

STUDIES

IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

PILGRIMS IN COMMUNITY AT THE FRONTIERS

A Contemplation on Jesuit Mission Today

HUNG T. PHAM, S.J.

AND

EDUARDO C. FERNÁNDEZ, S.J.

48/2 SUMMER 2016

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS is a publication of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States.

The Seminar is composed of Jesuits appointed from their provinces. The Seminar identifies and studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially U.S. and Canadian Jesuits, and gathers current scholarly studies pertaining to the history and ministries of Jesuits throughout the world. It then disseminates the results through this journal.

The subjects treated in STUDIES may be of interest also to Jesuits of other regions and to other religious, clergy, and laity. All who find this journal helpful are welcome to access previous issues at: ejournals@bc.edu/jesuits

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE SEMINAR

Guy Consolmagno, S.J., is director of the Vatican Observatory, Rome. (2014)

Barton T. Geger, S.J., is chair of the Seminar and editor of STUDIES; he teaches and writes on Jesuit Spirituality at Regis University in Denver, Colo. (2013).

Michael Harter, S.J., is assistant director of the United States tertianship program in Portland, Ore. (2014)

D. Scott Hendrickson, S.J., teaches Spanish Literature and directs the Graduate Program in Modern Languages and Literatures at Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Ill. (2015)

Michael Knox, S.J., is director of the Shrine of the Jesuit Martyrs of Canada in Midland, Ontario, and lecturer at Regis College in Toronto. (2016)

Hung Pham, S.J., teaches spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Cal. (2015)

John R. Sachs, S.J., teaches theology at the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass. (2014)

Monty Williams, S.J., is lecturer at Regis College in Toronto and writes on Ignatian Spirituality. (2016)

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a word from the editor . . .

The Seminar of STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS expresses its deep gratitude to Fr. John McCarthy (WIS), who steps down as copy editor of our journal after more than twenty five years of generous service. During that same period, Fr. McCarthy also served as copy editor, proofreader, and layout designer for most of the books published by the (then) Institute of Jesuit Sources in Saint Louis. The most notable is perhaps *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations* (1994), a veritable magnum opus that still does not exist in any language other than English. Before all of this, Fr. McCarthy had served as secretary to the American Assistant in Rome. So on behalf of the Society of Jesus: Thank you, Jack. We Jesuits understand our vocations better because of you.

Fr. William O'Brien (CDT) has kindly accepted the baton as copy editor. Our readers can sleep soundly as they expect no dangling modifiers on his watch.

Our thanks also to Fr. Oliver Rafferty (BRI) for his kind service on the Seminar. Fr. Rafferty continues his apostolates as visiting professor of history and director of the Center of Irish Programs at Boston College.

Now, for the first time in STUDIES history, the Seminar includes Canadian Jesuits. Fr. Michael Knox (CDA) is a historian of the early modern period, whose research focuses on the rhetorical structures of Jesuit mission literature in seventeenth-century Canada, early modern Jesuit mission history, and the theology of the Spiritual Exercises. He is director of the Shrine of the Jesuit Martyrs of Canada in Ontario and lectures at Regis College.

Fr. Monty Williams (CDA) has a doctorate in English literature from the University of Toronto. He also lectures at Regis College and gives retreats and workshops on spirituality in North America, Eastern Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. His next book, *The Way of the Faithful*, due in 2017, examines the dynamics of desire and recognition in the Spiritual Exercises.

For many years Jesuits have detected a lack of clarity—or perhaps, more accurately, a lack of consensus—on the role of STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS in the life of the Society. While some Jesuits consider STUDIES a peer-reviewed scholarly journal, others do not; and still others would prefer to see it evolve into a vehicle for personal reflections. Does the

Seminar restrict itself to spirituality, or do we publish essays on history and psychology? Are Jesuits the target audience, or do we speak to our lay colleagues and to other religious? And if only Jesuits, then do we mean US and Canadian Jesuits, or the worldwide Society?

To begin to address these questions, we recall that the US Provincials established the Seminar in May 1968 in response to two summonses. First, the Second Vatican Council had urged religious communities to engage in *aggiornamento*, that is, a study of and return to their original charisms in such a way that took into account the signs of the times and needs of the present. In response, the Jesuit Fathers of GC 31 decreed that the Society should “take a very close look at its own nature and mission in order that, faithful to its own vocation, it can renew itself and adapt its life and activities to the exigencies of the Church and the needs of contemporary man.”

Aggiornamento bore tremendous fruit for the Society in the last fifty years, perhaps most notably in extensive studies of the Spiritual Exercises; but in the process, Jesuits have come to appreciate that “returning to the sources” has its own ambiguities. Do we go back to the Formula of the Institute, which was written in 1540, when the First Companions envisioned a mobile ministry with yet no idea to start schools? Or do we privilege the revised Formula of 1550, by which time the early Jesuits already had ten years of practical experience under their belts? That document described schools as proper to the Society’s mission.

Later, Jesuits identified yet other ministries as vital to the Society. In 1883, the Fathers of GC 23 unanimously decreed that Christ himself gave to the Society the mission to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart, a reference to the revelations that St. Claude La Colombière received through St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. This “most pleasant charge” (*munus suavissimum*) was reaffirmed by another four congregations, not to mention later popes and superiors general. Likewise, GC 32 established the Society’s commitment to social justice, a commitment that later congregations and superior generals strongly reiterated. Jesuits widely understood both of these ministries as legitimate expansions upon our original charism.

And what, exactly, do we mean by “original sources”? Should we rely solely on official documents, or should we look to what Jesuits were—and are—actually doing? For example, the traditional language of “escape from the world” that appears in various forms in both the Formula and the Constitutions did not capture accurately the nature of Jesuit ministries. Nor do such documents necessarily tell us what our companions were thinking and feeling at the time. For instance, the fact that in the Formula Ignatius described Jesuits as “soldiers of God” does not indicate whether the majority of rank-and-file Jesuits actually thought of themselves as such.

With this in mind, we might consider the foundational texts of STUDIES itself. In December of 1968, Fr. George Ganss, SJ, articulated the purpose of the Seminar as follows:

1. in the light of actual problems facing the Jesuits of the Assistancy during this time of rapid change,
2. to do research in depth in the spirituality of Ignatius and in the historical development of Jesuit spirituality, and also to draw upon all modern sources, in order to throw light upon these problems, and
3. to communicate the results of this research and of the discussions of the seminar members about their application to the actual problems
4. to the members of the Assistancy.

This initial description seems to imply essays of a scholarly nature. Three months later, Fr. Ganss reaffirmed the scholarly emphasis, but he also acknowledged that Jesuits are better served by a “good” essay now rather than a “definitive” essay later:

The studies sent out will be considered as position papers. That is, they will ordinarily take a stand, hope to stimulate discussion, and be open to change in light of such discussion. They should be seriously and capably composed, with professional expertise and with documentation when it is desirable. But they need not attain that perfection and polish which some experts strive for in presenting a final or definitive presentation after years of study. If such perfection were demanded, the present attainable and timely good might be defeated by the dreamed of best which can be achieved only too late or perhaps never.

All well and good. But when we examine the essays that the Seminar actually approved in the first decade of its existence, what do we find? As early as the fifth issue, Fr. Bernard Lonergan wrote in the first person from beginning to end, with nary a footnote to be found. Only two issues later, Fr. Vincent O’Flaherty offered “reflections” on Jesuit commitment, apparently using as a primary source his experiences as novice master. Ten years later, Fr. Thomas Clancy edited a collection of folksy anecdotes by elderly Jesuits on what had sustained them in their vocations. And why did he do this? According to Fr. Clancy, because a Jesuit reader had asked for it.

In fact, if we judge by the typical benchmarks of scholarly essays—which generally include copious references to authoritative sources and the use of technical terms and tables, with no appeals to personal experience or

anecdotal evidence, and no reference to the writer's own opinions, no rhetorical questions, and no sentences written in the first or second person—one can argue that the majority of STUDIES issues have fallen short of the academic standard.

I mention this because Jesuits sometimes opine that STUDIES has ceased to be a serious journal, that it has wandered from its original academic focus and needs to return to its roots. Looking solely at the foundational texts, perhaps one can make this case. But if one considers what the Seminar actually has been doing for the last five decades, a different picture emerges. Certainly, the Seminar has consisted of scholars; but the scholars understood themselves as writing for their Jesuit companions.

I offer all this by way of prelude. In the next few issues, we will endeavor to clarify the kinds of essays that the Seminar seeks to publish, and we will do so with reference to the history of the journal, the present needs of the Society, and the signs of the times.

In the present issue, Frs. Hung Pham and Eduardo Fernandez propose another *aggiornamento*. The Society is experiencing a significant shift in manpower toward India and the southern hemisphere, a shift that calls not only for a reallocation of resources, but also for a reconsideration of such traditional categories as “mission territories” that originated within a European and North American perspective.

Recent experience also has stretched our ideas about “Jesuit community.” As a result of numerous advances in telecommunications, including Skype, Jesuits around the world can collaborate instantly and free of additional charge. In addition, the ubiquity of air travel makes it easier than ever for individual Jesuits to develop an entire apostolate out of being “on the road.” Such realities might act like a centrifugal force of sorts on our companions, pulling (or is that “pushing”?) them away from closer relationships with their housemates.

And so, the question: how might GC 36 revitalize our ideas of mission and community in ways that remain true to our charism? Frs. Pham and Fernandez propose that we address this question using three key terms: pilgrims, community, and frontiers. The writers maintain that the early Society understood and lived the ideas behind these terms in a kind of harmony. If modern Jesuits re-appropriate these terms, they can function as lynchpins for a renewed understanding of mission.

But here, too, subtle tensions surrounding *aggiornamento* can arise. For instance, on what basis do we suppose that we can find, in the early sources, even inchoate answers to our modern questions? Ignatius did not use the word “community” in the Constitutions, nor did he expend much ink there on either the details of common life or the spiritual goods of living with other men in community. Do we find in this absence a key to understand his think-

ing? Or does his silence indicate simply that, because the First Companions never had an experience of living together in community, the tensions that come with the common life—so obvious to us today—had never occurred to him?

Another question is whether we look to our actions as themselves a kind of source. By analogy, consider the doctrine of purgatory. In the early Church, Christians did not begin with a theology of purgatory and then pray for the dead as an expression of that belief. Rather, they instinctively prayed for the dead and then asked themselves what this prayer must mean, or how they could think and speak so as to make sense of their practice. Theologians refer to this principle as *lex orandi, lex credendi*: that “the law of prayer is the law of belief.”

Wittgenstein had a similar insight when he described philosophy as descriptive rather than prescriptive. In other words, its purpose is neither to answer our ultimate questions nor to change our behavior, but rather to articulate in a satisfying way that which we already are doing and feeling, so that we are no longer troubled by questions about why we are doing or feeling it.

Thanks to this creative exploration by Frs. Pham and Fernandez, I find myself wondering what we Jesuits might hope from General Congregation 36, apart from a new general superior. Would we like a new conceptual framework for mission that guides our apostolic decisions? Or perhaps what we really seek is a language to describe what we already are doing—instinctively, faithfully, generously—and will continue to do in any case.

Barton T. Geger, S.J.

Editor

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Hung T. Pham (ucs) is assistant professor of Ignatian spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University. He emigrated from Vietnam, graduated from Regis University, Denver, and entered the Missouri Province (1993). During regency, he worked with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Thailand, training math and science teachers, and he holds a doctoral degree from the Universidad Pontificia Comillas, Madrid, where he wrote his dissertation on Ignatian enculturation. He is an elected delegate of the Central Southern Province for GC 36.

