



# STUDIES

IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

HOW WE WERE: LIFE IN A JESUIT  
NOVITIATE, 1971-2018

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## THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

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The Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality is composed of Jesuits appointed from their provinces. The seminar identifies and studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially US 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.

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**57/1 • SPRING 2025**

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## *in the beginning...*

In her analysis of the document *Instructions pour le novitiate* (Instructions for the Novitiate) from the seventeenth-century Jesuit novitiate in Paris, France, historian Patricia M. Ranum proposes to us:

Like the disciple who “leaving all things,” followed Jesus, a novice who entered the Parisian novitiate left his family and its possessions, and he relinquished the social class in which he had been raised. He was no longer the son of an aristocrat, a judge, a shopkeeper, a craftsman. He was no longer a street savvy Parisian or a provincial bumpkin. He was now a “very humble and very obedient servant in Our Lord and novice of the Society of Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>

Much more recently—perhaps more poignantly—certainly more personally—historian Fr. John O’Malley (1930–2022) concluded that “when the door closed behind us on entrance day, a central aspect of our training immediately went into effect. We said good-bye to the outside world.”<sup>2</sup> Both historians—one a laywoman, the other a Jesuit priest—one studying a novitiate of the Society of Jesus in seventeenth-century France, the other in mid-twentieth-century America—identify at the outset of their respective studies a central point: to enter the novitiate meant leaving one life behind to enter a new one. In other words, it involved walking away from one’s family and friends, social position, daily routine, and cultural customs, just as it meant bracketing one’s personal tastes, political agenda, and preferred philanthropy. Likewise, it entailed integration into a new cultural and spiritual landscape, under the banner of Christ the King, as expressed in clearly defined formulations of prayer, grades, instructions, ordos,

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia M. Ranum, *Beginning to Be a Jesuit: Instructions for the Paris Novitiate Circa 1685* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 2011), 4.

<sup>2</sup> John W. O’Malley, SJ, “How We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate, 1946–1948,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2019): 5.

bells, dress, and aesthetics—a new social order that each man would learn to navigate throughout his life of service to God in the Society.

Of course, upon completion of the Second Vatican Council and with the modifications to the Jesuit *Constitutions* and following the complementary norms, congregational documents, and numerous curial letters that appeared, this seemingly fixed articulation of novitiate, applied around the world, along with Jesuit life and mission in general, changed. But like most great moments of historic change there was, perhaps, in each Jesuit novitiate, an immediate redress of externals followed by a much longer and ever-deepening appropriation of the fundamentals—a middle time of experimentation or “reboot” that some Jesuits received as “fresh air” and others as a crucible.

However, the novices, having for the most part no lived experience of what had been, simply accepted their experience as normal. Surely, each director of novices acknowledged, in some way or another, the fact that a man entering the novitiate was to leave one way of life behind so as to enter another; but just how that experience was to be inculcated anew, amidst a declared *aggiornamento*, appears to have been, for several years, in a state of creative tension.

It is during this time of creative tension that four of the five authors in this edition of *STUDIES* write about their experiences of novitiate life. Fr. Thomas M. McCoog (UEA), having entered in 1971, and Fr. James P. Croghan (UEA), Fr. William T. Olvey (UCS), and Fr. Thomas H. Smolich (UWE), all of whom entered their perspective novitiates in 1974, testify beautifully to their experiences and identify for the reader how their novitiates shaped their lives as Jesuits. In so doing, the authors do not so much compare their novitiate experiences to a “bygone era” as recount, often with self-effacing humor and fond recollection, their encounters with God during changing times.

These authors then invited our fifth contributor, Mr. Josef Rodriguez (UMI), who entered the novitiate in 2016, to join his own experiences to theirs. In so doing, they hoped to bring greater nuance to their own experiences while illustrating how the creative tensions of the mid-twentieth century continue to inform our twentieth-century novitiates in North America.

May their reflections inspire each of us to consider how our own formative experiences have helped make us into the men whom God would have us be.

*Michael L. Knox, SJ*  
*General Editor*

**NOTE: PLEASE MAKE SURE TO READ THE POSTSCRIPT AT THE END OF THIS ISSUE TO RECEIVE IMPORTANT AND EXCITING NEWS AS *STUDIES* MOVES TO AN ONLINE FORMAT IN AUTUMN 2025!**





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*Gentle and Merciful God, my Creator,*

*draw me to my earliest days with you.*

*Till my mind and heart, O Lord,  
that seeds planted in my youth may still grow,  
that risen branches in me stand ever green,  
and that still unpicked fruits might ripen.*

*Loving God, may my soil —  
that is, my soul —  
enriched by my history  
and nurtured by your love,  
bring forth now new life to your service.*

*St. Stanislaus Kostka, pray for us!*

*St. Ignatius Loyola, pray for us!*

*Mary, Mother of the Society, pray for us!*

*Amen.*

1. How has this article inspired me to reflect upon the past, present, and even future experience of novices in the Society of Jesus?
2. Have I ever found myself in a position of accompanying, directing, or governing a man in formation as a spiritual director, colleague, director of a work, or superior? If so, how, if at all, did my own novitiate experience shape the way I served him?
3. What particular experiences—persons, customs, prayers, ministries—from my own novitiate continue to be a part of my life today?

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**James P. Croghan (UEA)** serves as superior of the Jesuit community at Boston College High School in Boston, Massachusetts, where he also teaches theology. Before coming to Boston, he served for twenty-three years in the islands of Micronesia in the western Pacific followed by seven years on the island of Manhattan in New York.

**Thomas M. McCoog (UEA)** commuted between London and Rome for more than twenty years doing archival work for both the English Province and the Historical Institute. He currently oversees the archives of the former Maryland Province at Georgetown University.

**William T. Oulvey (ucs)** currently serves as student success coach and campus minister at Rockhurst University. He has served as director of Sacred Heart Retreat House, Sedalia, Colorado; secretary to the US assistant in the general curia; vocation director for the Missouri Province; and chemistry instructor at St. John's College, Belize, and De Smet Jesuit High School, Saint Louis, Missouri.

**Josef Raoul P. Rodriguez (um)** is completing an MTS at the Clough School of Theology and Ministry, Boston College. He holds an MA in philosophy from Fordham University and taught philosophy at Creighton University.

**Thomas H. Smolich (uwe)** currently serves as rector of the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University. Before that, he served as international director of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Rome. He contributed to *STUDIES* the essay *Testing the Water: Jesuits Accompanying the Poor* (1992).

# Introduction

In 2019, Jesuit historian Fr. John O'Malley (1930–2022) recounted, in a *STUDIES* monograph titled “The Way We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate, 1946–1948,” his first two years in formation in the Society of Jesus. In his introduction, O'Malley noted that his novitiate “was, in fact, a program that in its fundamental contours had been in operation since the sixteenth century.”<sup>1</sup> His description of the novitiate, particular people and places excepted, rang true to the experience of Jesuits across North America who entered the Society before the Second Vatican Council.

