigo did in his own way and because this is where we are failing. To suggest one instance, John Veltri, one of the most experienced directors of our times, does indeed call exercitants to consider God creating. Yet he argues that the truths and principles of paragraph number 23 “represent an attitude of mind and heart that comes from the experience of being accepted and loved and disposes one to express this love in deeds.”<sup>9</sup> I do not mean to reargue here the importance of looking at our practice of the *Fundamentum*, but Veltri’s stature elicits this reflection: The experience of being accepted and loved consoles wonderfully; but it cannot match the shattering experience of being created momentarily in concretenesses by God our Lord. The gentle Principle and Foundation of our “preparation days” confirms exercitants in faith, hope, and tender love and sends them back to their lives hugely encouraged. But why does it dispose so few to express their love in great deeds of justice and of self-donation to Christ in the Church?

### “God’s project”

Instead of talking about “God’s plan,” I have chosen to talk about “God’s project.” This puts into words a significant change that most directors and exercitants have already made.

“Plan” once suggested to us a reality in God’s mind, somehow identified with God and hence infinite. It had been laid out in the reaches of eternity before creation, like an architect’s blueprint completed before building began. To us in time it seemed completely fixed, and fixed in incomprehensible detail. Our task as creatures? Believe that God has a plan, struggle to see that events in our lives were written in that plan, and then freely conform ourselves. We were bits of data going through a massive computer program, trying to take the right turnings.

“God’s project” suggests a very different reality, a finite reality that exists in God but that is not God. A project is a concrete event,

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9. Veltri, *Orientations II*, 36.



an ongoing activity that requires improvisation and adjustment. God's project is what the Bible records, not God's plan. To God's project, all things great and small are required to make a contribution out of the self, and indeed will make a contribution whether by choice or not, whether embracing God's hopes or attempting to frustrate them. God's project in this last age goes forward only in Jesus Christ, in whom we live and move and have our being. As Haight vividly pointed out, we who are His members here and now make contributions to that project which will endure beyond time.

A point of connection: God's plan began with creation from nothing. God's project begins rather with creation from chaos, as the Bible teaches. "Nothing" is a kind of non-idea; "chaos" may well suggest a philosophical and (more recently) even a scientific idea, but chaos is a concreteness that we all experience. This makes it possible to begin to intuit God creating, for it means that God is creating each one of us out of the patent chaos of our life-world and even of our own history. God draws me out of the madresses and inveterate sinning of my own family and companionships and nation. God creates the authentic person I am becoming out of a wounding separation from my mother and my family, out of the sexual disorders I have introjected from my culture, out of my deliberately chosen and self-destructive habits of sin. When we think of it this way, the way the People of God thought at the start, we transmute "creation" from a distant, incomprehensible activity to the immediate and intimate environment of our coming to be.

### **"Iñigo de Loyola"**

The Pilgrim from Loyola was given to see and savor that. He felt fire in his belly at the thought that he could further God's project and lived a life of towering joy for it. "St. Ignatius of Loyola," whom we were taught to imitate, seemed to have received interior graces of an order and kind altogether different from our own. He came across as a forbidding personality, icily chaste, intellectually certain beyond challenge, preoccupied with obedience and endowed



with iron-willed self-control.

“Iñigo” seems to me almost another person. He had astonishing religious experiences which leap out of some documents even though he tried to shade them out with his ink. His eyes glinted in glee and sometimes in high passion; he had a Basque temper. He felt at home with every kind of person and spent his time talking—notably, with drifters, women, scholars, the rich and powerful. He seemed to fear no one. He did admit, though, that his knees knocked at certain news. He certainly could change his mind. When Salmerón differed on a point in the Constitutions, Iñigo wrote out his own final opinion for Polanco and then added, “but if you think some of this should be changed, change it.”<sup>10</sup> Above all and before all, he was a great, great friend who thought nothing of trudging ten miles through the haze of a fever just to sit with a sick companion. Since St. Ignatius of Loyola seems cast in plaster for pious purposes, I talk here about Iñigo.

## II. IÑIGO'S EARLY EXPERIENCE AND HIS LAY APOSTOLATE

I think the subject of this paper requires that we talk about Iñigo. For we can get the *Fundamentum* right only if we grasp Iñigo's earliest religious experience. We all know the story of Iñigo's conversion and perhaps feel tedium at the thought of going back over it. But we have underemphasized a couple of its more singular parts. And this will be brief.

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10. *Constitutiones S.I.*, 2 vols., *Monumenta Ignatiana* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1936), vols. 64 and 65 of MHSI, 2:71. References to this source indicate volume and page. This work is cited in Antonio M. de Aldama, S.J., *An Introductory Commentary on the Constitutions*, trans. A. J. Owen, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1989), 57.



### Iñigo's early religious experience

We know, for instance, that Iñigo had in hand at the very beginning of his religious experience Ludolph the Carthusian's *Vita Jesu Christi*. But we have not paid much attention to the fact that its introduction is a very long meditation on the prologue of John's Gospel, "In principio erat Verbum." In that meditation Christ is called *salutis fundamentum*, the sole fundament of salvation.<sup>11</sup> In the words of Ludolph, God is "with you not only through essence, power, and potency (as God is with all things); and not only through grace (as God is to those who are sanctified); but also through the taking on of our flesh."<sup>12</sup> Ludolph does not add a parenthetical "as God is . . ." to God's presence in our flesh. His entire study, and Iñigo's *Spiritual Exercises*, are a long consideration of how God our Creator and Lord keeps coming into our flesh. We have long noted that Iñigo's three "points" on a mystery in Jesus' life frequently reflect Ludolph's; we have perhaps not noted enough that Iñigo's religious experience frequently reflects Ludolph's deep absorption in John's first chapter.<sup>13</sup>

His reading of Ludolph raised in him the great desire to imitate Jesus, as we have stressed. We have also stressed that, as he read the *Flos Sanctorum*, Iñigo found himself ravished by a desire to imitate the saints' imitations of Jesus. He determined to make himself as holy

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11. Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Jesu Christi*, 2 vols. (Paris and Brussels: L. M. Rigollot, 1878). See Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 6-38.

12. "[Deus est] tecum non tantum per essentiam, potentiam, et praesentiam, qualiter est in omnibus rebus; nec solum per gratiam, eo modo quo est sanctis hominibus; sed etiam per carnis assumptionem" (*Vita Jesu Christi*, 1:35).

13. Note that this is the appropriate context for a sentence in the General Examination of Conscience (which grew out of Iñigo's earliest religious experience, not out of his scholastic studies in Paris): "The perfect, due to constant contemplation and the enlightenment of the understanding, consider, meditate, and ponder more that God our Lord is in every creature by His essence, power, and presence." See *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1951), no. 39.2 (hereafter, *SpEx*, followed by paragraph and, if necessary, subparagraph number).



as Onuphrius or Francis, or even holier. This much is often pointed out about his months at Manresa. What is not often pointed out is that—through profound spiritual suffering and exaltation—God taught Iñigo that he was to find his own way to imitate Jesus Christ. Iñigo left Loyola on the quest to find his own way.<sup>14</sup>

His way led to the bank of the Cardoner. There, Iñigo would later say, God taught him more than he had learned in every other way and time.<sup>15</sup> The pilgrim experienced “creatures coming down from God and their necessary going back up to, and reintegration into, their ultimate end, who is God himself.”<sup>16</sup> He experienced the passionately burning love of God pouring itself out, summoning all things into action, realizing the divine project in the cosmos in and through Christ. As Jerome Nadal expressed it a year after Iñigo died, “he was given not only a clear understanding but an inward comprehension of how God created the world and of how the Word became flesh.”<sup>17</sup>

God taught him in heart and in intellect how *in principio* means *now*, and how God our Creator and Lord continues Creator as well

14. See the suggestive development of Iñigo’s conversion laid out by Father General Pedro Arrupe in “The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism,” a letter dated 1980 to all Jesuits, privately circulated in “Five Recent Documents from Father General Pedro Arrupe, S.J., on Spirituality for Today’s Jesuits” (New Orleans Province, 1980). See paragraphs no. 5 through 25.

15. *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola, with Related Documents*, trans. by J. F. O’Callaghan and ed., with intro. and notes, by J. C. Olin (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 39f (no. 30 in other editions). (Hereafter *Autobiography*.)

16. Pedro Leturia, S.J., “Génesis de los Ejercicios de s. Ignacio y su influjo en la fundación de la Compañía de Jesús (1521-1540),” *Acta Historica Societatis Iesu* (1941), p. 32. This is a seminal article on the connections between Iñigo’s experiences and the Exercises. Ignatius himself, of course, remarks in his autobiography how much the vision at the Cardoner instructed him (*Autobiography*, 39f).

17. *Epistolae P. Hieronymi Nadal, S.J.*, 5 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I.), III (vol. 15 of MHSI): 238. Nadal’s most famous assertion is that “regnum caelorum illi magno privilegio aperuisset Deus,” that as a singular favor God laid out for him the victorious workings of the heavenly powers (“Apologia contra censuram Facultatis Theologiae Parisiensis,” *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignacio* [Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1951], 2:66).



as Lord. Thereafter he would "find God in all things," not as a fragrance or a consoling presence (only the first of four points in the Contemplation to Learn to Love as God Loves); rather, he would find God working busily, sharing thought and action and Self, and making him and all persons participate in the divinity (the remaining three points). It must be plain why any contemplative who is summoned to know God our Creator and Lord as Iñigo came to know Him would move into action. It must also be plain how profoundly correct commentators have been who connected the Principle and Foundation with the Contemplation for Learning to Love the Way God Loves.