Eduardo C. Fernández (UCS) is professor of missiology and Latino theology and ministry at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University. He entered the New Orleans Province (1980) and holds a doctoral degree from the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. Most recently, he published *Mexican American Catholics* (Paulist Press, 2007), which received a Catholic Press Association Book Award (2008) in the pastoral ministry category; and, with Kenneth McGuire, CSP, and Anne Hansen, he published *Culture-Sensitive Ministry: Helpful Strategies for Pastoral Ministers* (Paulist Press, 2010).

Pilgrims in Community at the Frontiers

A Contemplation on Jesuit Mission Today

Wishing to remain faithful to the charism of its founders, and to address the needs of the church and the world in the early twenty-first century, the Society of Jesus endeavors to renew its understanding of its mission and its life in community. In this spirit, the authors propose the triad pilgrim–community–frontier both to express the dynamics operative in the Society’s lived experience and to help articulate a fresh understanding of the institute today.

Introduction

There is also a house that should console us greatly, and that is, the pilgrimage or mission to the various parts [of the world] in order to help souls. So that, fortunately, through this pilgrimage or mission we have the whole world as our home. These missions fit well with us, especially according to the desire of Father Ignatius, who constantly sees in all his works that we [Jesuits] ought to be ready and available to go out to the whole world.

Jerónimo Nadal, *P6Coimbra* [16]¹

¹Jerónimo Nadal, *Las Pláticas del P. Jerónimo Nadal: La Globalización Ignaciana*, edición y traducción por Miguel L. Sebastià, SJ (Bilbao–Maliaño: Mensajero–Sal Terrae,

The upcoming thirty-sixth general congregation, which convenes in October 2016, will bring together Jesuit representatives from all parts of the world. In the past, consciously or unconsciously, Jesuit officials have classified these parts as either “centers” or “peripheries” of the Society, with reference to their ecclesiastical significance, administrative weight, or financial resources. These categories in turn established dichotomies: the West as opposed to the rest of the world, developed as opposed to developing countries, older as opposed to newer churches, and so forth.

From that perspective, the idea of “peripheries” and “centers” had advantages and disadvantages. A center not in touch with the periphery closes in on itself, creating its own enclave. On the other hand, Jesuits focused exclusively on the periphery, and therefore not in touch with the center, tend to become lone rangers, running the risk not only of burnout, but also of jeopardizing the future of important and innovative apostolates.

However, while these categories might illuminate a positive interdependence among different provinces in the Society, they also cause problems. A present ambiguity in the use of these categories could muddle the result of the Society’s discernment process particularly in terms of prioritizing and allocating its resources. To move beyond the traditional categories of “center” and “periphery,” Jesuits must recognize that going to the frontiers has meant, first and foremost, learning how to adapt *en marcha*—“on the journey”—confident that *all* are pilgrims—“friends in the Lord”—sharing a common bond in Christ, discerning and finding God in all things. Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), sitting at his desk in Rome, would have considered himself neither at the center nor at the periphery, but rather as a pilgrim at the frontier, discerning and entrusting the young Society to Jesus Christ by reading

2011), 400. “Hay también una casa que mucho nos ha de consolar a todos, y es peregrinación o misión a diversas partes para ayudar a las almas. De suerte que, por ello, to do el mundo hemos de tener por casa; y estas misiones nos son a nosotros muy conformes, especialmente según el deseo del Padre Ignacio, que de continuo se ve en sus cosas que quiere fuésemos dispuestos para ir por todo el mundo.” Unless otherwise noted, all translations are ours.

“the signs of his times,” all the while maintaining communion with other pilgrims around the world through writing letters.

The experience of Hung Pham with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Pacific Asia during his 1999–2000 regency taught him a valuable lesson in this regard. While the Burmese refugees struggling to survive deep in the jungles of Northern Thailand appreciated his presence and work there, they expressed clearly to him what they most needed from the Jesuits. For this work to be effective, instead of sending more volunteers—Jesuits or lay collaborators from abroad—to the refugee camps, the greater good would involve promoting wider social and political conversation around displaced persons’ issues. This effort would provide an entry into the fray of the debate from within the Jesuit network of socio-educational centers and parishes in the United States and Europe. In so many words, the refugees conveyed the following sentiment: “As much as we would love to have you here, we want you to go home to the United States and tell people that we are still alive.”

This essay serves as one response to the urgent call of Father General for us Jesuits to renew our theology of mission. Knowing well the immense scope of this topic, we

do not attempt to offer an exhaustive treatment. We do, however, aim to develop an Examination of Mission for individual Jesuits to use in their prayer and reflection, which we do by focusing on how some of the Society’s foundational documents envision, and how Jesuits have lived, three dimensions of mission in the Society—to wit, *pilgrim*, *community*, and *frontier*. Inspired by the Examination of Conscience in the Spiritual Exercises, the Examination of Mission proposes an understanding of Jesuit mission from the perspective of the early Jesuits’ sense of their vocation and Institute, so as to better discern where the Lord continues to call us today in the service of God’s people.

The essay divides into three parts. First, we examine the three dimensions pilgrim–community–frontier as they appear in the “Auto-

In fact, the deliberation that took place among the first companions who founded the Society of Jesus as an apostolic religious body directly resulted from their being “scattered and parted” for various missions.

biography," the Spiritual Exercises, and the Constitutions. In the second part, we briefly describe how these three dimensions, like the three notes of one musical chord, played out in various ministries of the early Society. In the third part, we use insights drawn from these historical successes and failures to address certain tensions in the Society today. As this structure suggests, we are convinced that only by recapturing a sense of Jesuit mission from the Society's beginnings can we discern and appropriate an understanding of Jesuit life and mission in today's context. To this end, our essay concludes with the Examination of Mission, which we offer Jesuits to use for prayer and discernment.

Prolegomenon: Sent on Mission

We begin with a consideration of what it means to be sent on a mission. The experience of mission or pilgrimage lies at the heart of Jesuit identity. In fact, the deliberation that took place among the first companions who founded the Society of Jesus as an apostolic religious body directly resulted from their being "scattered and parted" for various missions.² It was therefore no coincidence that Ignatius named the first chapter of the *Constitutiones "Circa Missiones,"* or, "On the Promise and Vow to Travel through Any Part of the World."³ This oldest part of the *Constitutions*, edited and incorporated into chapter seven of the *Constitutions* entitled "The relation to their neighbor of those already incorporated into the Society when they are *dispersed* into the vineyard of Christ our Lord," emphasized nimble movement in the Jesuit vocation.⁴ Mobility remains one of the inherent characteristics of Jesuits' self-understanding and identity, all of which the founding documents of the Society constantly articulate and reinforce.

²Jules J. Toner, "The Deliberation that Started the Jesuits: A Commentario on the *Deliberatio primorum Patrum*, Newly Translated, with a Historical Introduction," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 6, no. 4 (1974): 185.

³Antonio M. de Aldama, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: An Introductory Commentary on the Constitutions*, trans. Aloysius J. Owen (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1989), 249.

⁴Antonio M. de Aldama, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: Missioning*, trans. Ignacio Echániz (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 1.

From the beginning of the Society's existence, Jesuits did not limit themselves to their own geographical, cultural, political, or religious boundaries, but rather prepared themselves for missions to all frontiers of the world. Jerónimo Nadal (1507–1580), one of Ignatius's most trusted confidants and his official interpreter of the Constitutions, often described Jesuit mission as an ongoing pilgrimage to all parts of the world. He was completely convinced that Jesuits found their most suitable home on the road. John O'Malley (CDT app MAR) writes:

Nadal provided the clearest and most eloquent explanation of what [Jesuit] vows symbolized. As we have seen, for him and for his confreres, "missions" and "journeying for ministry," and sometimes even "pilgrimage," were synonymous. In his exhortations to Jesuit communities he described such missions and journeying as the "principle and most characteristic 'dwelling' for the Jesuit, as their 'most glorious and longed-for-'house.'" He loved this paradox that he saw entailed in the vow.⁵

Taking the "whole world as their home" and being ignited by the zeal of saving souls, members of the early Society developed and expanded their mission and network into a global enterprise. Running "wisely and ignorantly"—that is, following the lead of the Spirit and placing their hearts in Christ while relying on knowledge and wisdom learned on the road—they engaged in diplomatic and quasi-diplomatic missions for the Holy See, held professorships at universities, counseled bishops and ecclesial authorities on various theological matters, participated in Catholic reform and ecumenism, administered schools, and journeyed abroad to preach the gospel.⁶ The global missions of the So-

⁵ John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 300.

⁶ A quote from Nadal's *Diálogos* summarizing Ignatius' journey, "Ignatius did not run ahead but followed the spirit. In this manner, he was led to where he did not know. He had not thought then about founding the Society. However, step by step, a road was open to him and he went running, wisely ignorant, simply placing his heart in Christ" (n. 17, *FN II*, 252).

ciety thus resulted in an apostolic expansion that played a significant role in forming and reforming the Catholic Church.⁷

Considering that Jesuits had no schools during the first decade of their existence, it is astonishing that after 1551 they opened them at the rate of four or five per year. From the first ten founding members in 1541 to the time of Ignatius's death in 1556, Jesuits grew to number some one thousand men organized into twelve provinces, whose residences and ministries extended over all the known continents, from Europe to Africa, from Asia to the Americas.⁸ Jesuit presence and ministries embraced the many geographical, physical, social, cultural, and religious frontiers of the time. Gregory XIII (1572–1585), pope from 1572 until 1585, references these ministries in his 1581 address to the delegates of the fourth general congregation: "Your holy order, which is truly holy, has spread throughout the entire world. Anywhere you look you have colleges and houses. You direct kingdoms, provinces, indeed the whole world."⁹ In this vein, by the middle of the seventeenth century, "one could have said without exaggeration that the sun never set upon the Jesuit Empire, 'none can hide from its glow.'"¹⁰ Following Ignatius's inspiration and global vision, the Society of Jesus has in fact made the world its home.

While many studies have focused on the growth and expansion of Jesuit global mission to the frontiers, an understanding of Jesuit community as an equally essential part of the mission has perhaps been lacking. Jesuits often err in giving priority to one over the other, treating these two dimensions of Jesuit life—namely, apostolic commitment on the one hand and community life on the other—as opposing

⁷ William V. Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986), 45.

⁸ Michael Sievernich, "La Misión y las misiones en la primitiva Compañía de Jesús," in *Ite Inflammate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2010), 255–73, 264.

⁹ Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 97.

¹⁰ Steven J. Harris, "Mapping Jesuit Science: The Role of Travel in the Geography of Knowledge," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 212–40, 218.

aspects of the Jesuit vocation. In some cases, it almost seems as if a Jesuit must choose one at the cost of the other. For instance, Jesuits might work hard at a frontier, yet hardly be present in their community, perhaps even using their ministry as an escape from deeper investment in community. On the other hand, the conversations and visions of some Jesuit communities might not move beyond the boundaries of their assigned apostolate, limiting them in terms of geography or ideology. Neither represents a healthy approach to ministry. Granted that some Jesuits, given the nature of their work, must spend much time away from community, we are nonetheless convinced that these imbalances can result from a distorted theology of mission.