O'Malley began the epilogue of his essay with this observation: “By 1968, the novitiate program that we had assumed to be everlasting had begun to change. It continued to change for a few more years until it received the basic forms that it has today.”<sup>2</sup>

Now, as a kind of sequel to Fr. O'Malley's reflections, we invite you on a “magic carpet ride,” fifty years back in time, during and, arguably, at the peak of this time of “change.” In retrospect, perhaps the fundamental change involved the development of a novitiate program to engage rather than to isolate novices from the world. As such, the early 1970s were a period of experimentation where each novitiate “did its own thing” more than ever before or after.

Understandably, Fr. O'Malley's “few more years” did not last; yet they have produced stories worth telling. And so, before reading what follows, we encourage you to read or re-read Fr. O'Malley's essay to understand the way we were almost eighty years ago.

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<sup>1</sup> John W. O'Malley SJ, “How We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate, 1946–1948,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2019): 2.

<sup>2</sup> O'Malley, “How We Were,” 37.

After that, a historical overview, rooted in our personal experiences, followed by three novitiate stories from New York, Missouri, and California novitiates (1974–1976) and a contemporary response from the current UMI province (2016–2018), await you in the current issue.

We hope you enjoy the journey.

*Jim Croghan (UEA)*

*Tom McCoog (UEA)*

*Bill Olvey (UCS)*

*Josef Rodriguez (UMI)*

*Tom Smolich (UWE)*

# 1. O, brave new world / That has such people in 't!<sup>1</sup>

Thomas M. McCoog, SJ

The United States of America emerged from World War II as the wealthiest, most powerful nation in the world. The 1944 G.I. Bill provided educational opportunities for returning servicemen, as a result of which enrollment in Jesuit colleges and universities more than doubled between 1945 and 1947. The Roman Catholic profile grew in other ways. In 1948–49, Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain* sold over 100,000 copies, Henry Morton Robinson's *The Cardinal* was another religious bestseller in 1950, and Archbishop Fulton John Sheen's radio program, "Life Is Worth Living", began broadcasting in 1952 and, at its peak, attracted weekly audience estimated at 30 million.

Nevertheless, beneath this optimistic glow, anxiety haunted American culture, as the Iron Curtain turned former allies into cold war antagonists. "Red" China's emergence in 1949, and its involvement in the Korean War (1950–1953), which resulted in an armistice and stalemate, confirmed the paranoia fanned by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. Meanwhile, American physician, Thomas Dooley, circulated horrific accounts of the sufferings of Vietnamese Catholics at the hands of the Communists, and the "red scare" had schoolchildren avoiding nuclear holocaust by hiding under their desks. What role these fears played in the vocations of Jesuit novices who entered religious life in the 1950s remains unexplored.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Tempest*, 5.1.215; William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Barbara Mowat, Paul Werstine, Michael Poston, Rebecca Niles, eds., (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, n.d.), <https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/the-tempest/read/>.

And the times continued to change. Within three months of his election, in 1958, Pope John XXIII surprised the Roman Catholic world with the convocation of the Second Vatican Council and the fresh air he invited into the church. The election of the Roman Catholic John F. Kennedy in 1960 then confirmed Catholicism's new role in the modern world. Catholics abandoned their ghetto—erected by others or imposed by themselves—to follow the example laid down by the two Johns. We asked not what our country could do for us, but how we would aid both our country and our church.

The Catholic Church participated in this era of change as well. The Spirit breathed again as Rome cast aside antiquated customs and styles in favor of that renewal known as *aggiornamento*. Peter McDonough argues that “this appreciation of historical contingency and process was to become the hallmark of Vatican II.”<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, a Catholic president launched his promised “New Frontier” of domestic economic and social reform, established the Peace Corps, and aggressively worked for desegregation. Priests, nuns, and lay Catholics participated in civil rights marches and, a little later, demonstrated in favor of political activist, Cesar Chavez, and his grape boycott.

But arguably the most disruptive issue, within Jesuit communities, was the Vietnam war, as the FBI sought information by spying on anti-war activists such as Jesuit priest and Christian pacifist Daniel Berrigan (1921–2016), who sought sanctuary with Jesuit colleagues. Many readers may recall the conflicting petitions offered during Mass—this practice itself a liturgical novelty—as one side prayed for the brave American servicemen and the other for the victims of American imperialism. In this same vein, many watched, either aghast or with admiration, as Jesuit opponents of the war in Vietnam refused to exchange the kiss of peace with Terence Cardinal Cooke during their 1971 ordination Mass in New York City.

Everything was politicized. Traditional Latin chants *Pange lingua* and *Stabat mater* sung by ours were replaced by the now politically-incorrect, “Sons of God, Hear His Holy Word,” or “Gather Round the

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<sup>2</sup> Peter McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained: A History of the Jesuits in the American Century* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 15.



Table of the Lord," "Eat His Body, Drink His Blood," "And We'll Sing a Song of Love," "Allelu, Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia," and

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;  
we are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;  
and we pray that all unity will one day be restored.  
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,  
and they'll know we are Christians by our love.<sup>3</sup>

At the sign of peace, we "reached out and touched somebody's hand," literally and spiritually. And, in some circles, ordination was thought not to be required to pray the words of institution.

Yet more change was to come. Both Pope John XXIII and John F. Kennedy died in 1963, the latter's death the first of many assassinations that deflated the optimism of the early 1960s and prepared for cynicism following the Watergate crisis. As the 1970s unfolded, the ultimate failure of the Vietnam War in 1972 and the OPEC oil crisis, along with its long-lasting economic malaise of 1973, shook American confidence. Likewise, within the Catholic Church, the promulgation of the encyclical *Humanae vitae*, by Pope Paul VI, in 1968, prompted demonstrations and protests and corroded confidence in the magisterium, while the steady stream of priests and sisters departing the priesthood and religious life wrought changes in Catholic practice and imagination. Finally, the election of John Paul II as pope in 1978 and Ronald Reagan as president of the United States in 1980 signaled the end of an era, and a desire for more stability and less change.

The Society of Jesus in the United States followed a similar arc of growth and change and taking stock. 227 novices entered the American provinces in 1945. Between 1946 and 1950, the average was 343 men, and from 1951–1955, 380. The number of entrances peaked in 1959 with 418 novices entering ten provinces, and more than 400 entered the next three years.<sup>4</sup> There was plenty for these new Jesuits to

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Scholtes, "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love," F.E.L. Publications, 1966, [https://hymnary.org/text/we\\_are\\_one\\_in\\_the\\_spirit](https://hymnary.org/text/we_are_one_in_the_spirit).