Iñigo, scholars agree, held on to these experiences as foundational, telling Polanco and others that he would die for them even if somehow the Scriptures were lost. In the years of study after Manresa, he would steep himself in scholastic philosophy and theology. But he did not have to wait to learn from the faculty of Ste.-Barbe or from the Dominican faculty of theology how God our Lord keeps creating and continues living in our humanity. Both through Ludolph and the *Flos Sanctorum* and also directly, God had already taught him that.<sup>18</sup>

### Iñigo's lay apostolate

Promptly after his conversion Iñigo began helping others. He loved to talk to people about God, and after his experiences at the Cardoner he could hardly restrain himself from talking about the Trinity. He would learn gradually that he did better when he talked to others about what they needed to hear rather than about what he

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18. See Hugo Rahner, S.J., *Ignatius the Theologian* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968). Rahner begins with an analysis of "a phrase which contains in microcosm the structure of the world in which Ignatius moved and thought." The phrase is "de arriba," which marks Iñigo's apprehension through mystical illumination and also describes what Iñigo apprehended: God continually creating the world and the world participating in the divine gifts and going back to God. See pp. 3-10 of this work.



wanted to tell them.<sup>19</sup> Iñigo has never been famous as a preacher, but he had and used a great gift for conversation and for intimacy.<sup>20</sup> He kept these conversations on an intensely personal level, pointedly using the familiar *tú* with others, whoever they were and whatever their class or position.<sup>21</sup> He would whisper secretively in public places, or gather with groups of ten or twelve, or accept a dinner invitation and repay the host by adroitly leading a fruitful conversation.<sup>22</sup>

Early on in Barcelona and Alcalá, he spent much or most of his time in these conversations. He was able to help women especially, because they were available to hold long conversations. Our best evidence suggests that he persuaded them to meet and talk with him daily for one month. He explained to them the commandments, venial and mortal sin, and how to examine themselves according to the faculties and the senses. He would warn them that desolation would come upon all who undertook a good life, and explained how they could handle it. He left them with definite practices based on clear doctrines. This he called "teaching Christian doctrine" or drawing people to "the service of God." Joseph de Guibert points out that this looks very much like giving them the First Week of the Exercises.<sup>23</sup>

With some very few of these many people, however, he pro-

19. *Autobiography*, 34, 38, and 59ff.

20. Iñigo loved to *talk* with people, but did not think of himself as a preacher and spent very little of his priestly life in pulpits. See Thomas H. Clancy, S.J., *The Conversational Word of God: A Commentary on the Doctrine of St. Ignatius of Loyola concerning Spiritual Conversation, with Four Early Jesuit Texts* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978).

21. *Autobiography*, 65. Iñigo says about the imposing archbishop of Toledo, Alonso de Fonseca, that "he [Iñigo] spoke familiarly to him, as he used to do with everyone."

22. See Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 97-99.

23. Joseph de Guibert, S.J., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, trans. W. J. Young, S.J., ed. George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964), 75. (Hereafter, *deGuiJes.*) However, Iñigo makes no mention of exercises of the First Week, like the sin of Adam and Eve or the sin of one damned person.



ceeded differently. In Alcalá he certainly seems to have done much more with the three who came to be known, along with Iñigo, as “los Ensacados” because of their baggy grayish gowns. Gradually developing the procedures he would record in the annotations and notes, Iñigo guided a very few through a much more complete experience of the Exercises.<sup>24</sup>

### Three points about Iñigo’s practice

Although Iñigo did not keep or leave records of this lay apostolate, he left evidence of three practices.<sup>25</sup> The first emerges from what I have just said. Iñigo made a clear distinction between holding spiritual conversations and giving the Exercises. In the *Autobiography*, speaking about his return from Flanders to Paris for a second year of studies, he writes that he “began to give himself more intensively than ever to spiritual conversations, and he gave the exercises simultaneously to three persons.”<sup>26</sup>

His second practice was to give the full Exercises only to those whom he knew well. We know, to recall an extreme instance, that he guided Pierre Favre through a very long preparatory time of four years.<sup>27</sup> He did not take Xavier through the Exercises until after the

24. Note the distinction Iñigo makes in the *Autobiography*, 61: “At Alcalá he busied himself giving Spiritual Exercises and explaining Christian doctrine.” Guibert’s treatment is older but has not been outdated; see *deGuiJes*, chap. 2, “St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Training of His Followers.”

Of all the biographers of Iñigo, Christopher Hollis seems best to capture his powers to charm and influence people. See his *Saint Ignatius* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1931).

25. This treatment owes much to Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J., *Práctica de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio de Loyola en vida de su autor (1522-1556)* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1946). (Hereafter, Iparraguirre, *Práctica (1522-1556)*.)

26. *Autobiography*, 75. Why did Iñigo consider directing three people simultaneously a remarkable and memorable feat?

27. See *deGuiJes*, 78. Favre, of course, had suffered from scruples and was as absorbed in studies as was Iñigo. Simon Rodrigues, sickly and perhaps oppressed by academic affairs, did not go to live in a little room as the others had, but made a nineteenth-annotation retreat in his own quarters.



vows on Montmartre, and brought Simão Rodrigues through a nineteenth-annotation retreat only towards the end of their studies. We do not know that Iñigo ever duplicated such long preparations, but Favre, Polanco, and others reported that anyone who made the full Spiritual Exercises with Iñigo got to make them only after knowing him for a long time.

In the third place, Iñigo took full account of the whole person he dealt with. He grew more and more willing to categorize not only each person's qualities but even the persons, as the briefest reading of the annotations will indicate. His procedure offends us a bit, partly because we put out of our minds the central fact that, before anything else, Iñigo probed what a person desired. He stood in complete respect before that desiring. He did not press onto people further spiritual enterprises than they were capable of and eager for. Actually, Iñigo was as ready to discourage a person from some high enterprise as he was to encourage him or her.

He also carefully gauged the practices each person might be able and willing to follow. He surely seems not to have tried to draw many people to "pray the Scriptures" or to enter into contemplative prayer; he was working with people who had little access to the Scriptures. Directly to the point here, Iñigo appears not to have begun his spiritual conversations by talking in terms of the *Fundamentum*, the mystical illuminations of the Cardoner. Very early on, in Manresa in 1522, he had doted on talk about the things of God and had shared with others his mystical illuminations on the Blessed Trinity. But he learned promptly that people benefited more when he concentrated on behavior and its reward and punishment. So he changed so thoroughly that three years later in Alcalá he could tell the Inquisition that his conversations were about virtues and vices. Later still, in Salamanca in the summer of 1527, he faced the Inquisition again. His interrogators wanted to know what he included in his talk "about the things of God"; and Iñigo said, "We speak sometimes about one virtue, sometimes about another, praising it; sometimes



about one vice, sometimes about another, condemning it."<sup>28</sup> He gave them "all his papers concerning the exercises"; and, although he remembered that the long interrogation touched on the Blessed Trinity and the Eucharist, his story suggests that the real question was virtue and sin.<sup>29</sup>

### Annotations 18, 19, and 20

Iñigo's way of proceeding, then, was to talk with a person first about the more available doctrines and disciplines taught by the Church: sin and forgiveness, the commandments and human faculties, the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, God's governance and Christ's grace. He seems always to have started this way, even, Cusson contends, with those whom he would later take through the full Exercises.<sup>30</sup> If the person with whom he was growing intimate proved able and eager, then Iñigo would try going beyond this doctrine-and-holy-practice stage to draw him or her to a more intimate grasp of God working in the self and in the world. At this juncture he would try to share with people what God had given him at Loyola, Manresa, and the Cardoner.

In Annotations 18, 19, and 20 Iñigo codified this way of proceeding, developed at Manresa, Barcelona, Alcalá, and Salamanca between the fall of 1522 and his departure for Paris in September of 1527. In these annotations, Iñigo classifies various kinds of exercitants and suggests the processes and materials appropriate to their various kinds of experiences in the Exercises.

In Annotation 18, the longest of the annotations, Iñigo envisions the director in two situations. In the first the director is already

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28. *Autobiography*, 67.

29. *Autobiography*, 67-69. Iñigo himself concluded after this encounter that he needed further training in theology.

30. Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 51. In Cusson's mind, these prolonged spiritual conversations form the *process* of the Foundation, and the broad range over the primary truths of Revelation forms its *content*.



aware of the qualities of the person he deals with when he begins spiritual conversations. Perhaps he knows he is dealing with a person who is illiterate or has little natural ability. Or again, he may know that the person is reasonably well endowed, but he recognizes “one who wishes no further help than some instruction and the attainment of a certain degree of peace of soul.” In this situation, the director gives such a person the examens and the First Method of Prayer on the Commandments, the capital sins, and the powers of the soul.<sup>31</sup> Iñigo suggests catechizing this person. He does not mention the Principle and Foundation.

The second situation envisions a director moving into the Exercises but discovering that “the exercitant has little aptitude or little physical strength, . . . that he is one from whom little fruit is to be expected.” In this case the director takes as suitable material “some of the easier exercises as a preparation for confession.” He will take the exercitant through the First Week—precisely as a thorough preparation to receive the sacrament of reconciliation—but he will not get into deeper things. Specifically, Iñigo recommends against “taking up the matter dealing with the Choice of a Way of Life.”

Now the “Introduction to the Consideration of Different States of Life” (*SpEx* [135]) is the first mention made in the book of the Exercises concerning the choice of a way of life, and it appears only well along in the materials for the Second Week. In fact, this introduction suggests a way of getting the exercitant into the Two Standards, which is scheduled for the fourth day of the Second Week. Since Iñigo has suggested giving this kind of exercitant only the First Week, why would he specifically recommend that the director not “take up the matter dealing with the Choice of a Way of Life”?

The reason seems to be that Iñigo and early directors connected some material placed early on in the *Spiritual Exercises* with the process of election. From the time Iñigo wrote this annotation up to the publication of the official *Directory* in 1599, the *Fundamentum*

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31. *SpEx* nos. 238-248.



was considered part of the matter connected with the Choice of a Way of Life. "He [the director] ought, however, to take good care that the knowledge of this truth which the Foundation sets forth is as deeply rooted in [the exercitant's] mind as possible; for as the foundation of a building sustains the whole weight of it, so this truth underlies all the Exercises, and especially the rules of Election, which almost entirely depend upon it."<sup>32</sup>

If Iñigo precludes using the Fundamentum with exercitants who fall under Annotation 18, he explicitly includes it for those who fall under Annotation 19. Here, Iñigo addresses the case of a person who "is educated or talented" and gives a lot of promise, but is engaged.<sup>33</sup> The director encourages this person to take an hour and a half daily for the Exercises. He proceeds this way: "First, the end for which man is created should be explained to him," and then the rest of the Exercises exactly in their order should be given him.