In response to the *ex officio* letters of 2015, superior general Fr. Adolfo Nicolás observed:

There once was a time when each person (certainly each Jesuit) thought that he had “his” mission, whether sanctioned or not by obedience. Those were times of great commitment and marvelous heroism, but collaboration by Jesuits was often difficult to achieve, even with other Jesuits. Certain great “characters” stood out, and they left their clear mark on institutions and apostolates. However, at times, our residences became very institutional; they were hotels for apostles who were never home; they were houses of specialists who rarely spoke among themselves; they were residences that gave you a warm welcome but then left you alone in the comfortable Jesuit practice of being community only at Mass and at meals.¹¹

Thus since the end of the thirty-fourth general congregation in 1995, in order to confront effectively these unhealthy tendencies, there has arisen an urgent need to re-examine what a Jesuit theology of mission entails.

Likewise, provincials in the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States have been asking for a piece in an Ignatian key that will provide guidelines for international and intercultural missions. In their February 2010 meeting, they discussed and endorsed an international

¹¹ Adolfo Nicolás, “Letter to the Whole Society,” Rome, July 31, 2015.

ministry proposal that addresses this aspect of mission as envisioned by more recent developments in missiology, such as a greater concern for mutuality in terms of the sharing of resources between provinces and their international missions. This proposal advocates a shift in mission strategy marked by a move from philanthropy to solidarity, from Jesuit-only to partnering with others, from personal support for expatriate founders to project support led by the local province, from providing “men and money” to sustainability, from spontaneous impulse to advocacy for social change, from help to self-help, from perceiving international mission as an export or expenditure to seeing it as a gift and opportunity, and, finally, from life-long assignment for the few to shorter/intermediate-term mission for many. In this essay, we propose that these shifts need not be seen as a break with the past but rather in continuity with some of the more creative aspects of international mission and ministry in earlier periods.

Most recently, looking forward to the thirty-sixth general congregation, Fr. Nicolás has insisted that we take on this urgent task with boldness, integration, and depth, so to move toward the renewal of Jesuit life and mission today. In this spirit we offer the following reflections.¹²

I. Pilgrims in Community at the Frontiers: The Foundational Documents of the Society

The first Jesuits understood and articulated their mission theologically in terms of the experience of being *pilgrims* who labored in community on the frontiers of their time. Missiologists have noted that the appropriation of the term *mission* by Ignatius and his early companions represented a paradigmatic shift in the Christian understanding of mission at the middle of the sixteenth century.¹³ In

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Angel Santos Hernández, *Teología sistemática de la misión. Progresiva evolución del concepto de mission* (Navarra: Verbo Divino, 1991), 12–13; David J. Bosch, *Transform-*

classical Latin, the word *missio* has two related meanings: the first, and apparently original meaning, was “dismissal, release [as in] ‘*missio gladiatoris*,’ ‘*manu mission*,’ ‘*ite, missa est*’”; the second meaning, derived from the first, was “sending,” and it applied to things as well as to persons, as in “*missio litterarum*” or “*missio legatorum*.” Both of these meanings are preserved in medieval religious literature.¹⁴ According to Aldama, the verb *mittere* and not the noun *missio* was used in Vulgate to designate the activities of Jesus’s apostles and early disciples.¹⁵

Throughout the medieval period until the sixteenth century, what people today understand as “mission” was equated ecclesiastically with various phrases—for instance, “propagation of the faith,” “expansion of the reign of God,” “conversion of the heathen,” or “founding of new churches.”¹⁶ The term *mission* was used exclusively to designate the sending of the Son by the Father and of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son.¹⁷ Since the middle of the sixteenth century, however, it was the “Jesuits who first applied ‘mission’ to the spread of the Christian faith among people (including Protestants) who were not members of the Catholic Church.”¹⁸ In this way, Jesuits thus signaled an understanding of their apostolic ministry and commitment, assigned by their superiors, as the action of the Holy Trinity abiding in the world.

This insight came to Ignatius on the road as a pilgrim seeking the will of God and the means by which to save souls, including his own. Identifying himself as a *peregrino* (pilgrim) was important to Ignatius, apparent in that he referred to himself as a pilgrim fifty-five times in

ing Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission (New York: Orbis, 1998), 228; Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2005), 173–74.

¹⁴ Aldama, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: Missioning*, 7–8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 1; Sievernich, “La misión y las misiones en la primitiva Compañía de Jesús,” 257.

¹⁷ Santos, *Teología sistemática de la misión*, 12–13; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 1.

¹⁸ Santos, *Teología sistemática de la misión*, 12–13; Ignasi Salvat, *Servir en misión universal* (Bilbao: Mensajero, 2002), 161–62.

the “Autobiography.”¹⁹ And his use of the word was intentional. According to Fr. Luís Gonçalves da Câmara (1519–1575), to whom Ignatius narrated an account of his life, “[Ignatius] has so clear a memory of things, and even of the more important words, that he recounts something that happened ten, fifteen, or more times, exactly as it happened, he put it before his hearers’ eyes, and any long statement about things of importance, he repeats it word for word.”²⁰

For Ignatius, then, to be a pilgrim meant to be on the road—a state that emphasized movement and direction. On the road, a pilgrim was drawn into an encounter with the Creator who actively and constantly seeks to engage and interact directly with creatures [*Sp.Ex.*15]. Such an engagement is never static but always dynamic, directing the individual pilgrim to a deeper personal relationship with the divine.²¹ Furthermore, while the pilgrim journeyed physically through various locations, he also experienced conversion on the interior journey of his soul. Ignatius reminisced, “On this journey something happened to [me] that it will be good to have written, so that people can understand how Our Lord used to deal with this soul: a soul that was still blind, though with great desires to serve him as far as its knowledge went” [*Au* 14].

It thus was on the road that the *peregrino* journeyed ever more deeply into his conversion. He changed both his external appearance, replacing his “swords and dagger” for “sack cloth, staff and a small gourd” [17], and his internal disposition, moving from self-centeredness to God-centeredness, even surrendering his self-determinism to the will of God [47]. In this sense, the two changes included both a “conversion from” and a “conversion for,” advancing Ignatius the pilgrim toward being placed with Christ at the heart of the world.²²

¹⁹ *An Ignatian Concordance*, ed. Ignacio Echarte (Bilbao: Ediciones Mensajero, 1996), 946–47.

²⁰ Pedro Arrupe, “The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 33, no. 3 (2001): 6n8.

²¹ Francisco José Ruiz Pérez, “Camino,” in *Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciano*, ed. José García de Castro et al. (Bilbao–Santander: Mensajero–Sal Terrae, 2007), 261–68, 261.

²² GC 35, d. 2, n. 4.

Furthermore, the early companions took Ignatius's grace of conversion as intended for all members of the Society of Jesus.²³ Engaging in these dynamics of conversion so as to be placed with Christ has in turn entered into the Jesuit way of proceeding. In this vein, David Fleming has shown how the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises reflect these various stages of the conversion to which Jesuits are called.²⁴ Like Ignatius the pilgrim, Jesuits making the Spiritual Exercises thus enter into a pilgrimage, journeying not from Loyola through Montserrat, Manresa, Jerusalem, and on to Rome, but inwardly into the landscape of their own hearts and souls, through grace and sin, ultimately to recognize their true identity as "loved sinners yet called to be companions of Jesus as Ignatius was: Ignatius, who begged the Blessed Virgin to 'place him with her Son,' and who then saw the Father himself ask Jesus, carrying his Cross, to take this *pilgrim* into his company."²⁵ Indeed, in the Jesuit *Constitutions*, making a pilgrimage functions as one of the six principal testing experiences for those admitted into first probation, so that a person "may with genuine faith and intense love place his reliance entirely in his Creator and Lord" [67]. It thus was no accident that the first Jesuits often referred to themselves as *preti pellegrini*, or "pilgrim priests."²⁶

*Whether in the deserts of
monasticism or the Gothic
cathedrals of the medieval cities
or the discerning heart of the
individual, the term frontier
signifies the sacred space of
encounter between the divine and
the individual in communion.*

²³ Nadal understood Ignatius as the Society's *prima forma et gratia*, for "a Ignacio tomó Dios por medio para comunicar esta gracia, y quiso que fuera ministro desta vocación, y en él nos ha puesto un vivo ejemplo de nuestro modo de proceder" (FN II, 209) [God took Ignatius as a means to communicate this grace and wanted that it were from his vocation and in him placed for us a living example of our way of proceeding].

²⁴ David L. Fleming, "Ignatian Exercises and Conversion," in *Ignatian Exercises: Contemporary Annotations*, ed. David L. Fleming, *The Best of the Review* 4 (St. Louis, MO: Review for Religious, 1996), 72–85.

²⁵ GC 32, d. 2, n. 1. Our italics.

²⁶ James P. Broderick, *The Origin of the Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997), 63.

For his own part, Ignatius learned on the road that being a pilgrim meant being in community, and that one includes the other.²⁷ For a pilgrim, community-on-the-road means more than a group of people who happen to share the same roof at one time or who participate in the same journey at any given moment. Community-on-the-road denotes an “essential and generic human bond”—a true spirit of fraternity and equality connecting all pilgrims despite their “dignities, honors, wealth, education, and social position.”²⁸ Furthermore, it “does not merge identities” but rather liberates individuals from the conformity of conducting themselves according to a set of common behaviors. Indeed, it is richly charged with emotion and lived out with fluidity, detachment, and simplicity.²⁹ Community-on-the-road emphasizes that which draws and binds pilgrims together across time, space, and cultures, rather than the diversity of people who make up the group or the activities displayed by such a group.

As recorded in the “Autobiography,” Ignatius the pilgrim slowly journeyed into the experience of community, moving from avoiding others [18] to engaging them in spiritual conversations and exercises [57], to forming the *Iñiguistas*, or “followers of Iñigo,” and *ensacados*, or “sack-wearers,” finally to recruiting the “friends in the Lord” who grew into the Society of Jesus.³⁰ Two points are worth noting here. First, Ignatius learned the rich meaning of community-on-the-road through his pilgrimage experience. As part of his contemplative practice, he was always a pilgrim “irrevocably alone in his spiritual growth, yet at the same time [he was] always in the company of fellow pilgrims as well

²⁷ Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 37. We are grateful to Professor Kate Barush for this reference.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 250, 133.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 252.

³⁰ Barton T. Geger, “The First First Companions: The Continuing Impact of the Men Who Left Ignatius,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 44, no. 2 (2012): 10; Javier Osuna, *Amigos en el Señor. Unidos para la dispersión* (Bilbao–Santander: Mensajero–Sal Terrae, 1998), 18.

as in the company of the Divine."³¹ For Ignatius, the pilgrimage thus became a communion of individual pilgrims progressing toward their goals. In the "Constitutions, terms such as *houses* or *union* are used to denote where individual Jesuits are called to live and to labor "in common," saving souls in the "vineyard of Christ."³²

Second, as to what community-on-the-road entails, the bond that held Jesuits together was grounded neither in Ignatius or in any individual, nor even in the community itself or its activities, but in the Lord Jesus alone, whose life and love continually draw us into deeper companionship with him. Thus, according to the *Constitutions*, it is "the love of God our Lord" that remains "the chief bond to cement the union of the members among themselves and with their head" [671]. Similarly, it is significant that the meditation on the Call of the King in the *Spiritual Exercises* is followed by a contemplation of "how the three divine persons looked at all the plain or circuit of all the world," joined by their mutual eternal love for creation, and deciding to save the human race [102]. As part of the grace of the contemplation, Jesuits themselves would become "whom we contemplate," imitating the divine triune communion that constantly labors for the salvation of the world.³³

Finally, it was on the road where Ignatius, the pilgrim in community, was himself drawn into the divine life of the Holy Trinity who constantly reaches out to redeem humanity, this Ignatius who continually searched for a way and a space to meet and encounter God. Here we use the term *frontier* to denote the liminal, sacred space where humanity comes face to face with the divine. During the early age of monasticism, for example, deserts served as the frontier where ascetics encountered God.³⁴ At the beginning of the twelfth century, as major urban revival gave birth to cities in Western Europe, the liminal space of sa-

³¹ Gerald G. May, *Pilgrimage Home: The Conduct of Contemplative Practice in Groups* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 27.