<sup>4</sup> Entrance data throughout this essay was compiled using province catalogs housed at the Jesuit Archives and Research Center (JARC), St. Louis, Missouri. Special thanks to Megan Gilmore, JARC Assistant Archivist, for her work in assembling this data.

do: universities expanded, high schools were founded, and parishes were taken on. In 1960, the New York Province was divided into the New York and Buffalo Provinces, and plans were made to split the California Province into north and south.

More novices in turn required new, larger formation houses. In retrospect, most were designed for the world of John O'Malley's formation than for the modern Society that was emerging. For example, the New York Province raised money for a new philosophate at Shrub Oak, on the Hudson River, about an hour's drive north of the Bronx. It opened in 1957; it closed in 1971. Peter McDonough labeled it "the Titanic of seminaries," and, an unnamed Jesuit historian, described it as "the single most disastrous scholasticate that we had in modern times in the United States," almost as symbolic for a generation of East Coast scholastics as the Titanic itself.<sup>5</sup> Stories abound about events and personalities during its brief history, especially the final years as the counterculture invaded the groves of academe with protests and demonstrations against irrelevant lectures and impervious faculty.

In retrospect, Fr. Robert F. Harvanek (1916–1996), in reply to a question about what went wrong in the 1960s, suggested a partial answer:

We expanded in the 1950s beyond the capacity of the Society in the United States to maintain its interior spirit, its diversity of apostolates, and its mobility to respond to the needs of the changing culture and church. Perhaps the most important of these was the Society's inability effectively to continue its concern for and recognition of the spiritual and personal capacities and needs of Jesuits, especially Jesuits in the process of incorporation, but also those already in the field.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained*, 366–67. Former provincial John J. McMahon (1905–1981) played an instrumental role in the establishment of Shrub Oak. Later, as Jesuit visitor to the Australian province, he modeled proposals for changes in formation on it. See David Strong, SJ, "The 1961 Visitation of the Australian Province by John J. McMahon, SJ," in *With Eyes and Ears Open: The Role of Visitors in the Society of Jesus*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog, SJ (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 260–85.

<sup>6</sup> Robert F. Harvanek, SJ, "Reflections on Father Becker's Account of the Change in Numbers of Jesuits from 1958–1975," in *Changes in US Jesuit Membership, 1958–1975: A Symposium*, *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 9, nos. 1–2 (January and March 1977): 117.

Combined with this growth were winds of change in Jesuit formation, particularly novitiates. Fathers General Everard Mercurian (1514–1580) and Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615) had inserted the rules for novice masters into their editions of the *Regulae Societatis Iesu* of 1580 and 1590, respectively. These, according to Manuel Ruiz Jurado (1930–2022), “remained unchanged until 1963 with the exception of a change in a few minor details in 1932.”<sup>7</sup> Barton T. Geger (ucs) summarizes the constitutional conditions of the novitiate thus: “novices should minimize contact with the outside world (244), not leave the house alone or without permission (247), keep silence in the house (249), refrain from academic studies (289), and wear shabby clothing relative to scholastics and the professed (297, 577–78).”<sup>8</sup>

On October 5, 1964, during the third session of the Vatican Council, Fr. General Jean-Baptiste Janssens (1889–1964) died in Rome. While the Society was near its peak — over 36,000 members in 1965 — Jesuit canonist Urbano Valero (1928–2019) observed:

However, especially at the end of the (post-war) period, a confused but unmistakable awareness of the widely spread need and desire for profound change in many aspects of the Society’s life and apostolate, to adapt them to the requirements of a new age, had been progressively growing.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Manuel Ruiz Jurado, SJ, “Jesuit Formation during Mercurian’s Generalate,” in *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture 1573–1580*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog, SJ (Rome/St. Louis: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu/The Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 2004), 399–41 at 402; GC 2, d. 14, GC d. 31; John W. Padberg, SJ, Martin D. O’Keefe, SJ, and John L. McCarthy, SJ, eds., *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations* (St. Louis, MO: IJS, 1994), 115, 145,

<sup>8</sup> Barton T. Geger, SJ, “A Word from the Editor,” in John W. O’Malley, SJ, “How We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2019): vii. The parenthetical citations refer to paragraphs in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. George E. Ganss, SJ (St. Louis, MO: IJS, 1970), 154, 155, 165, 168, 258.

<sup>9</sup> Urbano Valero, SJ, “At the Head of the Society: General Congregation 31,” in *Pedro Arrupe, Superior General of the Society of Jesus: New Contributions for his Biography*, ed. Gianni LaBella (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2008), 109–93 at 113.

Janssens had already decided to convene a general congregation to deliberate what changes would be required of the Society after the council, but his death, of course, altered the proposed timetable.<sup>10</sup>

General Congregation 31 finally convened in Rome on May 7, 1965 and, for the first time in the history of the Society, it met over two sessions: May 7–July 15, 1965 and September 8–November 17, 1966.<sup>11</sup>

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*Of the more than 2,000 postulates received by the planning committee, the overwhelming majority requested changes in all aspects of Jesuit life.*

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Of the more than 2,000 postulates received by the planning committee, the overwhelming majority requested changes in all aspects of Jesuit life including the congregation itself and the “essentials” of

the Institute.<sup>12</sup> More than 160 of these postulates concerned the spiritual formation of young Jesuits. Indeed, according to the “Historical Preface,” “some complained about the way in which, in our times young Jesuits were being formed in the spiritual life.”<sup>13</sup>

Next, GC 31’s Decree on Formation was approved on 5 November, 1966. Regarding the novitiate, the new decree emphasized human, affective maturity. Candidates for the Society would undergo a thorough examination with the involvement of skilled psychologists. The novices’ introduction to religious life should not be “so rigidly determined that the novices, lacking in all initiative, can hardly ever practice spiritual discernment, or even obedience itself, except in the form of the passive and impersonal submission.”

The decree cautioned against total separation from the world. Novices, instead, should have “sufficient social contact with their contemporaries (both within and outside the Society).” The novitiate itself,

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<sup>10</sup> Pedro Miguel Lamet, *Pedro Arrupe: Witness of the Twentieth Century, Prophet of the Twenty-first* (Chestnut Hill, MA: IJS, 2020), 235.

<sup>11</sup> *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 31st–35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, ed. John W. Padberg, SJ (St. Louis, MO: IJS, 2009), 7.

<sup>12</sup> Valero, “At the Head of the Society,” 115.

<sup>13</sup> Padberg, *Jesuit Life and Mission Today*, 18–19.

should not be so “remote from reality that the novices’ difficulties are there overlooked rather than solved.” Also, “to provide the novices with a richer and fuller image of the Ignatian vocation,” other Jesuits should be selected to assist the master of novices.<sup>14</sup> In addition, novices demanded and were granted some say in their formation. For example, in 1967, with the permission of the novice master, the Maryland Province novices at Wernersville submitted a long report on how they envisioned the novitiate of the future.