This is the only mention made in the book of the *Exercises* of the Principle and Foundation, so we need to note two things. First, Iñigo contrasts both the persons and the process in Annotations 19 with those he described in Annotation 18. He then conspicuously connects the Fundamentum with making the whole of the Exercises, the process outlined in Annotation 19. His omitting them from Annotation 18, therefore, seems to indicate that he does not believe the

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32. *Directory 1599*, chap. 12, no. 7, p. 645. See Juan de Polanco, "Directorium (1573-1575)," doc. 20, chap. 5, no. 45, in *Directoria*. (Hereafter Polanco, *Directory*.)

33. One of the clearer lists of the qualities Iñigo looked for in potential candidates for the full Exercises was recorded by Father Alfonso de Vitoria, probably in 1555. They will do good work in the Lord's household; they are well educated or plainly can be; they are the kind of person who could choose a dedicated life; they are not so committed to or so absorbed in something that they would find it impossible to be indifferent toward it. Further, the more apt they are for a dedicated life in the Church or in the Company, the more apt are they for the full Exercises. To anyone else, Iñigo thought the Companions ought to do as he did and offer the help only of the First Week ("Directorium Patri Vitoria dictatum ca. 1555," *Directoria*, doc. 4, p. 90. (Hereafter *Directory Vitoria*.) This paragraph from Vitoria appears just as it is in the official *Directory* of 1599, no. 19.



Fundamentum gave them a lot of help.

Second, Iñigo does not say “to give” the Fundamentum to the exercitant, the verb he regularly uses of all other considerations and contemplations. He writes that the Fundamentum is to be “explained,” a distinction even clearer in Iñigo’s Spanish expressions, “dar” and “platicar.” José Calveras pointed out more than fifty years ago that Iñigo insisted that generally points be “given,” and that they be brief and succinct. “Let him adhere to the points and add only a short or summary explanation,” Iñigo wrote in Annotation 2. Here in Annotation 19, however, Iñigo uses another verb which means “to chat about” or “to talk over”; and Calveras judged that at the very least the word suggests that Iñigo intended the director to give much fuller points for consideration than he will give once the Weeks begin.<sup>34</sup> One thing is known: If they thought it useful, directors kept the exercitant in these exercises three or four days, and Pierre Favre, whom Iñigo judged the best director, once kept a man in them for ten days.

We need to keep in mind that the practice recorded in Annotation 19 grew out of the practice of spiritual conversation that Iñigo developed in his lay apostolate. This gives meaning to the fact that the directories of the sixteenth century regularly instruct directors to “declare,” not to “give,” the Fundamentum, echoing Iñigo’s *platicar*.<sup>35</sup>

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34. José Calveras, S.J., “Notas,” *Manresa* 7 (1931): 97-106. In this note Calveras contended that the Principle and Foundation ought not be thought of as a meditation, but rather—if I understand him correctly—as a sort of summary of the outcome of what went on before the exercitant entered the retreat.

See Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 48f, and Iparraguirre, *Práctica (1522-1556)*, 181f.

35. The directories are not unanimous, as will come out below. One keenly instructive proponent of a bare-bones Principle and Foundation is Antonio Cordeses. He suggested in his directory (written no earlier than 1575) a drier approach with points for a single day on “the ultimate end of human life,” so that the exercitant might memorize the material. Then, however, he suggested that during the second and following days the director should “platicar” and “declarar” the usefulness of the particular and the general examen and the points for each of the five exercises of the First Week. This same Cordeses complained a few years later that the Exercises had lost their pristine force (“Directorium Exercitiorum P. Cordeses,” *Directoria*, doc. 32, pp. 529-61).



What exact practice the directories identified will not be established definitively by the meaning of a single word, but our understanding of it does not depend on a single word. The sixteenth-century directories regularly say things about the Fundamentum (their usual expression for the Principle and Foundation) that suggest a procedure for it different from the procedures for any of the rest of the Exercises. This procedure required the director to see to it that the exercitant had absorbed the Fundamentum and found deep conviction in it. This differs totally from “repetition of meditations” and from staying with material while it proves fruitful. The procedure is expressed in most directories as emphatically as it is in the official *Directory* of 1599: “He [the director] has to see to it that the realization of what the Fundamentum reveals goes as deep into [the exercitant’s] spirit as possible.”<sup>36</sup>

The only thing we need to note about Annotation 20, as we have already observed, is that Iñigo knew people very well before he invited them to make the full Exercises. For such people, Cusson correctly contends, the meditations on the Fundamentum during an opening day or two just caught up and summarized what Iñigo had been sharing with them through the weeks or months.

### Polanco’s Directory

At this point, we ought to note how Juan Alfonso de Polanco treated these annotations. Polanco knew Iñigo as well as anyone else and perhaps even better, and his directory had considerable circulation and influence. In it he divides potential exercitants into four groups, describing how to deal with each in turn.<sup>37</sup> He begins with

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36. “Of the Foundation,” *Directory 1599*, chap. 12, no. 7, p. 645. Some Neapolitan Jesuits who criticized mixing the Examens with the Fundamentum during the first two days had this to say: “Sciatur summum momentum positum in intelligentia et penetratione fundamenti” (Let’s be clear about the absolute priority placed on the understanding of and the penetration into the Fundamentum) (“Avvertimenti sopra il Direttorio degli Essercitii,” *Directoria*, doc. 37, no. 12, p. 780).

37. Polanco, *Directory*, pp. 280ff.



those who want or who would benefit from less, the exercitants described in the first paragraph of Annotation 18. Polanco lays out in considerable detail the processes and materials to be given them. He does not mention the *Fundamentum* or suggest any of its standard materials. He places in the second group those who have the gifts to make the Exercises but who have lesser spiritual ambitions and want only to put some order into their lives. Keeping these exercitants well within Annotation 18, Polanco suggests an eight- or ten-day closed retreat, assigning this material: "After the *Fundamentum*, they can be given the examens and all of the exercises of the First Week through the general confession and the Communion after it."<sup>38</sup> Polanco's Latin sentence suggests a diminished and less crucial function for the *Fundamentum* in the experiences of these exercitants.

His treatment suggests, actually, that directors might use the Principle and Foundation in more than one way. With these less able or less zealous exercitants, they might go past mere catechesis on the Commandments and conscience, and suggest the basic truths of revelation. Certainly Cusson and other commentators believe that the Principle and Foundation offers an occasion to explore doctrines about God's provident care, Christ's redemptive act, the life of the Church, and so on, grounding all the more deeply the somewhat-enthusiastic exercitant's willingness to lead a good life. Very possibly, we are doing precisely that in our current usage of "preparation days," touching as we do on God's care, Christlife, and so on. We are continuing to use the Principle and Foundation, adapted to our own day. There remains the question of the *Fundamentum*, the experience of continual creation in Christ.

Polanco's third and fourth groups comprise those who have the gifts and desires necessary for the full Spiritual Exercises, whether they must go through the Exercises while carrying on their daily lives (Annotation 19) or can go off for a month (Annotation 20). Indicating a significantly deepened dialogue between director and exercitant,

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38. *Ibid.*, p. 281.



Polanco insists that the director have an intimate knowledge of such exercitants.<sup>39</sup> He assigns for the retreat's beginning the material of the Fundamentum, a kind of front door to the Exercises, emphasizing its importance to the Election. As I have already pointed out, directors considered the Fundamentum as an experience indispensable to making sound elections.<sup>40</sup>

### III. THE FUNDAMENTUM: CONTENT AND EXPERIENCE

From this exploration of Iñigo's own experiences and the practices he followed in his lay apostolate, we have drawn out all the elements in the Fundamentum. Before turning to others' practices—beginning with one of Iñigo's protégés—it will be useful to state in detail the content and experience of the Fundamentum and suggest its connection with certain other experiences in the Exercises. This statement will pull together some things already covered, but from the angle of actual experience.

First of all, the Fundamentum means God our Creator and Lord, Jesus Christ the Word who is Alpha and Omega and in whom we all live and move and have our being.<sup>41</sup> not like schist underlying hills and mountains, bearing all up, but inert, its necessary task long ago done

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39. See *ibid.*, no. 27, which calls for clear information about the exercitants' "mental capacity, level of learning, judgment, and affective life"; and particularly no. 31: "If [the director] did not know the exercitant beforehand, he should be careful to get solid insight into his personal qualities and his ways [*naturales mores et proprietates*]. He might learn from third parties, or he might get to know the man himself by astute probing." Polanco mentions nothing about knowing the Annotation 18 exercitant in any way at all (see *ibid.*, 286-288).

40. Polanco's opinion will be adopted by the official *Directory* of 1599: "He [the director] ought, however, to take good care that the knowledge of this truth which the Foundation sets forth is as deeply rooted in his mind as possible; for as the foundation of a building sustains the whole weight of it, so this truth underlies all the Exercises, and especially the rules of Election, which almost entirely depend upon it" (*Directory* 1599, chap. 12, no. 7, p. 645). See Polanco, *Directory*, no. 45.



and in place. Rather, this *Fundamentum* energizes all action in the present, like the unfathomable network of forces that move the tiniest atom in its inner dynamism and the vast galaxies in their cycles. For God our Creator and Lord in Christ creates momentarily, out of nothing, every single person and every other created thing that comes to be, even as it proceeds out of its secondary causes and becomes separate and individuated. God creates all those secondary causes, too.

Looked at in a more biblical manner, God our Lord keeps calling each person and all things out of chaos. Each person finds the self webbed in darkness, trammled by bonds both external and internal. But each person experiences God busily summoning him or her out of this chaos—out of the frantic wrack of social and political life and out of the inward ruin of misunderstood desires and misfired intentions. God is not a city toward which I journey across an insane moonscape; God somehow already lives and moves before the start of the wrack and ruin, somehow the source of all that is inward in me and outward around me, somehow bearing me and all else along purposefully. My task is not to go and find God; my task is to acknowledge and praise God making me out of all the madresses and all meaninglessness.