³² Arrupe, "The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism," 43.

³³ George A. Aschenbrenner, "Becoming Whom We Contemplate," *The Way Supplement* 52 (1985): 30–42.

³⁴ Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Brief History*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 50.

cred encounter moved to urban Gothic cathedrals in their vastness of space, their roofs elevated by high columns, their interiors surrounded by a sea of glass and flooded with light. Still later, the mendicant movement further affirmed the human and divine union in the villages, by means of their teaching and preaching.³⁵

With the dawn of Christian humanism and reform in the middle of the fifteenth century, spirituality was not so much a matter of external or communal practice but of the individual's deepening desire for God and experience of God's acceptance.³⁶ As a result, the encounter between humanity and divinity was believed to take place in the individual. And so, in the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius insisted on directors "allowing the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord" [15].

Whether in the deserts of monasticism or the Gothic cathedrals of the medieval cities or the discerning heart of the individual, the term *frontier* signifies the sacred space of encounter between the divine and the individual in communion. Such an encounter is possible first and foremost because of the ongoing communication of the Holy Trinity, who actively labors to "save the human race," pursuing and calling each individual to labor with the Lord. According to Jesuit general Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Ignatius was "probably the first person in the history of spirituality to perceive the Trinity as God at work . . . always filling up the universe and actively awakening the divine life in all things for the salvation of humanity."³⁷ Overwhelmed by divine love, the individual is moved to respond by surrendering to the divine will.

Thus, more than a physical space, *frontier* signifies a realm of discernment where the individual Jesuit, facing the crucified Lord, asks: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What will I do for Christ?" [Sp. Ex. 53]. For John Sobrino, living at the frontier involves a "greater scope of Christian imagination and creativity to experiment; where the risks may be greater; where there is a need of

³⁵ Ibid., 85.

³⁶ Ibid., 113–14; 129.

³⁷ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, *The Road from La Storta: Peter-Hans Kolvenbach on Ignatian Spirituality* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2000), 23.

prophetic activity in order to shake off the inertia that is continually immobilizing the church as a whole or in order to denounce sin more energetically."³⁸

For Ignatius, then, Manresa and La Storta remained two of the most important frontiers where the pilgrim encountered the divine presence and discerned the divine will. It was in Manresa where, after having wrestled with "different spirits through the lessons God had given him" [Au 25], Ignatius was graced with a penetrating knowledge of the Persons of the Trinity and of the divine essence, specifically regarding two of the divine operations *ad extra*: Creation and the Incarnation.³⁹ "[T]hat which happened at Manresa" became Ignatius's "point of reference" in discerning the direction and manner of how members of the Society are to save souls.⁴⁰

Again, remaining in the liminal space of discerning and waiting to be accepted and confirmed into divine service were Ignatius's only interests upon arrival at La Storta. "St. Ignatius' primary concern at this time," according to Fr. Kolvenbach, "is not the Society . . . neither are the tensions he brings with him even unto the portals of Rome his major concern; no, nor even the conflicts and misunderstandings that await him in the city of the Popes. His only concern, his one passion, remains that of being able to be acceptable to God's Divine Majesty."⁴¹ For the rest of his life, Ignatius remained in this liminal space of frontier, seeking the will of God so to be received into the Lord's service.

For Ignatius, such a frontier exists for all Jesuits only because the Trinity continues to be active in laboring to redeem humanity. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Contemplation on the Incarnation begins in the active discernment among the Three Persons of the Trinity. Here, it is the Trinity who, looking down upon the whole world, decides to send the Second Person to become human, immediately after which the angel of God arrives to greet Our Lady face-to-face [102]. Similarly, at La

³⁸ Jon Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (London: SCM Press, 1984), 323.

³⁹ Arrupe, "The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism," 9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴¹ Kolvenbach, *The Road from La Storta*, 2.

Storta, the Son with whom the Father placed Ignatius had already been on his own way, carrying the cross.

Two further movements revealing the frontier that all members of the Society of Jesus ought to explore appear in the mystical visions of Ignatius. In the first movement, God the Father, while dominating the scene, continues to labor in concert with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ignatius remembered this divine working relationship during his discernment on the issue of Jesuit poverty. On February 11, 1544, he wrote in his Spiritual Diary:

Thus I sat down considering almost in general whether the income should be complete, partial, or not at all. Then I began to lose the desire to look into pros and cons and at the same moment I received new insights, viz. that the Son first sent his apostles to preach in poverty, and later the Holy Spirit, by granting his spirit and his gift of tongues, confirmed them, and thus, since both Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit, all three Persons confirmed such a mission.⁴²

According to Fr. Arrupe, this insight of Ignatius summarized “the entire theology of mission which Ignatius makes completely his: Christ gives the mission, the Holy Spirit confirms it with his gifts, for the glory of the Father. It is the extension *ad extra* of the ‘expiration’ by which the Father and the Son eternally ‘send’ the Spirit.”⁴³ The mission of the Society of Jesus ultimately belongs to Christ. It is Christ who continually calls and sends Jesuits to labor with the triune God in their divine mission to “save the human race” [Sp.Ex 102]. In this way, God determines and sets the frontier for the Society.

In the second movement, the middle place where Ignatius was placed with Christ indicates the setting where God who belongs “in the first of all places” has chosen to be “in the last place” carrying the cross, laboring “in the *frontier* of the inhuman and on the border of the

⁴² *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings*, trans. Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 76.

⁴³ Arrupe, “The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism,” 33.

human.”⁴⁴ Similarly, in the *Spiritual Exercises*, immediately following the divine discernment and determination to “save the human race,” the angel Gabriel was sent to the frontier of the empire, to the “house and rooms of Our Lady in the city of Nazareth, in the province of Galilee” [103]. As the divine plan of salvation unfolds, Ignatius instructs the retreatant to ask for “the interior knowledge of the Lord who became human for me so that I may better love and follow him” [104]. In other words, becoming whom he contemplates remains the chief grace to ask for during these periods of contemplation. Thus, Christ functions as the standard of discernment and response for all members of the Society that bears his name. In other words, Christ’s standard defines the Society’s frontier.

II. Pilgrims in Community at the Frontiers: The Life of the Early Society

As noted already, the three aspects of Ignatius’s experience—pilgrim, community, and frontier—function as three musical notes in one harmonious chord that expresses Jesuit identity and mission. But all three notes must sound together. No note can be played separately from the others. In this section, we explore how certain moments of the early Society envisioned and lived out this harmonious chord of Jesuit mission.

It is interesting to note the almost complete absence of the term *mission* from the decrees of the early general congregations of the Society of Jesus. The decrees of the first seven congregations mention matters of “mission” only three times. Decree 130 of the first general congregation (1558) considered how “missions in the Indies are to be assisted,” and promised that “help would be supplied insofar as is possible.”⁴⁵ Decree eighty-six of the same congregation entrusted the solution to the question “whether or not permission to preach the Gospel should be sought from the ruler of China . . . in the prudence of

⁴⁴ Kolvenbach, *The Road from La Storta*, 30. Our italics.

⁴⁵ *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations. A Brief History and a Translation of the Decrees*, ed. John W. Padberg et al. (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994), 100.

the fathers of the Chinese mission."⁴⁶ Finally, decree twenty-one of the seventh general congregation (1615) ruled that "missionaries scattered through various provinces should be subject to the assistant and to the provincials in whose provinces they reside."⁴⁷ The word *mission* applied in a territorial or geographical sense did not appear until the decrees of the twenty-seventh general congregation (1923), specifically, under Title 3, which reads, "the Governance of Provinces, Vice-Provinces, and Missions."⁴⁸

The near silence regarding the word *mission* in these "matters of greater moment" is baffling considering the rapid growth of the Society of Jesus and the new enterprises that were taking shape.⁴⁹ Some of the historical hallmarks of this period, not only of the Society but also of the church, include the first Jesuit entry into China (1583); the penetration of Jesuit works and presence into the interior of Brazil (1586); the expansion into the inland of India (1606); the founding of the Paraguayan reductions (1610); numerous ministries of the Spiritual Exercises; and the Society's engagement in education, intellectual apostolates, and pastoral care in Europe and around the world. Certainly, the congregational delegates did not lack information on these ministries, given that the archives of the Society include a massive collection of writings on these topics. Could it be that the first Jesuits envisioned and communicated their idea of mission in ways different than we do today? And how did the early Jesuits apply the term *mission* to their vocation and ministry?

⁴⁶ Ibid., 276–77.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 256. This decree served as a response to the tensions among Jesuit missionaries of English origin who lived in Spain at the time. Questions arose whether to appoint superiors of the same nationalities to govern them, and whether these men should be exempted from the jurisdiction of the assistants, provincials, and local superiors of the provinces of residence.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 582. The index of topics indicates that the word *mission* first appeared in decree sixteen of the twenty-ninth general congregation (1946).

⁴⁹ Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 97.

In the writings of the early Society, the noun *mission* first appeared in the Formula of the Institute.⁵⁰ In chapter two of the 1539 Five Chapters, we read:

However, to forestall among us any ambition for such missions or provinces, or any refusal of them, let each one promise never to carry on negotiations with the Roman pontiff about such missions directly or indirectly, but leave all this care to God and to His vicar and to the superior of the Society. This superior, too, just like the rest, shall also promise not to approach the pontiff at all either one way or another concerning a mission of his own, except with the advice of the Society [4].⁵¹

All three versions of the Formula (1539, 1540, and 1550) insisted on the Society's "special vows" to the Roman Pontiff and all his successors; that is, to be "sent out to serve under the banner of the Cross" [3; 5]. As mentioned above, Jesuit mission, rooted in the divine economy of the Holy Trinity, entails, fundamentally, "to be sent." However, the evolution taking place in these three versions suggests an ongoing pilgrimage, the frontiers of which Ignatius and the early Jesuits had to discern continually so to remain faithful to the Spirit's lead. In the Formula of 1539, those to whom the Jesuits were sent included "the Turks, or the new world, or the Lutherans, or other infidels." The Formula of 1540 extended such a sending or mission to include "the Turks, and other infidels including those who lived in the regions called Indies, or other heretics or schismatics, or Christian faithful." And again, the Formula of 1550 expanded the frontier of Jesuit mission to embrace "the Turks, or other infidels including the regions called Indies, other heretics, or schismatics, or Christian faithful."⁵²

In this sense, the vow presupposed a mobility that impels Jesuits to various ethnic and religious groups, beyond geographical bound-

⁵⁰ Aldama, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: Missioning*, 9.

⁵¹ Antonio M. de Aldama, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: The Formula of the Institute*, trans. Ignacio Echániz (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1989), 10.