Superior General Pedro Arrupe (1907–1991) encouraged this *aggiornamento* throughout the Society and especially in formation. As a former director of novices, he was particularly attuned to the needs of men entering the Society, and therefore saw the need to contemporize the Society’s formation model. In one sense, he had no choice: when facing engagement with the modern world, what had been enshrined in 1590 disintegrated like ash.

In August 1981, at a meeting with Jesuit scholastics and novices in the Philippines, Father Arrupe stressed the importance of formation:

It starts from the time of the novitiate. Formation is a problem because, as I see it, it is something which is changing a great deal; and it is changing because it had to change. In this matter of formation, the first question we must ask is: What kind of Jesuit do we want to have in the Society? We speak of formation; but formation for what? The answers to these questions must be clear. Once you know the answers, you will have still to see what is the way, the means to attain it.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, novitiates changed—and rapidly. Between 1968 and 1975, all but the Maryland and New Orleans Province novitiates moved from relatively isolated sites to urban or suburban locations. Likewise, formerly rigid schedules gave way to more responsibility for novices themselves, and novice directors adapted programs to changed entrance classes: the cohorts were older,

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<sup>14</sup> Padberg, *Jesuit Life & Mission Today*, 71–75.

<sup>15</sup> “Meeting with the Scholastics and the Novices, August 1, 1981,” in *Leadership for Service. The Visit of Father Pedro Arrupe to the Philippines and Thailand, July 24–August 7, 1981*, ed. Pedro S. de Achútegui, SJ (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University, 1983), 80.

they had come of age during the expression and tumult of the 1960s, and they were smaller—much smaller.

On that note, few would have suspected a collapse would come so quickly and so easily. The number of novices entering fell to 275 in 1965, then 209 in 1967, and 126 in 1969. In this vein, departure rates for scholastics doubled in the second half of the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> As further signs of the times, the Buffalo Province rejoined New York in 1968 and, by

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*In the midst of this collapse, the Society's **aggiornamento** rediscovered tools that would provide a foundation for the future.*

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1975, the Society had closed five of its high schools.

As the trend continued, in 1970, 78 men entered the Society in the United States, and entrance numbers stayed below 100

through 1973: and while 1974 and 1975 saw 131 and 124 new novices, respectively, leading to thought that numbers had stabilized, entrances had once again fallen, by 1978, into double digits.

In the midst of this collapse, the Society's *aggiornamento* rediscovered tools that would provide a foundation for the future. The recovery of individual direction as the primary format for the *Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola* and the translation of the entire Jesuit *Constitutions* into the vernacular created new understandings of Jesuit spirituality and mission. But it took time for such new perspectives to reach a critical mass and spread throughout the now disparate programs.

Here, my own vocation story captures this time of change.

I was graduated from St. Joseph's Preparatory School, Philadelphia, in 1965, as the first session of General Congregation 31 was underway, and I applied to the Maryland Province in early July. At that time, there were three entrance dates in the province: July 30, August 14, and September 7. Application was simple and followed very much the practice delineated by Fr. O'Malley.<sup>17</sup> I produced the customary baptismal

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<sup>16</sup> "Table 1: Changes in Membership of the Society of Jesus, American Assistancy, by Selected Grade, by Year, 1958–1975," in *Changes in the US Jesuit Membership*, 78.

<sup>17</sup> John W. O'Malley, SJ, "How We Were: Life in a Jesuit Novitiate, 1946–1948,"

certificate and a letter of suitability from the pastor of the parish after, of course, an explanation why I was not interested in the diocesan priesthood. I had a physical and do not recall any psychological testing. I do recall one in-depth interview conducted by one of my teachers at the Prep; there may have been others. Having passed all of that, the provincial accepted me for the September entrance date. Sometime in August, I then received a detailed list of clothing that I was to ship to the novitiate before my arrival. Note here that transistor radios and typewriters did not appear in the list of acceptable items.

On my arrival at the Novitiate of St. Isaac Jogues, Wernersville, I found everything unpacked and neatly arranged in my cubicle. Each novice had his own room, but only the heavy snorers had walls that extended to the ceiling. Before the departure of our family and friends, we surrendered to them such superfluous items as our wallets and watches. I found the later wrenching because the watch had been a gift from my father, who had died six years earlier. Of course, our formators told us that we did not need watches: we knew for whom the bells tolled.

Then, during the week of first probation, before we received our traditional Jesuit cassocks, the staff introduced us slowly to a new way of life. Unaccustomed to going to bed at such an early hour, I tossed and turned as I pondered what I had done. I quickly realized that I was in the novitiate for the wrong reason. I discussed this with the novice master, who did all he could to dissuade me from such a rapid departure. Six days after my entrance I was back in Philadelphia to reclaim my admission to St. Joseph's College. My six days in the novitiate qualified as the freshman retreat.

Even though I could not shake an attraction to the Jesuit way of life—an attraction that persisted amidst the personal, cultural, and political changes of the late 1960s, I was certain that I had made the right decision. Fearful of making a similar mistake, I left the comfortable familiarity of Philadelphia for the Far West of South Bend, Indiana, where I began doctoral studies in theology at the University of Notre Dame. However, still feeling called to religious life, I left the program in May



1971 with a master's degree and, on September 4, 1971, reentered the novitiate at Wernersville.

Of my second novitiate class, two entered directly from high school, one had a doctorate, I had an MA, and the others came with various other experiences, including military service. Furthermore, the daily order dictated by bells had vanished. Indeed, except for daily Mass and meals, there was no prescribed daily order. We retained our watches and, with the approval

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*My novice master frequently explained that his role involved the formation not of good novices but of good Jesuits.*

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of the novice master, pocket monies and credit cards. Furthermore, we could bring radios, typewriters, and cassette recorders—but not air-conditioners or private cars! However, we could sign out house cars and leave the property, and our families could visit us regularly: indeed, many came annually for a weekend. We made the long retreat, individually directed, but with common points for prayer, during Lent and ended during Easter week.

Now, one might ask, acknowledging the differences, did a common “way of proceeding” ground the changes? My novice master frequently explained that his role involved the formation not of good novices but of good Jesuits. He often followed this explanation by a mild dismissal of a spirituality rooted in some variation of the alleged traditional monastic injunction that if one kept the rule, the rule would keep him.<sup>18</sup> Jesuit economist turned critic of the new formation, Joseph M. Becker (1907–2001), phrased it thus: previously “one could be surer of God’s will by following ‘the rule’ than by discerning one’s own way.”<sup>19</sup> Certainly, for generations, many Jesuits hid behind observance of the rule and blended in, refusing to stand out in that long black line. Now, what would they do once restrictions were removed and a daily order abolished?

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<sup>18</sup> A search for this exact quote proved fruitless. It may refer to the *Rule of St. Benedict*: “keep this little rule that we have written for beginners. After that, you can set out for the loftier summits of the teaching and virtues we mentioned above, and under God’s protection you will reach them. Amen.” See *The Rule of Saint Benedict* ch. 73, ll. 8–9, <https://saintjohnsabbey.org/rule>.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph M. Becker, SJ, “The Statistics and a Tentative Analysis,” 40.