We are faced with difficult speculative questions here, and some exercitants (and directors as well) founder in the speculations. We tend to place God our Creator as simply one cause in a long queue of causes, even if the first among many. We do not easily experience God transcendentally causing all of the causes we can reason to or perceive, or God as transcendent Process within whom we come to be. I have found among exercitants that we can and do experience all coming to be within God, however, and somehow know God as the “ground” of our being.

Some experience this in another way. They find themselves enjoying the freedom to say yes to the concrete gifts they have and are. All of us are called on to say yes to our life history and our self, particularly those elements over which we never had control or even



influence (race, ethnic background, birthplace, and time) because God is the Lord of our history. Each person, as creature, is called on to affirm the concrete gifts of the self (male or female, possessing high intelligence or low, great physical strength or little, great psychic energy or slight) which the Lord of Life has been conferring. We are not free to select a very great deal about ourselves and our life-world; God chooses for us and in us. Rather, our freedom functions precisely to accept, approve, and enjoy our concrete gifts or to distrust, dislike, or repudiate them. In this consists our fundamental stance of creaturehood toward God's creative love in us.<sup>42</sup>

In this Fundamentum all of the Father's project resides, transcending everything in the heavens and everything on earth. Hence, Jesus Christ is Principium, too, in whom reside concrete, finite projects and desires to be realized in each single human person. By "Principio" Iñigo meant something much grander than a norm or a moral dictum. Christ wants life for all persons, more abundant, lighted up by the New Commandment. In the vast majority of humankind, Christ achieves this by raising in them desires simply to do the next good thing. In some He has other hopes, and raises in them the desire to live the way Jesus lived, in labor and humiliation and poverty.<sup>43</sup>

Be clear about this: God projects for each human person a concrete contribution to the Reign, a contribution that will simultaneously build up the Reign and fulfill each person in the self. This concrete contribution God creates as an original purpose in each person—as He creates a specific kind of flight in a bird's egg, or in one acorn an oak spreading limbs in definite ways. Then in that

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42. John English, S.J., has explored this experience in *Choosing Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978). See also Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J., "The Mirror in the Field," *Review for Religious* 47, no. 6 (November/December 1988): 816-35.

43. Directors are finding great good in Johannes B. Metz, *Poverty of Spirit*, trans. John Drury (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1968). This is a commentary on Phil. 2:5-11. It needs to be supplemented with serious attention to the prologue of the Gospel of John.



person God raises desires and valuings out of the original purpose that solicit its free enactment. "In principio erat Verbum" and the rest of John's chapter means all of this.

### **A source of the faith that does justice**

Here lies the beginning of the social relevance of the Exercises. Haight points out a crucial truth when he says that "our final salvation cannot be conceived in abstraction from our creative action in and for the world." But the rest of his sentence must not leave us convinced that God's creative action has ended and ours is at present the solitary creative action in the world, "which God has in large measure placed in our corporate and personal hands." Do people all over the earth yearn for freedom? want a just share? cry out for dignity? Their desiring rises out of God's desiring to have practiced "the weightier matters of the Law—justice, mercy, good faith" (Matt. 23:23).

That same divine desiring, I can securely anticipate, rises in each individual. However, when I clutch the status quo too tightly, deeply attached to certain gifts that I have now, I thereby repress any desiring God might raise in me even to right what I can plainly see is unjust within the status quo. If I do not comprehend that all I have is gift, then I make myself the beginning and can read the Principle and Foundation—as Haight indicates we do indeed read it—only within "an individualistic framework and an eschatological bias."<sup>44</sup>

It is failure in the Fundamentum that causes the failure of the Exercises as a source of social energies.

### **The question of indifference**

This raises the full meaning of "indifference" in the Fundamentum. Indifference, in the tradition flowing from the Cardoner, cannot be restricted to some trivial self-discipline, like not demanding to work in one city rather than in another. It does not refer in the first

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44. Haight, "Foundational Issues," 23-25.



instance to external objects at all. Indifference means acknowledging that One greater than I creates concrete hopes in me, vibrant desires rooted in my own potential freedom. It means admitting that I do not determine which of all possible desirings rise in me, and acquiescing in having those concrete desires that in fact do rise in me. I do not deny that I have them or despise myself for feeling them. I do not demand, as a condition for worshiping God and living joyfully, that I have different desires than those that move me. For instance, if I know that I am meant to marry, I do not demand, as a condition for serving God and following my own conscience, that the desire rise in me for a "sweet singles" life. If I am a committed celibate, I neither revile life should I fall in love with someone nor repudiate my original purpose. If I yearn for children, I do not frustrate my desiring on economic grounds merely. All of this comes to indifference.

Indifference may well mean that I have to accept that my most basic yearning involves great labors, for example, as an artist; or entails selfless commitment, say, as a parent of several children; or requires incessant study, say, as a doctor or a priest. I may have to recognize that some desires I feel grow out of what I have been and have become, like the determination to follow standard procedures in an experienced surgeon; but others flatly contradict what I have been and have become, like wanderlust in a father of ten. I enact the first and endure the second until it wanes; for indifference also means that I take responsibility for my own desiring. I have no power to turn it on and off, but I have diplomatic control over my passions, as Thomas Aquinas somewhere said. So I can make my desire for a cigarette keen and irresistible by smoking; I can also make that desire fade like smoke by refusing to smoke long enough.

### **The original purpose and the final end**

Of course, I am filled with varying and even conflicting desires. If I am "indifferent," I acknowledge that among them emerges God's hope in me—some concrete desire to be, become, do; and if I enact that hope, I will realize my own freedom and God's choice as well.



This is the "original purpose" that the process thinkers talk about; it functions in each individual as the subjective correlative of the "final end" that Iñigo and the neo-scholastics talked about.

Finding my most radical authentic desire is precisely the momentous task of "discernment of spirits." For discernment means ultimately uncovering the concrete original purpose God creates in me, and acquiescing in the desires that rise out of it and lead to its realization. In the course of discernment I will surely feel many other desires, some of which I must repress or reject or let go of. For the same kind of desire can rise from different spirits: a desire to heal the poor from the spirit of true humanism or from the Spirit of Jesus Christ; a desire for self-sacrificing service out of an ideology or out of the Spirit. Although I cannot say much about it here, I should point out that each one of us has taken into the self more than one spirit, more than one life dynamic: Christlife, true humanism, the life of the flesh, and splinters of Evil. These four dynamics function within my life world and within my own self, raising desires and proposing purposes. If I intend to live more and more in Christlife, I must continually discern the source in my own self of my own desiring and purposing.

This, too, is indifference: to recognize that I truly want to have or to do something, and to be prepared to act or not, depending on what I conclude God hopes in me. How would this be possible if God were managing my life from outside it? How can I really trust my deepest desiring unless I commit myself to the belief that God desires there, too? that somehow my desiring and even my desires rise out of God's ongoing creating?

I will play at discerning how I feel unless I confess that our deepest desiring rises in God's passionate desiring at the beginning of our self, but that our experience of that original desire is confused by desiring that now rises out of sinful flesh, doomed social structures, and the power of Evil. We have to take care here about putting our holy desires in the dim past while feeling our less holy desires vibrate in the garish present. For we do not discern between



desires and possibilities rising at this instant from vital culture and the eager forces of Evil on the one hand and, on the other, desires and possibilities that were created in us at conception like a genetic code. Rather, we discern among all our desires—those rising in us now out of our enculturating selves and out of the active evils we have introjected into our selves, and those rising from the creative passion of God our Creator and Lord, inviting us to share in the divine project.

I do not argue that Iñigo had no belief in divine providence or governance. He simply did not distinguish God's action in these terms, but saw rather "how God creates" by a continual participation. Here precisely is the way the Principle and Foundation and the Contemplation to Learn to Love as God Loves are tightly related, as commentators have always said. Iñigo's mystical comprehension functions in a different universe of discourse from that of the splendid geometry of final end and symmetrically proportioned secondary causes, and from that in which the relation in God to His creatures is not a real relation but in some way a *relatio rationis*, as scholastic theologians once contended. These latter geometries were attributed to St. Ignatius of Loyola. They are not without basis in Iñigo's experiences and writings, but they do not reflect the man accurately.<sup>45</sup>

Iñigo's appreciation of God creating relates not so much to scholastic theology as to Scripture. For like the biblical vision, Iñigo's "does not restrict that creative activity and oppose it to the activity by which God sustains, activates and governs the world."<sup>46</sup> So writes

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45. Some men and women experience the transcendent God only as very much The Other, the One whose governance guides them and whose providence succors them. In my limited experience they rarely "run in the path of Christ our Lord," as Iñigo wrote in the *Constitutions* about men who successfully experience the full Exercises. They seem rather to live conventional lives, often of true and enduring holiness (*The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. George E. Ganss, S.J. [St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970], [582]). (Hereafter, *ConsSJ* and bracketed paragraph number.)

46. See Peter [Piet] Schoonenberg, S.J., *God's World in the Making* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, and Louvain: Editions E. Nauwelaerts, 1964), 28. I have not found a better treatise on the theology of creation.



Gilles Cusson:

It is essential to understand its ever actual character—something present, personal, and as urgent as “the love of God which overwhelms us” and urges us on. God’s creative act continually keeps us in existence; it is, in God, a call which lasts eternally. Now the same divine word also continually invites us to a redeemed existence. Whether we are aware of it or not, whether we are close to God or far from him, we are always being called by God in Christ.<sup>47</sup>

Here lies the first moment in the process Iñigo refers to in Annotation 15: “[The director] should permit the Creator to deal directly with the creature, and the creature directly with his Creator and Lord.” In the authentic *Fundamentum* our faith meets this challenge: What does this direct transaction between Creator and creature imply? If my Creator deals directly with me, does the Lord cease being Creator? and if not, how does my Creator act precisely as my Creator? What are the parameters of my own creaturely attitudes, commitments, and actions as I deal directly with my Creator?