⁵² *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús: Introducción y notas para su lectura*, ed. Santiago Arzubialde et al. (Bilbao-Santander: Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 1993), 33.

aries. It supported and strengthened three aspects of Jesuit mission—namely, the availability (1) to be sent on the road, led by the spirit, (2) in a community forged under the banner of the Cross, (3) to the ever expanding horizon. In this sense, part seven of the *Constitutions* understood Jesuit “mission” not only as traveling from place to place, but also as “residing steadily and continually in certain places” [603]. Subsequently, the meaning of *mission* was extended to cover various assignments ranging from full-time active ministry to time in probation, from the act of sending to the effect of that sending, from apostolic commitments involved in religious life to religious life itself in community.⁵³

With such an extensive understanding of their mission, Jesuits continued to discern the movements of the Spirit and to journey to many frontiers. Francis Xavier went on one of the first of many Jesuit missionary expeditions to the Far East. Jesuits were missioned to India, Molucas, Japan, the Congo, Brazil, and Ethiopia. At the time of Ignatius’s death, in 1556, more than one hundred Jesuits had been sent to India, Japan, and Brazil. Ignatius lived to see the Society’s first martyrs in India, Molucas, and Brazil.⁵⁴ In 1548, Jerónimo Nadal, Peter Canisius, and André des Freux were sent to Messina to open the Society’s first school in Europe.⁵⁵ Between 1554 and 1556, against the current theological climate at the time, Nadal argued to extend the ministry of the Spiritual Exercises to “infidels and heretics.”⁵⁶ A letter to Ignatius from one of his early followers, Miguel Landívar, indicated that, as early as 1537, “[the Companions] work to help others, and to walk with those who wander off the beaten path.”⁵⁷

On the theological frontier, some of the first Jesuits, including Alfonso Salmerón (1515–1585) and Diego Laínez (1512–1565), played an

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 27.

⁵⁶ Jerónimo Nadal, “Exercises for Infidels, Heretics and Sinners” *The Way* 43, no. 1 (2004): 43–50.

⁵⁷ Geger, “The First First Companions,” 18.

active role in shaping the Council of Trent.⁵⁸ Invited to the council by Pope Pius IV (1499–1565), superior general Laínez not only took an active role in the preparatory commission during the third stage of the council, but he also debated the dogmatic question of Christ's presence in the Holy Eucharist. At the same time, Salmerón, an active member of the council, argued on the basis of the divine law for children to receive the Holy Eucharist under the form of bread and wine.⁵⁹ For his part, Peter Faber (1506–1546) went against the current social and religious climate of his time by insisting on "love and compassion" in his advice to Laínez regarding how the Society ought to deal with "heretics," meaning Protestants, at that time.⁶⁰ Ignatius himself continued to remain in the liminal space of the frontier with many tears, ardent prayers, and devotions: while composing the Constitutions, he was discerning how the Society was to remain faithful to the poor Christ in its practice of poverty.⁶¹

As the frontiers of the Society's mission expanded and its members scattered throughout the world, their vision of community began to transform also. Along with the Spiritual Exercises, the newly composed and promulgated Constitutions served as the common bonds that "fasten and weld" all Jesuits into the one body of the religious order.⁶² The "union of hearts" among the Society's dispersed members and its head was concretely practiced by communication through letters that served as a vehicle of "mutual consolation and edification in our Lord" [Co 673]. Consequently, a network of epistolary exchange developed such that "news about the Society [could] be communicated to everyone" [Co 675] and "fuller knowledge of everyone" gained

⁵⁸ André Ravier, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 141.

⁵⁹ William V. Bangert, *Claude Jay and Alfonso Salmerón: Two Early Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985), 210.

⁶⁰ Hung Pham, "Pierre Favre's 'On Dealing with Heretics': An Example of the Early Jesuits' Way of Proceeding in Ecumenical Dialogue," *Ignis* 44, no. 4 (2014): 51–72.

⁶¹ Ignatius Loyola, "Spiritual Diary," in *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings*, 76.

⁶² "Preface to the First Edition of the Constitutions," in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), xv–xx, xviii.

so as to assure the wellbeing of the Society and communion among its members [Co 676]. From the beginning, the authors of the Constitutions recognized the essential role of this network in Jesuit union and governance, so much so that an office of secretary to the general was established to provide better administrative control and efficiency [800–802].

Taking into account the challenge of distance and the limited means of transportation available at the time, what the early Society achieved in its network of information exchange continues to inspire awe. Ignatius himself wrote more than 6,800 letters on a range of personal, political, social, educational, financial, and religious concerns, and these letters reached all parts of the known world.⁶³ One scholar sees this extensive and efficient network of communication as the world's first "body of discourse representing a global conversation, with participating voices from around the world."⁶⁴ This global conversation involved an astounding body of information regarding science, climate, theology, cultural anthropology, martyrs, travel narratives, and Jesuit churches and colleges, from across Europe, Asia, and the Americas.⁶⁵

This achievement of the early Society was built on the "bedrock of trust and reliability" of all its members. As such, the effectiveness of the Jesuit network can be attributed not only to the quantity and frequency of the information exchanged but also to the quality of individual Jesuits who did the reporting with keen observation and scientific intelligence.⁶⁶ It was also the result of the diligent work of Ignatius and succeeding generals, of Ignatius's secretary Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–1576), and of the fathers at some of the early congregations who decreed in meticulous detail how to conduct the written correspondence, with regard to the kind of information desired, its frequency,

⁶³ *Ignatius of Loyola: Letters and Instructions*, ed. Martin E. Palmer et al. (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006), ix.

⁶⁴ Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 194.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Harris, "Mapping Jesuit Science," 212–40, 231.

its style, and its organization.⁶⁷ Such diligence and high-level concern for communication among the early Jesuits demonstrated their desire to maintain union among all the pilgrims while continuing to discern where the Lord was calling them.

How did this harmony of Jesuit mission—pilgrims in community at the frontiers—continue to sound in subsequent generations? The remainder of this section will explore this question in terms of the graces springing from trial and error with regard to the failures and successes of the Jesuit missions

“in the Indies.” Those regions called “the Indies” had not appeared in the Formula of Institute of 1539, but only later in the versions of 1540 and 1550.⁶⁸ This fact suggests that the birth and the development of the Jesuit mission in the Indies itself represented a

In many western provinces, the number of Jesuits is decreasing. At the same time, an increase of Jesuit vocations in Africa and Asia has made great demands on Jesuit resources, especially in formation.

frontier. Specifically, it opened a liminal space where Jesuits as pilgrims in the newly-born Society of Jesus discerned and wrestled with how to engage creatively God’s living presence in non-Western contexts. At the same time, it also challenged them to maintain their communion with the universal body of the Society and the larger Catholic Church.

The Jesuits were not the first religious order to travel outside Europe, but insofar as they were pilgrims, they did not have concrete blueprints to follow. What they did have, and in fact relied upon, were the methods of discernment outlined in the Spiritual Exercises and still later in the Constitutions; and, most importantly, the divine grace that they received in each moment of their life and work. Thus what it

⁶⁷ Written correspondence was first prescribed in the *Constitutions* [Co 674], its manner of communicating and its frequency were further explained by decree fifty-four of the second general congregation (*For Matters of Greater Moment*, 124–25).

⁶⁸ “Formula de Instituto: Texto paralelo de las tres redacciones,” *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús. Introducción y notas para su lectura*, ed. Santiago Arzubialde (Santander: Sal Terrae, 1993), 30–40, 33.

meant to be pilgrims in community at the frontier entailed an evolving experience of errors and graces, failures and successes, fear and hope.

Indeed, the physical distance and arduous conditions of the journey that Jesuits had to endure in their travel to the Indies presented some of their greatest hardships. The trip from Western Europe to East Asia during this period lasted “not weeks, but months or years.”⁶⁹ Francis Xavier (1506–1552) needed thirteen months to travel to Goa from Lisbon.⁷⁰ Natural calamities, shipwrecks, seasickness, and piracy were all part of the experience. George Schurhammer described some of these conditions:

Seasickness took its toll of victims. Only the sea-hardened boatmen and sailors and few of the voyagers were spared. The majority of the latter were afflicted with a violent gagging and retching, a loss of appetite, and a general distress and feeling of exhaustion.⁷¹

For some, the symptoms lasted a few days; for others, they ranged from a week to forty-five days, or even two months. Italian Jesuit Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), having made the same journey, attested that “even the greatest heroes became pale, and no one could help another.”⁷² Due to the horrible condition of seasickness, many regretted having made the trip. Some actually confessed that, “if they had known what it was, they would not have gone to sea for all the treasures of India.”⁷³

In addition, the long distance and dangerous conditions made communication challenging if not impossible. Yet the pilgrims managed to maintain communication—a key part of their connection with the universal Society. Letters that informed Europe about the condition

⁶⁹Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*, 46.

⁷⁰ His fleet left Lisbon in April 1541 and arrived at Goa in May 1542 (George Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. 2, trans. M. Joseph Costelloe [Rome: IHSI, 1977], 3, 151).

⁷¹ Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. 1, 11.

⁷²Ibid., 11n74.

⁷³Ibid.

of the Jesuits and their ministries in the Indies were copied and sent on different ships using different routes. Of course, their correspondents expected delays and lost letters. Information from Lisbon to Beijing via Goa took two years each way, sometimes longer.⁷⁴ However, the efforts exerted by Jesuits to find ways to communicate across oceans and mountains gave witness to their profound desire as pilgrims to remain in communion with one another—a goal facilitated by having Rome as their central office.

Nevertheless, as Clossey notes, the connection between Rome and the Indies was “so tenuous that the only solution to the lack of information was a deeply disruptive recall of the principal missionary.”⁷⁵ Even having the Jesuit report in person guaranteed nothing. Not only their correspondence, but also at times the Jesuits themselves who served as messengers, were lost at sea. António Gomez (ca. 1520–1554), whom Xavier dismissed from the Society, died at sea on his way back to Rome to plead his case.⁷⁶ It has been estimated that in 1690, more than a century after the establishment of the Indies Province, only one hundred Jesuits of the six hundred who were sent arrived in China.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*, 46. In fact, the *Constitutions* explicitly made certain provisions for delayed communication between Rome and the Indies [Co 208, 447, 449, 517, 621, 623, 679, 803]. Xavier learned about Ignatius’s letter appointing him to be provincial of the East two years after the letter was written. Ignatius’s letter calling Xavier back to Europe was written in June 1553, a half year after Xavier’s death. General Laínez admitted Niccolò Lancilotti to final vows in the Society of Jesus in August 1558, four months after his death. German astronomer Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592–1666) wrote a letter from Beijing to General Francesco Piccolomini (1582–1651) dated March 15, 1655, almost four years after Piccolomini’s death and three years after the death of his successor, General Aloysius Gottifredi (1595–1652).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷⁶ Polanco’s letter to the vice-provincial of the Indies, Gaspar Marzaeus, granting Fr. Gomez permission to come to Rome to give his own reason, was dated December 24, 1553. Fr. Gomez sailed from Cochin to Portugal on February 1, 1554. His ship was wrecked due to a heavy storm, and his body was found among the deceased passengers on April 28 of the same year (Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. 4, 532).

⁷⁷ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*, 49–50.