Father Arrupe likewise raised this issue. In 1981, he dismissed a nostalgic contention that Jesuit life was now easier: "In our time we had bells and the *sotana*. Today we don't have supervision."<sup>20</sup> But, he contended, the absence of the traditional external protection made it more difficult to be a good Jesuit. For this reason, a good sturdy formation was even more urgent.

And what was a good, sturdy novitiate in 1974? It could not be the novitiate of John O'Malley's time. It was too soon after GC 31 to develop a single program that engaged a changing church and changed novices, and there was no Jesuit Conference to coordinate such a direction even if such coordination had been desired. And so, it fell to individual provinces and novice directors to find ways forward. Please read on for three distinctive answers to that question.

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<sup>20</sup> "Meeting with the Scholastics and the Novices," 85–86. *Sotana* is Italian for "cassock."

## 2. The Way We Were: Life in Jesuit Novitiate, 1974–1976

James P. Croghan, SJ

I had thought about the priesthood from about third grade or so—something most pious Catholic elementary school boys did at the time but which most left behind. With me, the idea never went away. I was a “smells and bells” kid, but so was everyone else in the early 1960s, when I served Mass in Latin, as an altar boy, at St. Mary’s, in downtown Jersey City. I have to admit that I have a certain nostalgia for the black vestments worn at funeral masses then.

All of that was well in the past when I began high school at St. Peter’s Prep, New Jersey, where we enjoyed more informal liturgies—at school, living-room coffee table masses, weekend retreat masses around the large dinner table at St. Peter’s Villa in Seabright, New Jersey. These were also the years of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Godspell*, which were formative influences in my life. It was all a different religious style and way of being church which continued into college.

I realized in my first year at St. Peter’s College (now St. Peter’s University), that I really wanted to be a Jesuit, and there was no need to wait until graduation, which had been my plan. So, early in the second semester, I spoke with one of the Jesuit campus ministers, who helped me begin the application process.

I never got all the details but, when I completed that process, the vocation director informed the Jesuits at St. Peter’s, who were helping me, that he would not recommend me for acceptance. While my grades in high school were decent enough, I came close to flunking a first semester philosophy course because I rarely attended

the class. Regarding that experience, I recall placing a mostly blank blue book on the desk of Fr. Ralph Dates (1910–1986) as I left the final exam, one semester, and then almost walked right into him standing just outside the classroom. After confirming that I had graduated from St. Peter’s Prep, he expressed how deeply disappointed he was that an alumnus from a Jesuit high school could perform as poorly as I had that semester. It was nearly unfathomable to him. Equally unfathomably, Fr. Dates gave me a passing grade. I repaid his kindness by working much harder in the second semester and doing well in the class. I have been grateful for him all the years since.

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*With my tainted academic record, and my shoulder length hair, the vocation director was skeptical about my readiness to enter the New York Province.*

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With my tainted academic record, and my shoulder length hair, the vocation director was skeptical about my readiness to enter the New York Province, which had more than its share of intellectual and academic heavyweights. That was until one of the campus ministers let it slip that Fr. Vinnie O’Keefe (1920–2012), then in Rome as a general assistant to the General Superior Pedro Arrupe (1907–1991), was my grand-uncle, which seems to have convinced him to drop his objections. So, while I was not quite a “nepo-novice” —playing here on the word *nepotism*—the incident highlighted an everyday fact of life in Jersey City: it’s all in who you know. All this and more brought me to the novitiate on the afternoon of Saturday, August 20, 1974.

## 1. The Setting

In 1960, the newly created Buffalo Province of the Society of Jesus chose for the site of its provincial headquarters Syracuse, New York, roughly midway between Albany and Buffalo, the province’s eastern and western limits, respectively, in upstate New York. The new province did not last very long and, in 1967, rejoined the New York Province from which it had split just seven years earlier. Once the reintegration of the province was completed, the provincial at the time, Fr. Robert Mitchell (1926–2006), met with his assistants and consultors in the summer of

1968 to chart the future of the New York Province. At the meeting, he decided to relocate the novitiate to the former provincialate of the Buffalo Province. The move, in the summer of 1969, brought to a close sixty-five years of Jesuit formation at St. Andrew-on-Hudson in Poughkeepsie, New York.

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*The message for us was that, although we would have challenges and make mistakes, the Society of Jesus would embrace us, nonetheless.*

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The newly named St. Andrew Hall, at the southern edge of the Le Moyne College campus, which currently serves as the principal building of the US East Province of the Society, is a relatively modest, three

story, red brick structure, with a split-level, two-story wings set perpendicular on the west end of the building. In addition to the main building, the novitiate includes two nearby houses which, at the time, contained about half the bedrooms for the twenty or so first- and second-year novices. When, on August 20, 1974, the nine members of my class arrived at St. Andrew Hall, we joined twelve second year novices. We also met our *veterani*—the nine men who had finished the novitiate program and were preparing to move to Fordham University to begin philosophy studies. To make room for the new novices, the newly-vowed men had relocated a couple of miles away to the then-Jesuit-run Christ the King retreat house.

Fr. Don Hinfey (1932–2024) was beginning his fifth year as the director of novices after having served one year as socius to his predecessor, Fr. Tom Walsh (1922–2012), who had been tasked with moving the novitiate program from Poughkeepsie to Syracuse. Don was assisted by Fr. John “Jay” Madden (UEA), who split the work of spiritual direction with him. In addition to Don and Jay, Fr. John V. Curry (1910–1977) served as rector, Fr. John J. Fernan (1908–1981) as spiritual father and confessor, and Br. Tom Hagan (1917–1976) as minister and treasurer of the community. Fr. Curry and Fr. Fernan had been longtime faculty members at Le Moyne College, teaching English and theology, respectively. Rounding out the staff, Mr. Frank Sanko, whose brother, Br. Peter Czajka, (1909–1980), cooked for many years at St. Andrew-on-Hudson, served as cook and had a room in one of the houses.

Fr. Paul Curtin (1922–1998), a member of the Le Moyne theology department, gave us our entrance retreat. Fr. Curtin was one of the least outwardly pious Jesuits I have known, and it was a bit of a wonder that he was asked to lead us through the retreat. Most memorable is a crude joke he told the first day or two about an organ-grinder, his monkey who runs off, and a man in a nearby apartment who thought he was pregnant but was suffering from acute constipation and had just gotten a powerful laxative from his doctor, which ended with the punchline, “You’re hairy and you’re covered with [crap], but you’re mine, all mine!” The message for us was that, although we would have challenges and make mistakes, the Society of Jesus would embrace us, nonetheless. He also warned that Jesuits we liked and admired would leave the Society, and we would run into superiors of various kinds whose competence for office we would question. On that point, he advised us to remember, “You didn’t enter for those bastards, so don’t leave for them, either!” Welcome to the Jesuits. At the end of the retreat, we were officially novices; but the days of receiving our religious habits were already in the past.