#### IV. THE FUNDAMENTUM: PRACTICE DURING IÑIGO’S LIFETIME

As he composed the book of the *Spiritual Exercises*, Iñigo put down succinct directives on how to use most exercises. Recall, for instance, that he assigned specific times of the day for making the exercise on the Kingdom, and a midnight meditation for the Two Standards.<sup>48</sup> About the Principle and Foundation, however, Iñigo wrote only the brief clause in Annotation 19 already discussed. But he had surely instructed his companions to place the exercise at the

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47. Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 176.

48. *SpEx* nos. 99 and 148. Since commentators regularly connect the *Fundamentum* with the *Contemplatio*, we might notice here that the only hint Iñigo gives about using this last contemplation is in the introductory note about how love works: “Before presenting this exercise, it will be good to call attention to two points” (*ibid.*, no. 230).



very beginning of the Exercises: "Quod ad ordinem attinet, ante omnia fundamentum proponatur" (As for the sequence of matters, the Fundamentum should be presented before anything else).<sup>49</sup>

Since we have so sparse a written record of how Iñigo himself proceeded, we are very fortunate to have a record of the way Iñigo explained the Fundamentum to Father Juan Alfonso de Vitoria.

In Rome in 1555, just the year before Iñigo's death, Vitoria gave the Exercises to a young man named Lorenzo Maggio. During the retreat he regularly visited with Iñigo himself to get help and directives. Vitoria wrote everything down, and his notes form one of the earliest "directories." They are invaluable for finding out how Iñigo proceeded with the Fundamentum, though we have to note carefully that he was helping with the retreat of a young man with outstanding dispositions who wanted to choose a way of life. This is a retreat of election.

Vitoria's record shows that he let the retreatant settle in the first night, and then the next day proposed to him four annotations—Annotations 1, 20, 5, and 4, in that order—and the Principle and Foundation.<sup>50</sup> How he handled the Fundamentum, he very vividly describes. Iñigo had suggested that Vitoria propose the Fundamentum as a challenge.

Vitoria makes Iñigo sound something like this: Tell the youth to notice how very hard a man finds it to choose how to live so as to serve God. Tell him to notice that some who have mistakenly chosen religious life have not persevered in it but, rejecting the light yoke of the Lord and abandoning their vowed life, have gone to hell. Others need to enter religion because, if they stayed in the world,

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49. "Quomodo in dandis Exercitiis se quis habere debeat, cum exacte dantur," *Directoria*, doc. 3, p. 82. Two codices have corrections and additions by Juan de Polanco and Jerome Nadal. This document marks the earliest attempt at a formal directory. It was almost certainly written from Iñigo's responses to questions intended to get him started on the directory he had agreed to write.

50. "Directorium P. Vitoria," *Directoria*, doc. 4, pp. 100f. To tell the end of the story, Lorenzo Maggio joined the Company.



they would sin and go to hell. Take the young man through all the states in life this way—rich and poor, married and unmarried, and so on. Make sure he understands that, since none of these states of life are sinful of themselves, the malice lies in the person who refuses to choose according to what God calls him to. God makes some people the marrying kind and others the kind who are for a monk's life. In this sense, Jesus' saying "Let him who can hear, hear," inviting us to a life of perfection, could be considered a genuine command to the one who can indeed hear. For we must do what God wants us to do. But what a struggle! When we see all this, we know that we have to depend on God when we come to choosing. Or something else along those lines.

Iñigo then broke the matter into three parts, the first of which is this: "Primera: el fin para que Dios lo crió" (First, the end for which God created him).<sup>51</sup> What did Iñigo mean? Did he mean what an F. X. McMenamy would explain just four centuries later, that God has created this youth for Himself and his heart will not rest until it rests in God? No. Iñigo does not here state universal truths. He speaks concretely to this youth. He means that God actively creates this youth, intending that the youth live this or that state in life, down to some particulars, including diet and almsgiving and docility to this pope and that bishop. Can this be serious? After a second point about being careful how we use all the good means at our disposal, Iñigo poses a third point:

tercera: la dificultad que hay en tomar éste o aquél, sin saber cierto el que más conviene, según lo ya dicho, y el daño que de esto viene—para que de aquí nazca el ponerse en equilibrio.

Face it (to make a loose paraphrase); we have tremendous problems deciding to live one way or another. We simply don't know with any certainty what kind of life will be good for us. There's all that business about freely choosing to marry or not and having to go into religious life but risking betrayal and so on. And the dreadful

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51. Ibid., p. 101.



wreckage in our life if we choose wrong! Anyhow—considerations like this will lead him to take a stance of active indifference, and to be balanced before his choice.

### The lessons from Vitoria

First: Does this sound like a retreat director calmly giving three points without wasting a single word? No author I have read has noted Iñigo “platicando” here, chatting away, or remarked on the style and rhetoric that he conveyed to Vitoria. Yet nothing is more plain. Vitoria was to use several tried rhetorical devices to help the young man feel the weight of God’s creating him and determining his “call.”

Then, second: This instruction to Vitoria, on its surface, seems to make the *Fundamentum* mainly a matter of indifference and resignation to God’s will. But notice what lies under that—a whole world of belief, focused on God giving life and gifts of specific kinds to this youth. No talk about God’s “will,” as though that were a cold blueprint, but talk instead about the inner purposes and inborn aims in this youth’s self. If he’s the marrying kind, then he risks losing his soul should he enter religion. If he can indeed hear the summons to make himself a eunuch for the Kingdom, then he runs dreadful risks should he make himself a father instead. The entire consideration revolves around the intimately personal relationship between this emerging youth and the God who makes him, and the intertwining of a creature’s freedom with the Creator’s—not two equal things.

If that is not in place, then the challenge that Iñigo ended with would have been empty.

It would be useful to lead him this way: So that you can sense how hard it is to use with indifference the means that the Lord our God has given for us to attain the end for which He made us, and so that you will put yourself completely in His hands once you know that, for here’s the *Fundamentum*, where we find what we desire.<sup>52</sup>

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52. Ibid. Also see Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 48.



“What we desire”—Cusson and others seem to take this to mean that what we desire to find here is the disposition of indifference. This disposition has about it something “objective” in that it puts the youth at balance before alternative objects. But we also ought to note this kind of subjective correlative in the youth’s interior, what exactly and authentically he does indeed desire. For “what we desire” cannot be manipulated consciously or willfully changed from one thing to another. As Iñigo said, we *find* what we desire.

Any larger desire reaches deep into our history and into our selves, created there from moment to moment by God our Creator and Lord. We cannot manipulate those depths. Then what we desire emerges in what Ong calls our “confrontational self,” the self that we are confronted with, surprised by, discover.<sup>53</sup> We cannot manipulate those emergences.

Will what we desire lead to goodness and to life? Suppose what we truly desire, or determinedly set ourselves to desire, leads us to sin and to death? How are we to escape that? We are not ourselves capable of reaching the salvific balance within our own desiring, so that we want God first and all else in God. Mercifully, we are invited and seduced by God the Lord to abandon ourselves to Him, to “place ourselves entirely in His hands.” For God can and wishes to raise in us desires that lead to life—not just for ourselves, but for the whole earth.

In this way, I believe, we can actually come to thrill with the dry discourse about “the end for which I am made.” It is objective-analytic language for Iñigo’s mystical insight: God’s passionate loving burns at the core of all things and at the core of my own desiring, so that when I come to what I most authentically and holily desire, I have come to God’s passionate desiring within me. They are the same.

The splendors of this mystery of Christ—that salvific plan of God as

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53. See the treatment of “self” *passim* in Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).



communicated and lived out in the whole Christ, Christ and his Church or Mystical Body—these splendors and they alone can establish us in perfect Ignatian indifference, and then go ever farther and arouse that “supernatural desire” for what Ignatius will call “the third kind of humility” ([168]).<sup>54</sup>

Unanimous early opinion held that no exercitant could successfully have the experience of the Spiritual Exercises who did not first successfully have the experience of the Fundamentum. The reason must be clear.

## V. INTERIM HISTORY

### The Fundamentum becomes the “Principle and Foundation”

Even during Iñigo’s lifetime less-skilled men, including scholastics, were giving the Exercises. Certainly before 1553, Iñigo wrote in the *Constitutions* that scholastics, “after they have had experience of the Spiritual Exercises in their own selves, should acquire experience in giving them to others.”<sup>55</sup> By the end of the 1550s, most of the first practitioners of directing the Exercises had either died or been assumed into governing the Society. Not only were less-skilled men directing but men who directed little were writing directories.<sup>56</sup>

These developments caused tensions in the practice of the Exercises and in Jesuits’ thinking about how to direct them; and after

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54. Cusson, *Biblical Spirituality*, 176.

55. *ConsSJ*, [408, 409]. Iñigo states that they should give only the First Week and should be supervised. These paragraphs were in the *Constitutions* that Nadal took to Spain in 1553. See Antonio M. de Aldama, S.J., *An Introductory Commentary on the Constitutions*, trans. A. J. Owen, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, [1979] 1989), 139.

56. Antonio Cordeses is an excellent example. The editor of his directory says that Cordeses did not direct very often, which is no surprise, since he was provincial four times, rector of a college twice, and superior of a house twice (“Directorium Exercitiorum P. Cordeses,” *Directoria*, doc. 32, p. 532). Paul Hoffaeus in Germany is another example, very like Cordeses.



Iñigo's death this leading question became acute: What indeed makes the experience of the *Fundamentum*?<sup>57</sup> Men debated it for forty years without any real resolution, until the official *Directory* was promulgated in 1599, to no great applause.

During the 1570s and 1580s, many directors, sensitive perhaps to repeated complaints about taking ill-prepared and unpromising exercitants, seem to have focused tightly on subjective dispositions. As a consequence, the subjective disposition of indifference came to summarize the *Fundamentum*. Along with that, directors began giving the Principle and Foundation to everyone, so that some time around 1575 Father General Everard Mercurian could call this universal use "the custom of the Company." The *Fundamentum*, he argued, is "appropriate for people of every kind, whatever their endowment, whatever their state; and every single one needs to be introduced to it in a way that will reach him where he is, so that we have to find ways that suit the Exercises and the people."<sup>58</sup> Mercurian's argument was clearer than his mind, however, because in another document he gave instructions that exercises for common and uneducated people should begin this way: "First. Give the particular examen; and perhaps also the *Fundamentum*."<sup>59</sup>

Actually, Mercurian's two opinions reflect two trends that emerged before or during the 1570s. The trends are difficult to sort out because we have very few records of what directors actually said to exercitants.<sup>60</sup> We therefore have to depend on the directories,

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57. See Iparraguirre, *Práctica (1522-1556)*, 31-39.