Beside the long distance and the harsh conditions that Jesuits faced on pilgrimage to the frontiers, cultural diversity and adversity posed additional and perhaps even greater challenges to their union. The Jesuit missionaries who sailed to the Indies via Lisbon from 1541 to 1580 consisted of 54.9% Portuguese, 28.3% Spanish, 12.4 % Italian, and 4.4% other. Between 1581 and 1640, the Jesuits were 63.8% Portuguese, 4.4% Spanish, 26.8% Italian, and 0.9% German, with the remaining 4.1% being a mix of Austrians, Poles, Belgians, Swiss, Flemish, English, and Irish, not counting colonial-born white and mixed blood and native-born Jesuits.⁷⁸

Divisions among Jesuits, particularly the rivalries between the Spanish and the Portuguese, intensified such that it caused Antonio Possevino (1533–1611), the general secretary, to urge General Everard Mercurian (1514–1580) in 1576 to write a *lettera di unione* to encourage “union and charity without distinction between races and nations,” and to avoid an “irremediable schism” in the Society.⁷⁹ In 1619, André Palmeiro (1569–1635), visitor of the Indies, observed that “some Portuguese do not get on well with the Italians . . . one thing which [he] often hears and which [he] sees with [his] own eyes, is a source of discord.”⁸⁰ Quarrels about mission strategy and lifestyle among Jesuits of different provinces in the Indies, including Japan and China, Malabar and Goa, Goa and the eastern province, were common.⁸¹ Hence, “it would be a mistake to think that from the outset Jesuit missionaries hit upon this formula [of union of hearts and minds] or that they were unanimous in its acceptance.”⁸² These conditions reinforced Jesuit convictions about the need for a centralized authority that facilitated community-on-the-road, and that justified the institution of the visitor.

⁷⁸ Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540–1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 268.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 268; Antonio Astrain, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la asistencia de España*, vol. 4, 8. John P. Donnelly, “Antonio Possevino: From Secretary to Papal Legate in Sweden,” in *The Mercurian Project*, 323–49.

⁸⁰ Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, 270. See also Liam Matthew Brockey, *The Visitor: André Palmeiro and the Jesuits in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014).

⁸¹ Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, 653.

⁸² George H. Dunn, *Generations of Giants: The Story of Jesuits in China in the Last Decades of the Ming Dynasty* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962), 14.

In the midst of all the physical and emotional hardship that Jesuits faced on their journeys to the Indies, and of the cultural adversity and division that threatened the union among members, the love and passion for saving souls continued to motivate and inspire these pilgrims to remain at the frontiers. They continued to discern the will of God, to remain in communion with one another, and to mobilize the church. Similar to how God led Ignatius, *el peregrino*, through a long and winding journey in the pursuit of “saving souls,” Jesuits in the Indies were committed to be “members of a community founded chiefly for this purpose: to strive especially for the progress of souls in Christian life.”⁸³

Indeed, one of the central themes in the foundational documents of the Society of Jesus is the care of “souls”—both one’s own and those of one’s neighbors.⁸⁴ No matter where Jesuits found themselves, no matter the ministries to which they were missioned, to “help souls” constituted the “aim and end of [the] Society” [Co 307]. It continually defined all Jesuits as pilgrims in community at the frontiers. Despite the hardships, therefore, the desire to win souls for the glory of God continued to inflame the Jesuits’ passion and zeal to go to and to remain at the frontiers in the Indies.⁸⁵

Appealing to the same bond of union, Jorge Serrão (ca. 1528–1590), provincial of Portugal from 1570 to 1574, confronted the division among the various ethnic and national factions within the Society, insisting that “there must not be Italians nor Spaniards nor Portuguese but only perfection and the Company of Jesus.”⁸⁶ Therefore, for members of the Society, knowledge of Christ must serve as the end goal for all pilgrims. In other words, the love of Christ must serve as the chief

⁸³ Antonio M. de Aldama, *The Formula of the Institute: Notes for a Commentary*, trans. Ignacio Echániz (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1990), 2.

⁸⁴ The word *ánima* appears fifteen times in the “Autobiography,” almost eighty times in the *Spiritual Exercises*, seventy-five times in the *Constitutions*, twenty-one times in the *Spiritual Diary* of Saint Ignatius, two times in the “Deliberation of the First Fathers,” and five times in the *Directory of the Spiritual Exercises (An Ignatian Concordance, 47–50)*.

⁸⁵ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*, 118–23.

⁸⁶ Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, 268.

bond that holds all in communion. And following Christ must be the fundamental reason that sends Jesuits to the frontiers. To this end, “to know Christ more intimately, to love Christ more dearly and to follow Christ more closely” [Sp.Ex.104] must animate the hearts of each pilgrim.

III. Pilgrims in Community at the Frontiers: Jesuit Life Today

In the first part of this essay, we followed Vatican II’s summons that the Society study its original inspiration, presenting Jesuits as pilgrims in community at the frontiers. For centuries, returning to the original sources has featured prominently in the Society’s way of proceeding. That is, we must know where we have been—we must, perhaps, perform a type of Examen—in order to discern where the Spirit is leading us.

What remains to be seen, however, are the contours of a more clearly articulated *aggiornamento*, or updating of the Society’s understanding of mission, in today’s context. In the July 2015 letter mentioned above, Fr. Nicolás reminds Jesuits of this need for renewal:

In 1995, at the end of General Congregation 34, we were told that “what we need now is a **New Theology of Mission.**” I confess that at the time the statement impressed me greatly and that since then I have made it completely mine, but I regret that we have not faced this challenge with sufficient boldness.”⁸⁷

In this spirit, we here suggest some of the challenges and tensions for pilgrims in community at the frontiers today. We argue that a contemporary rendering of this threefold dynamic provides a necessary paradigm for the Society of Jesus. This paradigm in turn coincides with what the new missiology describes as *missio Dei*—that is, the understanding

⁸⁷ Nicolás, “Letter to the Whole Society.”

that our mission, lived in community, comes from God. In other words, “the church has a mission because the mission has a church.”⁸⁸

Certain tensions have surfaced in the Society today as the result of recent demographic shifts. For instance, in many western provinces, the number of Jesuits is decreasing. At the same time, an increase of Jesuit vocations in Africa and Asia has made great demands on Jesuit resources, especially in formation. Articulating these tensions, however, in such terms as “periphery vs. center,” “individual creativity vs. communal commitment,” and “local vs. global,” can mislead us. These shifts also can call us to a new way of discerning and imagining how to be pilgrims in community at the frontiers. And so, as the future unfolds, we once again set out following the call of the Lord in *communitas*, discerning in new frontiers the presence of God in the “signs of the times.”

In the context of global Christianity, one of the most notable changes involves the decrease in the number of Christians in the Northern Hemisphere in contrast to the dramatic increase in the Southern. One in five of all Christians (21%) now lives in sub-Saharan Africa. Over a period of one hundred years, Christianity in this region, at least in terms of numbers, has recorded an astronomical, seventy-fold increase in membership, from seven million to 470 million.⁸⁹

According to Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator (AOR), Jesuit theologian and former provincial of the East Africa province, this phenome-

⁸⁸ In the words of Father General Nicolás, “Now we speak of our mission in the Church as part of the mission of God, the single ecclesial mission in which all people participate. We try to discern humbly where God is working, and how, so that we can cooperate more effectively in God’s work. We are becoming aware that God has already been at work in many hearts and that discovering what God is doing in the world is more important than determining beforehand how we might multiply Christians by our own norms” (Nicolás, “Letter To the Whole Society”).

⁸⁹ Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator, “A Billion Reasons to Believe in Africa: The Long March from ‘The Hopeless Continent’ to the ‘Spiritual Lung’ of Humanity,” Pope Paul VI Memorial Lecture, October 18, 2013, 4, accessed June 18, 2016, [http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/12704/98567/version/1/file/A%20billion%20reasons%20to%20believe%20in%20Africa%20Full%20Text%2018%20October%202013%20\(3\).pdf](http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/12704/98567/version/1/file/A%20billion%20reasons%20to%20believe%20in%20Africa%20Full%20Text%2018%20October%202013%20(3).pdf).

nal growth is part of a larger trend taking place in the Southern Hemisphere:

Together with its Asian and Latin American continental counterparts, Africa occupies a strategic position on the axis of growth that not only defines “the next Christendom,” but, more significantly, exemplifies Phillip Jenkins’ idea of “global Christianity” and fulfills Karl Rahner’s vision of a “world-Church” that welcomes “others who come bearing gifts from the global South for the regeneration of the Body of Christ.”⁹⁰

From this perspective, it is possible to consider Africa, Asia, and Latin American as both “centers” and “peripheries” of today’s world church. Instead of simply identifying them as our frontiers, the first question

International exchanges and immersions are now happening in non-Catholic educational institutions. For example, Jesuits in predominantly Muslim Indonesia facilitate interfaith encounters between local students and theology students at the Jesuit theologate in Berkeley, California.

for Jesuits must be: where is the Spirit calling the Society in the midst of these changes? Again, *frontier* has to do essentially neither with new territories nor with novel ideas—though these may be involved as a result—but first and foremost with a liminal space where God continues to meet the individual and vice versa. Thus, Jesuit mission to the

frontiers remains the creative work of the Spirit, and thus requires individual prayer and communal discernment for the sake of the universal mission of the Society.

⁹⁰ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Karl Rahner, “Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council,” in *Concern for the Church*, trans. Edward Quinn, vol. 20 of *Theological Investigations*, (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 80. The block quote is from Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator (commencement address, Jesuit School of Theology Berkeley, May 19, 2012).

Speaking to a gathering of the former Missouri and New Orleans Provinces in St. Louis on June 13, 2014, Orlando Torres (UCS app DIR), formerly Father General's assistant for formation, informed the group that 80% of today's Jesuits in formation come from the Southern Hemisphere. At one time, the United States, part of the so-called New World, had the largest number of Jesuits. Today, India, as an assistancy of the Society, can legitimately make this claim. The procurators in Nairobi in 2012 posed just this question: What might this demographic shift imply for Jesuits throughout the world be in terms of the support, formation, and governance of our men in the Southern Hemisphere?

We cannot base our discernment of the frontiers only on the basis of economic distribution, as seen through eyes of cultural and financial experts. As pilgrims in community at the frontiers, the starting point for such a discussion must begin with prayers and discernment with the Lord, who continues to call us to labor with him in the evolving circumstances of the Society. Where is the Lord continuing to call us Jesuits? And how might the Society, given its current human and financial resources, respond to this call? Re-centering and placing ourselves in the Lord liberates us from the emotional ties and personal and communal attachments that at times have seemed to take over our discernment and discourse.

Indeed, these recent demographic shifts can constitute a composition of place in our discernment within our respective communities and apostolates. Going back to our foundational focus—that is, taking to heart Ignatius's appeal for an international mutuality among communities—we need to find ways to strengthen and to maximize our communion, mutuality, and collaboration among one another across regions, assistancies, provinces, and communities, so as better to serve both church and society. To this end, as discussed above, letter writing has helped foster universal communion in the Society. Today, given the availability of the Internet, which facilitates transcontinental communication, Jesuits not only are maintaining universal communion among themselves, but also are using it for such greater goods as distance learning. And so, just as our forebears, through their writings and correspondence, bridged the intellectual gap between Europe and China,

Jesuits today are promoting reconciliation and establishing right relationships in today's "fragmented world."⁹¹

A personal experience might help to illustrate this point. We related at the beginning of this essay Hung Pham's experience with the JRS in Northern Thailand. By courageously raising their voices, the refugees opened Hung's eyes to a greater reality—namely, that the issue of refugees and migrants concerns not only Myanmar or Thailand but also the entire international community. For this reason, our overall society improves qualitatively only when the conditions of refugees and immigrants improve. In this context, to be at the frontier does not necessarily mean working at the refugee camp, but certainly discerning and looking for ways to mediate and to connect the reality of refugees and their living conditions with the rest of the world, and for the world to work in solidarity with people in dire need of its attention.