## 2. The Daily Order

At the start of its sixth year in Syracuse, the novitiate had a well-established yet fairly minimalist program, and most everything we did had been ongoing for a few years already. First-year novices all took classes at Le Moyne College. Having a suitable building, in close proximity to a Jesuit college, with ready-made academic programs, was the principal reason for moving the novitiate to Syracuse. I had had one year of college, three others in the class had come straight out of high school, and the remaining five entered having already earned undergraduate degrees. The Le Moyne class schedule and academic calendar structured our weekdays during the school year. We had time each day for personal prayer, Mass, reading, course work, and house chores—setting the tables for meals, running the dinner dishes through the Hobart dishwasher in the scullery, and generally keeping the common areas clean. In general, it was left to us to determine how best to use our time.

Saturday mornings were for more in-depth cleaning of the three houses along with tending to the grounds. Jobs were assigned by a point-person called the *beadle*, who served as go-between for the staff

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*While we needed to ask for permission to miss Mass and/or dinner, we were otherwise free to create our own schedules.*

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and novices and so was responsible for making sure everything was satisfactorily done. Mass was celebrated on Saturdays and Sundays before lunch, and most every Sunday afternoon, the first- and second-year novices, who were not away on ex-

periments, drove to the Loretto Rest nursing home to sing for the residents and staff, practices for which we set aside time each week. For this ministry, we had several very talented novices with excellent voices to carry, in well-received performances, those of us who did not.

The *New York Times* and the local Syracuse newspaper were delivered each day and made available to us in the recreation room. We were all instructed to bring an AM/FM clock radio to use in our rooms and so, along with TV news, we stayed well-informed of local, national, and world events. Less than two weeks before we entered, Richard Nixon had resigned as president of the United States, and that story continued to occupy the headlines. But our Jesuits made news as well. For example, on the day we arrived in Syracuse, Fr. Joseph O'Rourke (1938–2008), a New York Province Jesuit, baptized a baby on the front steps of Immaculate Conception Church in Marlborough, Massachusetts, because the priests of the parish would not baptize the infant because of the mother's views on abortion. O'Rourke had been told by the provincial superior not to do the baptism, and the *Times* and many other papers reported the story of the baptism, as well as that of his dismissal from the Society a few weeks later, for religious disobedience. Given that it was, for several days, a topic of intense conversation, Don Hinfey met with the novices to talk us through what happened, and to deepen our understanding of Jesuit obedience.

On weekdays, we gathered at 5:00 p.m., in the recreation room, for the Liturgy of the Word, and then moved to the house chapel for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and dinner at 6:00 p.m. each night. While we needed to ask for permission to miss Mass and/or dinner, we were otherwise free to create our own schedules.

Every Thursday evening, the novitiate community gathered in the basement of one of the other buildings for liturgy. These were more informal, “coffee table” masses, during which the Eucharist was shared by passing the plate around the room with each person taking a host and holding it until we all received together. The (ceramic) chalice was then passed for each one to receive the Blood of Christ. The practice of passing the plate around the room ended when the novitiate staff sought clarification from the local bishop if it was permissible for the novices to receive the Body and Blood of Christ this way and learned that it was not. Thereafter, the presider made his way around the room to give communion. Following the Mass, we enjoyed a *haustus*, or social, before dinner.

A pastime very popular at the novitiate then was *Diplomacy*, a board game set in the years prior to World War I, with up to seven players representing the major powers of Europe at the time. Each round of play consisted of negotiations, with each country forming alliances and coordinating troop and fleet movements with other countries. Territory was won and lost in each round. Playing for an hour or two at a time, in the attic of the main building, games could go on for a few days. The last time we played was cut short when one of my fellow first year novices complained to Don Hinfey that the other six players connived to force him out of the game in the very first round with coordinated attacks on his country. We could not convince him, or Don, that it was not deliberate, perhaps because we couldn’t fully convince ourselves of it, either. In any event, *Diplomacy* was thereafter banned from the novitiate as divisive of community life.

### 3. Ministries and Experiments

In addition to whatever classes the novices took at Le Moyne College they served, once or twice a week, at a local Catholic-affiliated social service agency. I was among a few of us who volunteered at Vincent House, an afterschool and summer program for children run by Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, usually serving in a “big brother” role to one of the children attending the afternoon program. Most of the activities were held at Vincent House with occasional

ventures farther afield, including the novitiate, for shooting hoops at the basketball rim mounted on the garage. I brought twelve-year-old Frank, with whom I worked, to the novitiate to bake a cake on his birthday for him to take home. He did all the work as I guided him through each step. We made quite a mess along the way, but the afternoon was a huge success. Still vivid all these years later is how he lit up with a combination of astonishment, pride, joy, disbelief, gratitude, and scheming when I handed him the cake to take out to the car. It was pretty clear when I dropped him at his house that he had little intention of sharing the treasure he had created.

Novices also regularly served at Unity Kitchen, a Catholic Worker soup kitchen and overnight shelter. We helped prepare the meal and often worked the overnight shift supervising the men's shelter, where one night I was propositioned by one of the clients who was a quintessential looking "dirty old man" character. He had a permanent tracheotomy and could not speak, and so mimed what he was inviting me to. The experience showed me a completely unexpected side of charitable work and the people we served, and in doing so succeeded, I believe, as a novitiate experiment. Another memorable evening was when one of the second-year novices made borscht for the evening meal at Unity Kitchen. The clientele nearly unanimously rejected being served pink soup for dinner.

In June, all the novices drove to Deal, New Jersey, for villa (vacation), staying for a week at a large house, a short walk from the beach, owned by the St. Peter's College Jesuit Community. Soon after villa, we all dispersed to a variety of apostolates throughout the then New York Province, which included all of New York State and northern New Jersey. Most were spent in summer programs run by the high schools and parishes. The summer between first and second year, I spent six weeks in the Jesuit Community at McQuaid High School in Rochester, New York, teaching in the McQuaid Higher Achievement Program (HAP) for rising eighth graders. The aim of the program was both to introduce the boys to McQuaid and to prepare them better for the high school entrance exams they would soon be taking. HAP gave me my first classroom teaching experience.



In September, as second-year novices, we went to Jogues' Retreat in Cornwall, New York, to make our eight-day retreat and, upon returning to Syracuse, began a monthlong course on the history of the Society of Jesus with Fr. William Bangert (1911–1985), using his book on the subject which had been published by the Institute of Jesuit Sources in 1972.

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*The building and grounds at Wernersville easily dwarfed what we were used to in Syracuse, and we usually felt like poor city kids visiting their far wealthier country cousins.*

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Starting in mid to late October, and lasting through the winter, groups of three to four second year novices did a monthlong stint at Calvary Hospital in the Morris Heights section of the Bronx, New York. From its founding, Calvary focused on the care of terminally ill patients. We worked as orderlies with a welcoming and supportive staff that was very familiar with Jesuit novices and why we were there. While working at Calvary, we lived in a sparsely furnished three-bedroom apartment a short walk from the hospital.