58. Miguel Lop, S.J., trans. with intro. and notes, *Ejercicios Espirituales y Directorios* (Barcelona: Editorial Balmes, 1964), doc. 19, no. 2, p. 223. (Hereafter Lop, *Ejercicios y Directorios*.)

59. "Brevis instructio de modo tradendi Exercitia," *Directoria*, doc. 18, no. 20, p. 248. The editors of the directories claim to be certain that this instruction came from Mercurian. Not a lot of conclusions about early practice lie beyond dispute.

60. Peter Canisius dictated points to a retreatant, and these are "of exceptional value because they are the only complete scheme of the way the Exercises were given in those first year" outside the directories (Iparraguirre, *Práctica (1522-1556)*, 186).



which fortunately are numerous.

Iparraguirre surveyed all of these directories and detailed the two trends in using the Fundamentum by comparing a pair of the more influential directories, that of Juan Mirón and that of Juan Alfonso de Polanco. Mirón, he says, begins “from a high level of pure theory and the ideal.” Polanco begins “in the heart of the exercitant.”<sup>61</sup> This opposition, we need to note, had set in by the early 1570s, when Polanco wrote his directory.

Polanco’s directory came later, but his approach to the Fundamentum was earlier. It is the approach exemplified in Vitoria’s directory cited above. The great director Gil González Dávila considered Polanco’s directory so authoritative that everyone else’s seemed to him a schoolboy’s notes. In this approach, the Fundamentum focused on the intense personal relationship between God in Christ and the exercitant, and elicited experiences filled with reverence and awe, like Iñigo’s Cardoner experience. This Fundamentum elicits a process of great desires, creative and active indifference, and the possibility of wanting to imitate Christ in the third kind of humility.

It seems as though only a few second- and third-generation companions really knew how to use Polanco’s Fundamentum—Gonçalves da Câmara, Melchior Carneiro, Rodrigo Alvarez—and they too commonly spent their time governing the Company, unable to continue directing retreats. All of this would explain why, as early as 1573, the laconic Cordeses, whose Principle and Fundamentum was a dry list of nearly philosophical reflections, would write that “the Exercises have lost their force.”<sup>62</sup>

If the Exercises had lost their force, it was partly due to the success of a second approach to the Principle and Foundation. It

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61. See Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Desde la muerte de san Ignacio hasta la promulgación del Directorio oficial (1556-1599)*, vol. 2 of *Historia de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1955), 426-31. (Hereafter Iparraguirre, *Historia II (1556-1599)*.) He stated: “Mirón desde la altura pura e ideal de la teoría. Polanco desde el corazón del ejercitante” (ibid., 430).

62. Iparraguirre, *Historia II (1556-1599)*, 393.



suiting the “light exercises” or briefer presentations of the First Week. This drier use of the Principle and Foundation in the full Exercises appears to have evolved from less active directors and more theoretical writings, and eventually to have found its way into the Juan Mirón draft directory of about 1590. In an epoch when the Company was struggling to keep the Exercises alive, it was this Principle and Foundation that ended up in the official *Directory* of 1599.<sup>63</sup>

Mirón’s Principle and Foundation focused directly on the creature rather than on the Creator, but spoke in tightly scholastic terminology: the ultimate end, the appropriate means, *tantum quantum*. Out of that came a less creative and more passive indifference in the sense that the exercitant was expected to find rather his objective duty than his creaturely freedom.

The practice of the Exercises changed a good deal during the years between Iñigo’s death in 1556 and Aquaviva’s promulgation of the official *Directory* in 1599. In Iparraguirre’s opinion, they went through a real decline during Mercurian’s generalate (1573-81). In certain regions, the Exercises were hardly used during the 1570s and 1580s. A bit of a brouhaha tore through a French provincial congregation in 1575 over ignorant men directing retreats and a little later Gil González Dávila complained that the men in Spain did not know how to use the Exercises. As these bumpy experiences ground along, Juan Mirón’s approach to the Principle and Foundation “from the high level of pure theory and the ideal” won out.

The decline in the long conversation to help people enter into the *Fundamentum* seems quite clear and will grow even clearer when “retreat houses” are established in the next century as ongoing apostolates. This and other developments go a long way toward explaining the increasingly common complaint that the Spiritual Exercises stopped yielding what they had regularly yielded during Iñigo’s life.

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63. The story of this struggle does not fit here. Iparraguirre tells it in sections entitled, to list the less depressing instances, “The crisis in Fr. Laínez’s time,” “Distorted concepts of the Exercises,” and “Meditations added by various authors” (Iparraguirre, *Historia II (1556-1599)*, 321-413).



Much else contributed, of course, including a significantly loosened standard of selecting those who were invited to make the full Exercises, a loosening complained of by Iñigo himself well before his death. But the furnace at the core of the experience shook down at best to glowing coals when the Fundamentum turned to a heap of arguments why a man or woman should be “indifferent.” This was the Principle and Foundation “legislated” by the official *Directory* of 1599.

Several developments in the use of the Principle and Foundation between the time of the official *Directory* of 1599 and the beginning of directed retreats in the middle of the twentieth century will help us understand what we are currently doing.

As the 1500s ended, directors seem to have followed Mercurian’s instructions and given the Fundamentum to everyone. At the same time they tended to make the Fundamentum part of the First Week, integrated into the struggle against sin.<sup>64</sup> This ensured its presence in all the fresh ways of using the Exercises that Jesuits continued to invent.

During the 1600s and 1700s, in fact, Jesuits laid great stress on using the Exercises as an instrument of popular religion. A Ceccotti in Rome gave the Examens and three methods of prayer to mobs of illiterate folk in churches even as he continued in the novitiate of Sant’Andrea al Quirinale to guide the better disposed through the thirty days (no midnight meditations). A Pavone in Naples taught priests Scripture using the framework of the Exercises. A Huby in France invented a group-activity retreat with little quiet time—early cursillos—and produced neat how-to-do-it books that led crowds of Bretons to the religious renewal of at-home retreats. Jesuits watched retreat houses rise, flourish, fail. All over Europe they wrote out the

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64. The official *Directory* of 1599 calls the whole of the First Week “fundamentum” in several places. Here is its first sentence about the Fundamentum: “The first step into the First Week is taken by considering the final end. This consideration is called Fundamentum because it is the basis of the entire moral and spiritual enterprise” (*Directory* 1599, 643).



meditations like psalms. They produced books of meditations for the whole year framed on parts of or on the whole of the Exercises. They shaped the Exercises to lead people through the purgative, illuminative, and unitive ways.

In all of these uses, of course, the Principle and Foundation grew tightly integrated into the preachment of the life of the Commandments. It came to be part of popular religion, a heady kind of religious experience that every person could and ought to have, with the help of good preaching. Instead of forming the subject for long conversations, it formed the orderly subject of brief considerations in the opening days of the Exercises.

At the same time, directors of closed retreats were developing the vaguely specious parallels between purgation, illumination, and union on the one hand, and the successive Weeks of the Exercises on the other. In that process they shaped the Principle and Foundation as a kind of prelude to purgation, an urgent motive for embracing the life of virtue. Directors were often giving retreats to religious, a major preoccupation of the official *Directory* of 1599, and they appear to have stressed in the Principle and Foundation the personal activity of the exercitant, the determined reasoning and willing to holiness.<sup>65</sup>

Directors of the full Exercises, nonetheless—who by the 1700s were few and far between—continued to use what we have come to call preparation days. In Iparraguirre's view, they proposed first of all to help the exercitant grow aware of the concrete project of this particular retreat.<sup>66</sup> This awareness of the exercitant's current desires and projects they correctly considered relevant to the Principle and Foundation, which they never omitted from a directed retreat except

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65. The official *Directory* of 1599 instructs the director to give the exercitant first of all Annotations 1, 5, 17, and 20—insisting on dispositions of generosity and activity. Its tone is perfectly captured in a statement about the exercitant: "Itaque statuat ipse secum viriliter agere" (So in this way he should insist with himself to work energetically) (*Directory* 1599, 583).

66. Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J., *Evolución en Europa durante el siglo XVII*, vol. 3 of *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1973), 440-42.



when working with someone who would not be able to get good out of it.<sup>67</sup> As a rule their practice dictated a specific use of the time given to the Principle and Foundation; they drew the exercitant to gaze on the concrete realities in his or her life, with the explicit understanding that "this is the beginning of a reform of the whole person."<sup>68</sup> God stood present to this process through the Enlightenment's conviction of divine governance. The Governor, however, kept moving further away.

### The Exercises as a school of "perfection"

As the seventeenth century ran into the eighteenth, those who used the Exercises seem to have concentrated more and more on "perfection," which involved an intense focus on human activity. In fact, there seems to be sound justification for the claim that beginning in the seventeenth century Jesuits made the Spiritual Exercises into "just an ascetical handbook."<sup>69</sup>

Jesuits had a long start on that development in their use of the Fundamentum. For, by laying so much stress on reaching true indifference, they had emphasized the activity of the creature "cooperating with grace." They had to heighten that stress in order to escape charges of quietism. Unhappily, while they were defending themselves against charges by their enemies that they had adopted Fénelon's passivities and Jansenius's rigorisms, they swept away all intimate sense of *creatio a nihilo*, and focused blazing attention onto the creature's action over against the action of God. "Make yourself indifferent" differs as a point of departure in a dozen important

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67. Ibid., 458.

68. Ibid., 450. It might be worth noting that, if Iparraguirre has it right, we are witnessing one sign of the emergence of modern individualism.

69. William A. M. Peters, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Exposition and Interpretation* (Jersey City, N.J.: The Program to Adapt the Spiritual Exercises, 1968), 2. Peters applies this epithet to the retreats of the twentieth century. Those of us who made novitiates and tertianships thirty, forty, and fifty years ago will recognize its accuracy.



particulars from the Magnificat's "Fecit mihi magna qui potens est" (He who is mighty has done great things for me).