In fact, this emphasis on solidarity has already begun. The Ignatian Solidarity Network, for example, gathers lay collaborators, students, and Jesuits from among the various institutions that the Society sponsors in the United States. In this vein, its Bridge and Advocacy programs have been addressing the issues of immigration reform, environmental justice, and human rights in Central America.⁹² In cities such as Denver and Kansas City, Jesuit communities do not dedicate themselves exclusively to one apostolate, such as a school or parish, but rather try to focus on the needs of those cities as a whole. Surely, we Jesuits, historically known as "international teams, which were the expression of the plural character of an institution that aspired to universality," continually look for ways to build bridges among communities and to advocate for the voiceless.⁹³ Any failure of Jesuits and their institutions to collaborate is not acceptable; indeed, it is a source of sadness that we need to examine seriously in prayer and in conversation among ourselves as friends in the Lord.

⁹¹ One of the calls stated in GC 35 (d. 2, nn. 1, 26; d. 3, nn. 17, 43).

⁹² Ignatian Solidarity Network, accessed June 18, 2016, <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/iftj/>.

⁹³ Alfonso Alfaro, "Hombres paradójicos: La experiencia de alteridad," in "Misiones jesuitas," special issue, *Artes de México* 65 (2003): 25.

In the early Society, a key tool for such mutuality and collaboration involved learning other languages and immersing oneself in cultures different from one's own. In such thoroughly international settings as the Paraguayan reductions, Jesuits emphasized not only the Latin that had played such an important role in their formation, but also the local languages, the learning of which accounts in part for why Jesuits excelled in the creation of grammars and dictionaries. Jesuits in the reductions, for example, relied principally on older women to help them learn Guarani, given the inappropriateness of engaging younger women and the unavailability of the men, who were busy hunting or farming. Indeed, Ignatius urged Jesuits to familiarize themselves with their local "region, climate, longitude, and latitude, native customs, dress and houses" not out of curiosity, but for the sake of better governance in the Society.⁹⁴

In recent years, Jesuits in the United States who do not already speak Spanish have made notable efforts to learn it. But beyond language skills, we might ask how our Jesuit communities and lifestyles in the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States reflect the diversity not only of members of the Society, but also of the population whom God has called us to serve. Our communion must move beyond tolerance or simply enduring one another's cultural behaviors and practices to engaging in serious conversations by which we share our unique gifts and wisdom while acknowledging our shortcomings and limitations. On this point, dinner and recreation room conversation around the consolidation of provinces—for example, the US Central Southern Province, a juridical coming together of men from very different cultural worlds—reveals underlying attitudes and perspectives. In this way, governance and authority in the Society can reflect not only the diversity of its members, but also its intercultural dynamic, so that together we develop a Jesuit culture centered on Christ.

Individual Creativity vs. Communal Commitment

Earlier, we alluded to Fr. Nicolás's concern about the understanding that any given Jesuit might articulate "his" mission to the detriment

⁹⁴ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*, 194.

of collaboration among “Ours.” Such an attitude has haunted some of our works, heroic though they may have been. If in fact we are pilgrims in community at the frontiers, then we need to discern the role that individual creativity plays in the context of our communal mission.

Certainly, our commitments to so many educational institutions ought to foster individual creativity. In this vein, the desire to develop innovative and sustainable projects must emerge from both individual creativity and group discernment, especially to the extent that Jesuits serve in places that lack the resources necessary to carry out the mission. An individual Jesuit’s creativity must accompany the Society’s commitment to various institutions and vice versa, since although institutions become fossilized without individual creativity, individuals without institutions cannot sustain their creativity. We can take as a case in point the growing institutionalization of the Cristo Rey schools initiative. While innovative and charismatic Jesuits founded most of these schools, the continued success of the schools calls upon the efforts of many, more ordinary Jesuits and lay men and women working diligently and collaboratively in the context of those institutions.

In some provinces, for instance, the collaboration between more established universities or high schools and newer and less affluent Cristo Rey high schools exemplifies the need for constant renewal of what constitutes frontiers. In this vein, Regis University in Denver has pioneered the Jesuit Commons Project, which makes university-level distance learning accessible to persons in African refugee camps. Another example is the incorporation of Saint Patrick’s Parish in East Oakland into the mission of the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University. While these joint projects have their share of difficulties and challenges, they nonetheless stand as living signs of pilgrimage in community at the frontiers, where individual pilgrims energize one another in the process of building a greater common good.

That the Society remain faithful to the teachings of the church while at the same time interpreting accurately the signs of the times remains one of our most urgent challenges, above all with regard to the Society’s understanding of and commitment to the role of women in the church. Indeed, the contributions of women in Jesuit schools and spiritual direction programs exemplify this reality. For Ignatius the pilgrim, life at the frontiers meant inviting lay people and especially

women to more active engagement in the works of the kingdom. The “royal ladies” and “ladies of noble birth” with whom he corresponded kept him connected to the political authorities of his time, while the “benefactresses” financially supported Jesuit apostolic enterprises and ventures. The “mothers,” “daughters,” and “friends” in turn shared and enjoyed with him the personal loving kindness and intimacy of friendship in the Lord.⁹⁵ And toward the end of his life, though turning “more reserved, almost shy” and maintaining strict boundaries in his spiritual correspondence with women, Ignatius continued to solicit their services with humility and loyalty, dedicating and directing all things to the greater glory of God.⁹⁶ Likewise, decree fourteen of the thirty-fourth general congregation entitled “Jesuits and the Situation of Women in Church and Civil Society,” calls all Jesuits to conversion from a “form of clericalism which has reinforced male domination with an ostensibly divine sanction” [9] to a deeper appreciation of the “generous contribution of women,” to the end that our mutual relationship in ministry might continue and flourish [10].

Certainly, the creativity of God, which knows no limits, continues to expand our horizons. For the first fifty years of its existence, the Society opened its door to admit *conversos* or “new Christians”—including Christians of Jewish ancestry—when a number of religious communities had either rejected or closed their doors to them and the papacy continued to enforce anti-Jewish legislation. In this way, the Society functioned as a safe haven for *conversos* to live out their desire to follow the Lord; and in return, many of them—including Antonio Possevino, Pedro de Ribadneyra, and Alexandre de Rhodes—became some of the most influential administrators, historians, and catechists in the Society.⁹⁷ And then again, Jesuits did not partner only with those with whom they were in agreement. For example, Jesuits went to the Prot-

⁹⁵ *Saint Ignatius Loyola: Letters to Women*, ed. Hugo Rahner (New York: Herder and Herder, 2007), 4–6.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁷ Robert A. Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews: Jesuits of Jewish Ancestry and Purity-of-Blood Laws in the Early Society of Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 41–115.

estant Netherlands to publish books that would educate the Western world about China.⁹⁸ Today, endowed with the rich heritage of creative fidelity, the Society is called once again to be courageous and creative in its discernment on how to serve those who are feeling neglected and marginalized in the church today.

Finally, the call to the frontiers in modern times has enabled lay-Jesuit collaboration by expanding the Jesuit apostolates of education and social ministries to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as in the work of the JRS mentioned earlier. Furthermore, international exchanges and immersions are now happening in non-Catholic educational institutions. For example, Jesuits in predominantly Muslim Indonesia facilitate interfaith encounters between local students and theology students at the Jesuit theologate in Berkeley, California. This opportunity to travel to other countries and experience other religious traditions *in sitio* stimulates an emerging theology of interreligious dialogue, as the work of Francis X. Clooney and others attests.⁹⁹

Local vs. Global

A tension between *local* and *global* emerges from the displacement of peoples, climate change and related ecological disasters, global terrorism, and above all the growing Islamophobia. As such, Fr. Nicolás's call to re-examine Jesuit life and mission at both the local and the global level attends not only to people's immediate needs, as important as they are, but also to social structures that perpetuate injustice. For instance, two significant efforts within the Society to address larger global issues include the ecological programming of various retreat centers

⁹⁸ See Philippe Lécrivain, SJ, "Jesuit Culture and Missions in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: At the Crossroads of History and Theology," in *The Jesuits and the Arts: 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley and Gauvin A. Bailey, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 249–68.

⁹⁹ *The New Comparative Theology: Interreligious Insights from the Next Generation*, ed. Francis X. Clooney (London: T. and T. Clark International, 2010). For a summary of the current shape of the many levels of dialogue in an Asian context, see Edmund Kee-Fook Chia, "Mission as Dialogue: An Asian Roman Catholic Perspective," in *Mission After Christendom*, ed. Ogbu U. Kalu et al. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press), 144–54.

and the commitment of increasingly more Jesuit scholars to the study of Islam.

As pilgrims in community at the frontiers, we discern and execute locally, but with a global perspective. And the Spiritual Exercises contain a contemplation of the world in its particularity as a kind of template for this approach. In this exercise, the exercitant notices the world's inhabitants in their "dress and appearance," races and behaviors, birth and death, and so forth, while at the same time contemplating the three divine Persons looking down "on the whole round world and on all its people" [106]. From this perspective, early members of the Society of Jesus, by observing keenly the populations they encountered, organized and established not only a Jesuit knowledge of geography, but also a more profound "geography of Jesuit knowledge" that provided a network of "spatial distribution and motion of the people, texts, and objects" to all members of the Society.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, as the history of the Society demonstrates, their international connections often enabled Jesuits to stay on the cutting edge of emerging interdisciplinary knowledge. Serving as cultural brokers, they helped to bring people together around common interests, religious or otherwise. This international collaboration meant achieving greater good at the local level, as for example "Ricci's mathematical and technological publications in Beijing, herbal remedies concocted by Jesuit apothecaries like Sigismundo Aperger in Paraguay or Johann Steinhofner in Mexico, or the usefulness of José de Acosta's treatise on the natural and moral history of Peru and Mexico."¹⁰¹ Not only did these benefit the Society but also did they advance the cause of universal knowledge.

In light of the Society's past practice, how we Jesuits take into consideration the global dimension of our ministry at the local level continues to challenge our vision and commitment to mission. While we continue to learn from what we have done, we do not need now a repetition of past successes but rather "a cultural change in the Society

¹⁰⁰ Harris, "Mapping Jesuit Science," 212–40, 214.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 231.

of Jesus in order to develop agents with the new skills needed to provide vision and leadership in a universal and collaborative mission."¹⁰²

One way in which the Society has formed and developed such agents has had to do with sending men outside of their home provinces for formation or ministry. Completing a stage of formation in another country opens up the Jesuit to a larger world and often instills in him a greater compassion, especially when he must learn another language and adopt a different way of life. But even brief international experiences can promote international networking, sharing of resources, and communal discernment, all of which can prepare the man for future apostolic endeavors. Indeed, such experiences help Jesuits and their co-workers in the Lord's vineyard to learn to adapt to different circumstances and, more importantly, to develop a more universal vision along with the skills for collaborative ministry. In this way, Jesuits empowered by a more universal vision in the past became brokers of culture and builders of cross-cultural bridges.¹⁰³

Finally, as Fr. Nicolás has reminded us recently, various international disasters, such as the earthquakes in Haiti (January 12, 2010) and Chile (January 3, 2011); the triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown in Japan (March 11, 2011); floods in Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines (2011), and Madagascar (2012); and drought and famine in the horn of Africa (2011–2012) have made clear the need for an international collaboration between Jesuits and others. "These and other disasters have given rise to an impressive movement of compassion and solidarity among many groups, organizations and individuals. Moved by the love of God that we ourselves have experienced, we

¹⁰² "International Networking In the Society of Jesus: Challenges from a Universal Mission," Boston College, April 28–30, 2012, p. 3, accessed June 18, 2016, http://jesuitnetworking.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/2012_Conference_International_Jesuit_Networking.pdf.