We returned to Syracuse in time for Christmas, and the whole community celebrated the day together. On St. Stephen's Day, we left Syracuse for a home visit before regrouping early on New Year's Eve at the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan to travel to the Maryland Province Novitiate of St. Isaac Jogues in Wernersville, Pennsylvania, where we spent a few days with our fellow novices. The building and grounds at Wernersville easily dwarfed what we were used to in Syracuse, and we usually felt like poor city kids visiting their far wealthier country cousins. We had Mass and meals together and engaged in various games and activities over the couple of days we stayed there.

Once back home, we began to look forward to the long retreat, which we did in the early to late spring of our second year. Tom Walsh initiated this innovation *ad experimentum* at St. Andrew-on-Hudson and continued it at St. Andrew Hall. Tom believed both that first-year novices were not yet ready to enter into the experience of the Exercises and that the novices should have an extended period after leaving the novitiate for further discernment before pronouncing their first vows. All the novices who made the Exercises during the approximately ten-year period when the long retreat was scheduled in the second year took their

vows near the end of their first year of philosophy studies in the university chapel at Fordham University with their families in attendance.

Don Hinfey agreed with Tom's rationale and continued the pattern during his time as novice director. Fr. Edward "Ned" Horgan (1930–1994), succeeded Don, and kept the retreat in the spring of second year for one more class until the Jesuit general intervened and instructed that the long retreat should be moved back to the first year of novitiate.

The retreat was usually timed so that the Third Week of the Exercises coincided with Holy Week and the Fourth Week with Easter. For this, we returned to Jogues' Retreat in Cornwall, New York, where we had done our eight day retreat the previous September. Don Hinfey gave meditation points each night after dinner to the novices he directed while Jay Madden gave points individually to his directees. We all had our own copies of Fr. Louis J. Puhl's translation of the *Exercises* and followed the text as presented through five periods of prayer. Easter in 1976 fell on April 18, which experienced record breaking temperatures that weekend with highs in the mid-90s. Easter Sunday was a break day and many of us drove an hour to Rye Beach in Rye, New York, to spend the day swimming in the Long Island Sound. Thousands of others had the same idea.

We returned to Syracuse after the retreat and commenced our study of the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus using the English translation that George Ganss (1905–2000) had published in 1970. Don Hinfey met with us each weekday for about a month and took us through the text accompanied by his commentary. Upon completion, we had only our summer apostolates to look forward to. I worked for about eight weeks as a counselor at Camp Montserrat, in Lake Placid, New York, the summer camp for the original Nativity middle school, Nativity Mission Center, located on the lower east side of Manhattan. From Lake Placid it was back to Syracuse to pack up one last time before moving down to Murray-Weigel Hall, adjacent to the Rose Hill Campus of Fordham University in the Bronx, New York. Our time at St. Andrew Hall ended in the late summer of 1976, but we were still technically novices until early May 1977, when six of the original nine members pronounced our first vows at Fordham.

## 4. Some Final Reflections

Long ago, I overcame my puzzlement at Don Hinfey's choice of Paul Curtin to give us our entrance retreat just days after we came to St. Andrew Hall. Over the years, I have said goodbye to Jesuits, both friends and others whom I did not know as well but whom I greatly admired and respected, and I wondered at times, following their departures, about my own vocation. And too often, I've been like that organ grinder's monkey, hairy and covered with [crap], yet embraced, encouraged, and loved by the Society of Jesus through Jesuit friends, superiors and provincials. I did not think it at the time, but Paul Curtin surely spoke from a deep—and most likely, hard-earned—wisdom, which has made all the difference in supporting my vocation.

I must have trusted Paul that the Society of Jesus would embrace me fully and lovingly, and this trust in turn invited and allowed me to embrace and love the Society. The Society said *yes* to me, and I began a very long *yes* to God and the Society from those first days in Syracuse—a relationship shaped by and grounded in mutuality, reciprocity, friendship, and love. Listening to our novice director speak about a brother Jesuit whom he knew being dismissed for disobedience made what was an abstraction all too real and concrete. Even more, though, I learned that obedience meant, in practice, simply going where my superiors sent me. For the two years in Syracuse, that was to Vincent House, Unity Kitchen, Calvary Hospital, Camp Monserrat, McQuaid High School, and even to Loretto Rest Nursing Home, where my more talented novice brothers covered for me and a couple of others who could not sing a note. This last experience, frequently repeated, taught me a lot about community and the corporate nature of our work, not only with Jesuits but also with countless coworkers and colleagues.

Each of the work settings in turn opened to a multifaceted world of people in need who invited us into service. Even more importantly, we met and worked alongside people who did the work with great dedication and commitment full-time, not just for the few weeks or months that we did. Year after year, these people generously welcomed and patiently contributed to the formation of successive groups of novices. My experience of working with, and often enough under the supervision of,

such lay colleagues began in the novitiate and has always just been the way things are. In this sense, I always have had great lay mentors and friends on whose support I depend and from whom I continue to learn.

Finally, the novitiate taught me how to pray, how to live community life, and how to be sent; and, most importantly, how to knot all three together ever more firmly in the celebration of the Eucharist. Fifty years on from that warm August Saturday, accompanied by my parents and three younger siblings on the drive from Jersey City, New Jersey, to Syracuse, New York, I look back with amazement and profound gratitude. I have lived a life far beyond anything I could have imagined then, or even imagine now, all of which was and is possible only because God called me to the Society of Jesus—my “pathway to God” allowing me to “strive with all [my] effort to achieve this end set before [me] by God.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Formula of the Institute* 1550, no. 1; *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms: A Complete English Translation of the Official Latin Texts*, ed. John W. Padberg, SJ (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 1996), 4.

### 3. An Open Horizon

Thomas H. Smolich, SJ

**O**n 7 September 1974, I entered the novitiate of the California Province in Montecito, California. Unlike most of my classmates, I had never visited the novitiate, nor met the province vocation director.

I graduated from Jesuit High School, Sacramento, in 1973, and thought about the Jesuits there; each year, various scholastics and priests had made a difference in my life. But I felt I needed a different space to make such a decision. For college, then, I went as far away in distance and culture as I could go: New College of Florida, a small liberal-arts college, in Sarasota, with no grades and individualized majors. Midway through the first quarter, I felt the Lord was still calling me, and I made my decision to apply to the Society of Jesus. When I got home for Christmas, I spoke with Fr. Tom Allender (1940–2024) who had taught me junior English and was a mentor to me. He initiated the process: I completed the application interviews over Christmas break and then received the good news in early May.