"Make yourself indifferent" begins in the creature and not in God, for one thing; for another, it more than suggests that the creature does indeed "make the self." It sharpens the focus on the exercitant's relationship to the self, for another, and blurs the relationship of the exercitant to God. And again, it heightens the obligation to be indifferent in relation to things, softening in the process the duty to worship in relation to God. Perhaps most important, this departure stresses the creature's generosity and places less emphasis on the generosity of the Creator. All of this is rather different from Iñigo's "de arriba" and the authentic *Fundamentum*.

### **The restored Society: the *Fundamentum* as relic**

In the restored Society's use of the Spiritual Exercises, we begin to recognize the practices of the Principle and Foundation followed in long retreats until the 1960s. Promptly after the Restoration, Father Jean Petitdidier published a guide for Jesuit tertians' long retreat. He began his section on "El hombre es criado" this way: "Do you believe this? Of course. For faith teaches it and reason demonstrates it."<sup>70</sup>

As his age freed him to do, Petitdidier spoke of the objective order as though he had a copy of God's plan hanging on his wall. Jesuits during the nineteenth century held on to this untroubled assurance of objective truth, convinced that Newton had spoken Gospel when he said the world was mathematically elegant because God had made it that way. Even when thinkers around them were writhing with the probes inserted into "objective truth" by Kant, Darwin, and Emerson, Jesuits kept experiencing the solidity of objective truth. And there is where they fixed the Principal and Foundation.

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70. Joannes Petitdidier, S.J., *Exercitia Spiritualia tertio probationis anno a Patribus Societatis Jesu per mensem obeunda* (Lyon: Perisse Fratres, 1825), 34.



A Jesuit who remained anonymous published a summary of the main nineteenth-century commentaries in 1894. He called the Principle and Foundation “a concatenation of truths which we can never fully appreciate for simplicity, vitality, largeness, and splendor.”<sup>71</sup> The handbook—given strong endorsement by Father General Luis Martín through a preface written by his socius—clearly reflected Jesuit thinking on the Principle and Foundation through the nineteenth century, so that in 1922, Pierre Bouvier could claim it as “the oldest interpretation”: “Before appealing to the light of faith, . . . [St. Ignatius] first states the two principles which reason alone establishes, then draws from these principles the conclusions which flow from them for those who wish to strive for perfection.”<sup>72</sup>

Few Jesuits at this epoch, when Western humankind was losing its sense of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, seem to have read the Principle and Foundation as a religious document aimed at eliciting a specifically religious experience. Imbued with the polemical and apologetic temper of the time, they questioned only whether the exercise required pure reason or reason enlightened by faith. Plainly, retreat preachers who could even entertain the notion that it might be scholastic philosophy had utterly lost the Fundamentum of Iñigo's mystical experiences at the Cardoner and of Vitoria's stirringly affective directory.

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71. *Manuel des Exercices de s. Ignace: Résumé des principaux commentaires* (Poitiers: Oudin et Cie, 1894), 32. The author here cites Maurice Meschler, one of the fathers of neo-scholasticism.

72. Pierre Bouvier, S.J., “The Authentic Interpretation of the Foundation in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius,” trans. anonymous (West Baden: published ad usum Nostrorum tantum, 1943), 45. The original monograph (perhaps course notes) appeared in Bourges in 1922.



## VI. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

As this century began, Jesuits did not refer to Christ through whom all things come to be when preaching the Principle and Foundation. They might be expected to, since the Church was renewing its understanding of Christ living in time through His Mystical Body. But they did not know that "God our Creator and Lord" refers to Christ. Instead, they took the Fundamentum to refer to creation at its beginning and to its End outside of time. They therefore made the Principle and Foundation deal rather with God's work than with God.

The great German preacher Franz von Hummelauer illustrated all this vividly in the opening years of the twentieth century. He put as great a stress on creation as had his predecessor Peter Canisius. Yet, he plainly used the concept of *creatio a nihilo* only of a historical event, naming God's activity since that event differently. Man is created, he insisted, "*in duration*, that is to say, as long as man exists: for the first creation is continued uninterruptedly by divine conservation and providence."<sup>73</sup> As a consequence, at the beginning of his retreats von Hummelauer focused tightly on humanity. "The Foundation treats directly of man, not of God."<sup>74</sup>

This Principle and Foundation deals with what people do and why they do it. It was "practical" but not obvious; it had really become an abstruse formulation which we have to struggle with in the tangle of our minds if we are to wrest some application to our own lives.

Aloysius Ambruzzi, S.J., whose book was much used in the United States after its publication here in 1951, shows what this meant. Ambruzzi called the Principle and Foundation simply "this preliminary consideration . . . called *Principium*." He invited the

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73. Franz von Hummelauer, S.J., *Points for the Meditations and Contemplations of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, trans. V. J. Hommel, S.J., ed. H. Roper, S.J., 2nd. ed. rev. (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, [1909] 1955), 26.

74. *Ibid.*, 26.



retreatant to consider that every human “is essentially *ab alio*—*a Deo*. He is absolutely nothing in himself; God is his Creator and Lord. As a powerful ray of light from the infinite Sun . . . ”—does the author conclude that each human person shares the infinite goodness and life of God “as a powerful ray of light from the infinite Sun” shares the light of the Sun? ? No. Rather: “As a powerful ray of light from the infinite Sun, this *truth* dissipates the clouds of darkness that often surround man and directs him to the goal of his existence, Godwards.”<sup>75</sup>

Do not miss the significance of the final word, “Godwards.” We’re here and God’s there. In some books this is called alienation. So it has come to this: the passionately creating Christ, Ludolph’s *salutis Fundamentum*, has been reduced to a logical argument, a light beam. Devoid of Christ’s courtesy, this truth-beam smashes to motes the doubts and hesitations of any person of good will. In this way the Principle and Foundation became “truth” in thousands of preached eight-day retreats and in hundreds of preached thirty-day retreats. And we all fretted that we could so intransigently resist its macerating logic.

### Beginning in the mind: “God’s plan”

How far Jesuits had moved from the mind of Pierre Favre and Juan Alfonso de Polanco is vividly illustrated by one of the more influential American Jesuits of this century. F. X. McMenemy, S.J., who as tertian instructor in Cleveland trained hundreds of Jesuits between 1929 and 1949, put it this way:

FIRST PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION. A principle is a beginning for the *mind*, and a foundation is a beginning for the *will*. With this *first* principle we begin all our reasoning about human life. The truth about human life can be deduced from it; error cannot, but must have

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75. Aloysius Ambruzzi, S.J., *A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 3rd. ed. (Westminster, MD: [1938] 1951), 7. The first edition appeared in India in 1928.



another beginning. Upon the same principle the will builds its moral life as upon a foundation. What is good fits upon it; what is bad does not, but must have another foundation. By means of this first principle the mind and will get a start in the process of discovering the secret of life—what is true in life, what is good in life. And at the very start they must find God.<sup>76</sup>

At least for many published thinkers, the Principle and Foundation had become a quasi-subsistent idea, the “Divine Plan,” which was not God and not a creature, but somehow a reality hovering between. We had removed Christ from the Fundamentum, then God, and now we were on the way to removing any experiential humanity. All became idea.

This idea did not belong to scholars only. A widely circulated book written in 1962 for rank-and-file Catholics called the Principle and Foundation “a synthesis of the divine plan for the salvation of man.” Its author warned directors against “a temptation to amplify the theology and philosophy of creation; to make of this an explanation of the nature of man or to get the exercitant lost in the wonders of the created world of creatures. All this is beside the point.”<sup>77</sup> Then what was the point? A plan, a divine plan, as real and heavy as the July sun in Chicago: “Man was created to praise, reverence, and serve God. . . .”

This was not—just to be historically complete—finally a genuine American heresy. The Europeans at home and in the colonies were as emphatic. Ignacio Casanovas, for example, the great Jesuit commentator whose publishing during the 1930s was cut off by his death in the Spanish Civil War, spoke just as philosophically. He

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76. Francis Xavier McMenamy, S.J., *Eight-Day Retreat, Based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, ed. William J. Grace, S.J. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1956), 8.

77. James J. McQuade, S.J., *How to Give the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius to Lay Apostles* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962), 15, 82. Keep in mind that McQuade was almost surely addressing the case of Annotation 18 exercitants. Our problem was that, when it came to the Principle and Foundation, we made no distinction among exercitants.



considered the Principle and Foundation “una fórmula de orden muy levantado y excelso,” and called it “este criterio” and “la norma perfecta del orden.”<sup>78</sup> Casanovas was far from considering creation an ongoing event. He considered the Principle and Foundation a reality established by and flowing from a long-past event, an event which achieved not so much the origin of all living things as the ineradicable laws and norms governing them.

Elsewhere in Europe, H. Pinard de la Boullaye, S.J., decided to deal with the Principle and Foundation either philosophically or theologically depending on his audience. He began his written treatment of it with the statement that the basis of all of our obligations—not of our personal relations with God in Christ or of our relationships with ourselves and with others, but the basis of all our obligations—is “the fact of creation.”<sup>79</sup> A real event called creation happened in the unimaginably distant past. It is over. It functions now only in the moral order.

### Creation as fact and the triangle of being

By mid-twentieth century, believers had come to dwell in a sacred triangle of being: God, humankind, and all other created things. This found concise expression in a sentence that was written by Antoine Giroux, S.J.; printed in ten thousand copies of his book for the priests of France; and then translated for many American preachers. He first established that “all creatures were made and given to us” only so that we could serve God, and then concluded,

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78. Ignacio Casanovas, S.J., “Introduction,” *Comentario y explicación de los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola* (Barcelona: Editorial Balmes, 1945), 1:210-16.

79. H. Pinard de la Boullaye, S.J., *Les Exercices*, vol. 1 of *Exercices Spirituels selon la methode de saint Ignace*, 7th ed. rev. and enlarged (Paris: Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1950), 51. Pinard helped the spread of a religious experience important in our time: “Nous subsistons seulement à condition que la même parole créatrice qui nous a dit: ‘Sois’ ou ‘Commence’ persiste à nous enjoindre: ‘Demeure.’” So we have learned to “wait upon the Lord” in our preparation days. Creation does indeed have a history and our task is truly to “wait upon the Lord.” But we may not be delineating this religious experience carefully enough.