¹⁰³ See Gerald McKevitt, *Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848–1919* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2007). Chris Lowney, *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-year-old Company that Changed the World* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2003) describes the Society's ability to bridge countries and power elites.

are invited to collaborate with others in order to contribute what we can to alleviate the sufferings of people affected by these calamities.”¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

A popular Vietnamese saying counsels:

Return and bathe in your own pond

Whether clear or murky, the home pond is always better.

Inspired by the Second Vatican Council’s call to return to the original inspiration of our charism, this essay has bathed in the “home pond” of the Society of Jesus. In so doing, we have tried to recapture some of the inspiration and practices of the early frontiers. We hope that this exercise will encourage further *aggiorn* Jesuits, whom we have characterized as pilgrims in community at the *amento* in an effort to develop a Jesuit theology of mission in today’s context.

In conclusion, we offer a Contemplation on Jesuit Mission, the content of which sounds the three notes pilgrims–community–frontiers—that harmonious chord which rang out among the early Jesuits. We model our own contemplation after the Contemplation to Attain Love in the Fourth Week of the *Spiritual Exercises* [230–237], and we pattern its lines according to common practice of the Examen. With these notes, we hope to hear this contemplation resonate in the symphony of the Holy Trinity’s active presence in the world.

A Contemplation of Jesuit Mission

Composition of Place

Here it is to see myself as sitting with God, with other Jesuits—including the network of all those Jesuits whose faces and names come to

¹⁰⁴ Adolfo Nicolás to All Major Superiors, “The Service of the Society of Jesus in Times of Disaster,” Rome, March 12, 2012, accessed June 18, 2016, http://www.sjweb.info/imagesNews/2012-03_12Mar12_ENG.pdf. The letter goes on to give seven practical guidelines for Jesuits to follow in times of such universal disasters.

my mind—and with lay collaborators, with all of whom I am working and to whom I relate in and beyond my current ministry.

The Grace for Which I Ask

Here it will be to ask for interior knowledge of all the great goods taking place in my current ministry and in ministries of other Jesuit companions whose faces and names have come to my mind, as well as how our ministries are connected. All are engaged in order to realize how the Lord continues to labor in each of these ministries individually and in all of them as one.

The First Point: On Being a Pilgrim

I will call back into my memory how the Lord has called and led me in my life journey: the desire to join the Society and the gifts that God has given to me in my Jesuit formation; the novitiate, and the years that followed, such as the years of philosophy studies, of regency, of theology studies, of special studies, of apostolic service, and so forth. Through all the ups and downs, I will ponder with deep feeling how the Lord has continued to breathe the divine breath into me by calling me, sustaining me in my Jesuit vocation and constantly drawing me ever more closely to him.

Then I will reflect on myself and consider what I ought to offer and give to the divine majesty—namely, my readiness and availability to go wherever the Lord calls me for God's greater glory. With deep and heartfelt feeling, I pray the *Suscipe*.

The Second Point: In Community

I will call back into my memory the names and faces of those Jesuits whom God has gathered and sent to me—deceased and alive, of my immediate community and beyond, in person and in academic writing, and so forth—who have lovingly and patiently accompanied me in words and in deeds, who have engaged and challenged me in my growth as a Jesuit, and who have mentored me in my intellectual and spiritual formation. In the midst of all the challenges and difficulties of community life, I will recall with a deep feeling all these dear Jesuits who have shown to me the living presence of Christ through the

example of their prayer and commitment to his apostolate and to community life.

Then, I will reflect on myself and consider what I ought to offer and to give to the divine majesty, namely, my open attitude of spirit and heart by which I see other Jesuits through the compassionate eyes of the Lord and as friends in the Lord laboring in the Lord's one vineyard.

The Third Point: At the Frontiers

I will consider how God labors constantly to refound the Society in the midst of all the social, cultural, political, and religious shifts and changes in the landscape of the world today. For example, the Lord is working to redirect the Society in its way of caring for the students, faculty, administration, and staff of Jesuit institutions, and in its discernment for better collaboration between Jesuits and lay partners and among Jesuits. I will consider that it is the Lord who has inspired the existence of the institute in the first place, who continues to sustain it through the goodness of so many people, and who gathers and brings its entire works to fruition.

Then I will reflect on myself and consider what I ought to do in order to encounter the divine majesty—namely, to cultivate an ability to change and to remain flexible in my laboring with the Lord.

Closing Point

I will consider that our mission comes from God, and that the goods that God has brought about through the Society and its lay collaborators are gifts of the divine goodness raining down from above. Then, reflecting on myself, I pray the *Suscipe*.

On the Feast of Mary, Mother of the Society of Jesus, April 22, 2016

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

I am very happy that Fr. Joe Tetlow (UCS) wrote on this topic for *STUDIES* (48.1). He raises some good questions and provides some excellent resources for reflection on this important ministry of the Spiritual Exercises. In fact, this issue of *STUDIES* got read faster than any previous issue that I have seen in the last decade. I agree with Fr. Tetlow that retreat masters in a preached retreat must do more than lecture in their talks. They must witness to what is in their heart, and to what they live in their faith and action. There must be a connection to the world, especially to the social gospel and current culture. He is wise in quoting Joyceann Hagen that the failure of some Jesuit retreat houses was mainly a function of a lack of leadership. I would nuance this comment and say that many retreat house directors were put in charge of sinking ships due to deferred maintenance and a ministry staff that was very old or not competent anymore to carry on this ministry.

I would like to list some reflections on this ministry, and some issues that I think might add to or nuance Fr. Tetlow's article:

Fr. Tetlow makes no mention of the *Guidelines for the Jesuits and their Colleagues in the Ministry of the Spirit-*

tual Exercises in the USA and English Speaking Canada that was approved by the Provincials of the US and English Canada and revised in 2009. This was an attempt by the Provincials to apply for this ministry concrete standards that could be evaluated from time to time. It is important for Jesuit spirituality ministries to operate out of a clear mission and vision statement, and to have professional ministry staffs adequately trained and supervised according to clear ethical standards.

While the preached retreat is a very valuable ministry of the Spiritual Exercises, it is not the only work of a retreat house in the Jesuit tradition. We must not forget the directed retreat, training programs, and Ignatian prayer programs, especially on discernment, young adult ministries, Ignatian programs for the addicted, and the many Kairos programs in which high school students, even from our Jesuit schools, participate. To restrict all of our retreat houses to simply the preached retreat I believe would be a big mistake.

Fr. Tetlow offers a critique of particular retreat ministries—like Bel-larmine, Manresa, and other Jesuit retreat houses and spirituality works—that I believe detracts from the overall thrust of his article. I believe *STUDIES* as a publication was

not meant to be a critique of concrete ministries. And yet Fr. Tetlow raises a concern that some Jesuit retreat houses and spirituality ministries have ceased operation. The retreat house directors and Jesuit provincials and their staffs need to study the challenges facing spirituality ministries and come up with solutions for viability for the 21st century.

In order to survive, the ministry of the Spiritual Exercises does not necessarily need a retreat house that Jesuits operate. It is true that having a retreat house that provides a sacred space does help in giving the Spiritual Exercises. And yet, while many Jesuits were trained to give the Exercises, not many have been trained to operate hotels where the Exercises have been given.

Here at Bellarmine, we find that we are attracting many adults, some younger and for the first time, to attend a half-day or evening spirituality program that is very Ignatian. Many of these day program attendees go on to make a silent weekend preached retreat, and some sign up for a 5–8 day directed retreat. Retreat houses face aging populations, and it is always profitable to find ways to attract new folks to attend the weekend silent retreat.

We have to pay attention to the culture and clientele in a particular area. What may work in Convent, LA may be a disaster in New York

City or Los Angeles. And yet there is much to learn from the successes of our retreat houses along the Mississippi River and in Minnesota.

Let's go back to leadership. With a shortage of Jesuits, many of our retreat houses have hired lay directors. In my opinion, if you hire a lay director just because he/she has business experience, it will be a disaster. You need a director with organizational and management skills along with a depth in Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit ministry. The lay directors who have both sets of skills—a rare breed—have been very effective. This is not to say that a very spiritual Jesuit with no organizational skills might not also be a disaster in running a retreat house.

I would hope that these comments would add and critique, in a constructive way, Fr. Tetlow's provocative essay in the most recent issue of *STUDIES*.

Paul B. Macke (CDT)

Executive Director

Bellarmino Jesuit Retreat House
Barrington, Illinois

Editor:

My *STUDIES* (48.1) aimed at focusing American Jesuits' attention on a plain fact: that we have simply been abandoning a ministry that has thrived for several generations. No

recognition of that abandonment appears in the 2009 Guidelines, which were not updated in 2014 as scheduled. Yet the Guidelines were drawn up after most provinces had closed a lot of retreat houses. My pointing out those closings is not a criticism; it is a recognition of fact intended to guide discernment, which has been the purpose of *STUDIES* since it began.

I have not sensed any serious pastoral discernment in this process of closing retreat houses, though I may just be unaware. What does it mean, for instance, that Faulkner dropped and then re-introduced the preached retreat? That Gloucester now offers it? What does it mean that some Jesuit houses offer a range of good activities, including some preached weekend retreats? I had hoped that my *STUDIES* article would make clear that we do not yet know the answers to those questions.

But we must find some answers if we are to honor a tradition in giving the Spiritual Exercises that goes back to St. Peter Favre and to St. Ignatius himself.

Of course, there are other ways of applying the Exercises. We have plenty of books on them. And the personally-directed retreat remains helpful, though to a relatively scanty Catholic population.

But the preached weekend retreat offers a service to the laity that Jesu-

its do not—and cannot—offer anywhere else. The retreat house serves as an anchor for and a symbol of the “middle class holiness” lived by the vast, vast majority of faithful Catholics. They are thirsty for solid spirituality.

Apparently, I did not make a good enough case that this ministry is thus an excellent match for the great need in the American Church for adult spiritual formation. Serious formation—not just courses in Bible or instruction on prayer—requires witnessing by spiritually-mature Jesuits and colleagues. The needy adult cohort—the mass of those who still go to Mass—is not mentioned in the 2009 Guidelines, which have to do with Jesuit governance matters. What about this cohort?

Is the American Society relinquishing the ministry of preaching? We are, in practice. Yet our first constitution, the *Quinque Capitula*, lists, as our primary ministry, “preaching.”

The thought that men were put in charge of “sinking ships” because of lack of leadership and good staff really underscores my main point: the Company in the US has been simply letting go of the preached weekend retreat. On this note, I find problematic the reference that Fr. Paul Macke (CDT) makes to “hotels where the Exercises have been given.” We trained men for higher education;

we trained men as principals and administrators for high schools. The retreat houses? I'm surprised that, as Fr. Macke writes, anyone can believe that "many Jesuits were trained to give the Exercises." Not in my time as a Jesuit.

Perhaps what Fr. Macke's careful response calls attention to is the need

for a serious assistancy discernment on American Jesuit care for the Spiritual Exercises in all their applications. All I have to say is that it better happen quick if it's going to happen in my lifetime.

Joseph A. Tetlow (UCS)
Our Lady of the Oaks

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Jesuit Conference, Inc.
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Washington, D.C. 20036-5727