“Whence, in order to preserve the equilibrium between God and created beings, we should render ourselves indifferent to all creatures.”<sup>80</sup> He did not suffer here from a limitation of language or of translation; Giroux and his contemporaries *thought* of humankind over against other creatures. Interpreting the Principle and Foundation, they saw humankind as using all other creatures instrumentally in order to achieve our own human end, and not as standing in the midst of creation, bringing all things that groan for redemption back to God’s project and to God.<sup>81</sup> The Company—loyally working out the papal mission to promote neo-scholasticism as the ultimate paradigm—misplaced the vision of Canisius that humanity gives tongue for all creation.<sup>82</sup> So we split the work of faith and the work of stewardship of the earth. But that is not all we split. Like all of his contemporaries, Giroux so plainly worked in the “objective order,” so resolutely applied Thomistic objective analysis, that he surprised no one when he turned devoutly to God, “My First Principle.”

We have to be careful not to make dunces of our forebears. Churchmen and theologians of the last three centuries gave scant attention to the doctrine of creation, but that neglect had already marked a millennium.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, theologians and spiritual directors during the past century have had to absorb into their work an astounding range of new knowledge and skills: depth psychology, evolutionary paradigms, biblical criticism, social Darwinism, Marxist theory, vast historiographical discoveries, and process thinking, among others. In certain ways, each of these developments did some particular harm to Christians’ ability to keep aware of God’s continuing creation.

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80. Antoine Giroux, S.J., *A Retreat for Priests*, trans. Edgar J. Bernard, S.J. (El Paso: Revista Católica Press, 1947), section 1, p. 1, and section 2, p. 1.

81. See Cusson, *Biblical Theology*, 63f.

82. Iparraguirre, *Práctica (1522-1556)*, 186-89.

83. See J. Courtney Murray, *The Problem of God, Yesterday and Today*, St. Thomas More Lectures, 1 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964).



It seems arguable that few religious experiences have suffered as incessantly and as destructively during the last three centuries' changes as has the authentic Fundamentum.

## CONCLUSION

Whatever the history of the changes and whether Cusson and others have managed to state the content of the Fundamentum exactly or not, we have to recognize that our practice of the Principle and Foundation needs renewal. We have to get more specific than the assessment of the most widely used book on the Exercises: "As is evident, these words express the basic Christian catechesis in the general terms of salvation."<sup>84</sup> We have to find our way back to what these words express that is not evident.

We have to see the Fundamentum newly.

First: The sentences of the Principle and Foundation are meant to evoke a religious experience. In the first instance, they evoke Iñigo's mystical experiences, at Manresa and at the Cardoner, of all coming to be in Christ and through Him returning to God. In our time, they often evoke a deep sense of God's interest in and involvement with my own self, even with all my decisions, as John English helps exercitants realize.<sup>85</sup> Sometimes, the Fundamentum occasions the experience of the self coming to be in God, as Donald Gelpi has described.<sup>86</sup> Sometimes, the Fundamentum occasions the experience of God summoning me out of chaos, out of the darkness of disorder,

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84. David L. Fleming, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading*, rev. ed. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978), 23.

85. See John English, S.J., *Choosing Life: Significance of Personal History in Decision-making* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

86. Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., *Experiencing God* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).



as William Reiser is now describing.<sup>87</sup>

Second: These experiences surely begin in many ways, but they are intended to penetrate to the intimate relationships between Christ our Creator and Lord and each individual person. The exercitants-to-be will not get beyond a consoling sense of meaning in life and some manageability in their religious affects (Annotation 18 retreatants) unless they begin the Exercises already in touch with God infinitely active within their life-world, life history, and self. Annotation 19 and 20 exercitants most characteristically are those who experience the reality referred to in Annotation 15, of how God our Creator and Lord deals most intimately with each person and how a person so approached truly responds dialogically to this direct divine approach.

Third: Every skilled director in our day insists that exercitants must experience how God has been cherishing them and caring for them all of their lives. But we need to keep aware that, if they are to reform their lives or make a serious choice of a way of living, they have to get beyond that comfort and consolation. They need to mull over the truth that God the Lord creates in them their primitive purposes in the concrete—not just, for instance, the artist's purpose to create, but this artist's concrete purpose to create this statue or novel. They need to examine whether they believe that the basic and life-forming desires they feel come from advertising, their general culture, their families, their education—or whether they can believe that all of their important desires somehow grow out of the passionately creative desiring in God that keeps raising life in themselves. This is the stuff of the radical prayer David Hassel teaches.<sup>88</sup>

Fourth: This should be explicitly stated: John Veltri and others correctly insist that the stance of true indifference is a gift of grace.<sup>89</sup> In the same way the deep apprehension of creaturehood, of being

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87. William Reiser, S.J., *Drawn to the Divine* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1988).

88. David J. Hassel, S.J., *Radical Prayer* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987).

89. Veltri, *Orientations I*, 101; *Orientations II*, 32.



continually summoned into existence by God our Creator and Lord, is also a gift. David L. Fleming's treatment moves toward this realization. He recommends scriptural texts "which will enlighten and reinforce the notions contained in this foundation." The texts include not only Psalms 103 and 104 and Genesis but also John's first chapter and Colossians 1:15-23.<sup>90</sup> These are often the occasion of the graced insight into ongoing creation.

Fifth: The Principle and Foundation as a document does not represent a philosophical argument or a detached statement of "God's plan." It does not represent a dated theology of creation or an outmoded starting point in spirituality. Instead—and I change language here—the Fundamentum can best be taken as a kind of minidirectory that gives the substance and the procedure for spiritual conversation during the years, months, or at least days leading up to the full Exercises.

This suggests exhorting, sharing of faith, encouraging, and challenging as we prepare an exercitant to enter the First Week. Retreat directors today do not hesitate to share our faith and hope in God accepting us and caring for us. During the preparation days we regularly exhort and encourage exercitants in these terms, often suggesting as matter for prayer God's going before us and behind in Psalm 139, and Isaiah 43:4, "You are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you."

The authentic Fundamentum requires that we exhort, share, and challenge at a further depth in the divine relationship. Going beyond God's caring and upholding, the Fundamentum guides us to talk about God's intensely personal and transcendently masterful creating. I do not mean in theory or in general. No, talk about the concrete particulars in this exercitant's life and self.

Talk about original purpose raised by God—how some are born to think mathematically, some to hear no musical pitch or see no color, some to beget and nurture children. Talk about how being

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90. Fleming, *Spiritual Exercises*, 22, 154f.



born black or ethnic specifies possibilities, as does being born man or woman, American or Australian—and the Spirit of Life determined those possibilities for me. Talk about how our biological temperament takes firm shape before we reach the use of reason and free choice, and how that shape comes from the Creator directly, working busily in secondary causes but not through Chance or Fate or a Statistical Grid. Talk about how God's hopes for us and for this life-world are incarnate in our most authentic desiring.

Explore with a capable exercitant how God's project has a living blueprint—the passionate, life-shaping desires that God raises in living persons. Point out how important to thousands and thousands of people are the desires that rise in a Mother Teresa's heart—and wonder whether our own authentic desires are not important, too, and to how many? If each of us enacted the deepest desires that God our Creator and Lord raises in our spirits, then in that moment the Reign of God would explode among us.

We are fools to try to force the Spirit of Life to make us authentic persons as long as we willfully choose contrary to our most authentic desiring. We are fools if we think that we can determine what original purpose will authentically define us—and lunge at celibacy if our life history and self show that we are meant to marry, or at a career leading to wealth if we are meant to serve. On the contrary, we are very wise to wait patiently while God defines in us our original purpose and gives us to know it and attend to it by raising great desires in us to enact it.

Explain to a very promising exercitant that we make the full Exercises precisely as our best effort to come to and keep at equilibrium in the midst of all our desiring and then to identify our most authentic desire—unencumbered with enculturated expectations, the need to please others, the bindings of our sins. Once we come to see God's hope in us, then we beg that we have the courage to enact it wholeheartedly. We are never scientifically certain; we must always believe in God. We are never securely clear; we must always hope in God. And about love: if we do not comprehend how God continually



summons us out of the chaos of fallen humanity into His light, then we will not know how to love ourselves in the way of the Great Commandment.

Finally, then, the Principle and Foundation as Ur-Annotation instructs the directors to use every rhetorical device to elicit in the promising exercitant-to-be an experience of God continually creating the self. We will help the exercitant to feel the infinite Goodness moving out of Itself to call us to live the image of that Goodness. We will share the exultant experience of God's extravagant goodwill toward all that God has made, and God's passionate and creative yearning to be loved, a yearning known in our own selves.

To turn it around, successful exercitants move beyond "self-acceptance" and even beyond "self-assertion." If they are truly generous with God, they come to accept the seriousness and rightness of their deepest desiring, even though their deepest desiring moves them to fearsome projects like a celibate life of service or to unnerving risks like leaving undeveloped a great talent. They do not keep up the dialogue with God the Creator and Lord very long before they come to know more surely than they know the sun rises that the passionate loving of God works deep in their selves, weaving them into humankind and into all creation.

This is how we can honor what the official *Directory* of 1599 mandates: "[The director] ought to take good care that the knowledge of this truth which the Foundation sets forth is as deeply rooted in [the exercitant's] mind as possible."<sup>91</sup>

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91. *Directory 1599*, chap. 12, no. 7, p. 645.



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- 21/2 Demoustier, Calvez, et al., *The Disturbing Subject: The Option for the Poor* (Mar. 1989).
- 21/3 Soukup, *Jesuit Response to the Communication Revolution* (May 1989).
- 21/4 Tetlow, *The Fundamentum: Creation in the Principle and Foundation* (Sept. 1989).

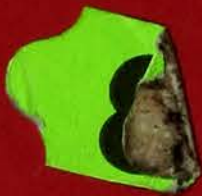






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