On entrance day, twenty-seven new novices—the largest class since 1968—met one another and our families in the recreation room of the College of the Queen of Peace (CQP), the novitiate’s official name. Once families left, and we had an early dinner, our first conference with the director of novices followed. He welcomed us and noted that we were probably tired—true enough.

CQP sat on 140+ acres with a Pacific Ocean view in Montecito, a mountainside suburb of Santa Barbara with one of the wealthiest zip

codes in the country. The Society had purchased the property in the early 1960s as part of a plan to split the California Province in two, north and south. By 1974, however, that plan was long gone, but still remem-

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*Because prior to the novitiate my spiritual life had been conventional and inconsistent, these individualized and intense days of prayer were something new for me, powerful and a bit scary.*

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bered in the partial foundation of an unbuilt juniorate wing opposite the novice building, covered with boulders and a cross.

The novitiate's centerpiece was a chapel in the spirit of Vatican II: wider than long, with a large altar and sanctuary ideal for concelebration.

The rest of the complex looked modern but was quite traditional. The novice building had small bedrooms, with bathrooms down the hall and showers in the basement. A separate administration building had common spaces for the novices on the ground floor and living space for the permanent community upstairs. A large kitchen/refectory and a shop block completed the campus.

The permanent community had nine Jesuits: the director of novices, Leo Rock (1929–1998); his socius, Michael Moynahan (UWE); the house treasurer, Ralph Deward (1908–1993); three Jesuit brothers, Nick Kristovich (1912–1986), Artie Lee (UWE), and George Rice (1892–1982); two priests in doctoral studies at the nearby University of California Santa Barbara, Wilkie Au and Robert Picetti, who later left the Society; and scholastic Dennis Smolarski (UWE), in a master's degree program, also at UC Santa Barbara. Wilkie and Bob served as adjunct staff members with Bob also serving as minister.

Our first week culminated with the triduum retreat, which was individually directed by scholastics from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley (JSTB)<sup>1</sup>. Prior to the novitiate my spiritual life had been conventional and inconsistent. These individualized and intense days of prayer were something new for me, powerful and a bit scary. The scholastic guiding me, Raymond van de Moortel, now a priest of the Boston

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<sup>1</sup> Now the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University (JST).

Archdiocese, encouraged me to stay with the experiences and said that I would understand better later: good advice. At the concluding Mass, we wore clerical shirts for the first time.

The rest of September could be described as orientation to the novitiate and to Jesuit life. The director gave us conferences on prayer and the socius gave us conferences on Jesuit life, while the seven second-year novices showed us the ropes and supervised us on work orders.

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*Grape-picking gave us an identity as a class and bonded us for the experiences ahead.*

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This period ended when harvest time arrived at the novitiate winery.<sup>2</sup>

In late September, all the novices went to the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos for “grape season.” This was a month-long work experience, picking grapes five days a week and visiting Jesuit communities, family, and friends in our spare time. Sacred Heart, adjacent to the winery, was the former novitiate repurposed as a retirement center. We lived with a variety of senior Jesuits—some quite friendly, some unsettled by the appearance of thirty-plus noisy novices with no cassock in sight. As for grape season itself, picking grapes is hard work, and few of us were good at it. Yet grape-picking gave us an identity as a class and bonded us for the experiences ahead.

A word about calling them “experiences” rather than the more traditional *experiments*. Leo Rock was a Rogerian therapist by training, and that humanistic perspective grounded his understanding of formation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Novitiate Winery was founded in 1888 by Jesuits from Turin, Italy who brought clippings to California and planted them on hillsides around Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, above the town of Los Gatos, now a suburb of San José. Through the mid-1960s, much of the vineyard work was done by novices and juniors. By 1974, most grapes were machine or professionally harvested, leaving novices to pick small and steep vineyards that would be otherwise unprofitable. Ours was the last class to pick both novitiate years. 1977 was the final “grape season.”

<sup>3</sup> Carl Rogers (1902–1987) was best known for the development of “client-centered therapy” (later renamed person-centered therapy). According to Rogers, an environment that provides genuineness, openness, and empathy allows a person to grow and makes self-actualization possible. To see Rogers in action, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ee1bU4XuUyg>.

He understood experiments as something that happened to us, while experiences provided opportunities for growth and learning.

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*I finished the Exercises with great gratitude, feeling that I had truly become a Christian through walking with Jesus and answering his call.*

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The next experience was the long retreat, which began in early November. Through the first two weeks of the Spiritual Exercises, the novice director gave two conferences a day with meditation points for our prayer. For the third and fourth weeks, the socius and adjunct staff offered points in a similar fashion. We saw the novice director for spiritual direction every other day for fifteen minutes, and most afternoons included an outdoor work order in relative silence.

Mike Moynahan had trained as a liturgist, and worship played a central role in the Exercises at CQP. Second-year novices planned liturgies fitting with the retreat meditations and each of them preached once. In the third week, for example, the daily liturgy for the Last Supper was designed as a seder meal. In 1974, this day fell on Thanksgiving, which made for a “seder brunch” and a break evening for Thanksgiving dinner. By that time, our youngish class, which included ten high school graduates plus five who had not finished college, had become “silence-challenged.” So because the staff hoped to keep relative silence, they did not permit us a break day between the third and fourth weeks.

I finished the Exercises with great gratitude, feeling that I had truly become a Christian through walking with Jesus and answering his call. The thematic liturgies played a significant role in my retreat as did the camaraderie of shared experience.

December then consisted of faith sharing, the return to normal novitiate life, and preparation for Christmas celebrations and the new year. The first-year novices also took on novitiate jobs. Discovering a manual for the idle novitiate bell system, the new beadle, or novice point person, tore it up, declaring it would never be used again.

January saw the departure of second year novices for their “long experiences” and the arrival of William Bangert (1911–1985), of the



New York Province, who gave us a four-week class on the history of the Society. Fr. Bangert was an enjoyable lecturer with a sly sense of humor and a flair for the dramatic. On the penultimate day, not wanting to scandalize us sooner, he solemnly let us in on the secret that Ignatius “may have had a bastard child.”

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*Through the conferences and preaching, Leo encouraged us to develop an interior life through finding our own habits and rhythms of prayer.*

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Once he left, common order settled into its routine. We had breakfast at 8:00 a.m. with personal morning prayer to take place before. Most mornings also included a conference on the vows, the *Constitutions*, or another aspect of Jesuit life, usually offered by the director. Before lunch, we celebrated Mass in a domestic chapel located in the novice building. The liturgies typically included memorable preaching, guitar music, and eucharistic prayers from the compilation “Bread Blessed and Broken” or other sources.<sup>4</sup>

Mass was followed by examen, lunch, and, two or three days a week, work order. Evening meditation came at 5:15 p.m. followed by 6:00 p.m. dinner. Spiritual reading and evening examen followed on the schedule without time slots, and we had unstructured time in the evenings. We occupied ourselves with watching the then-new HBO, playing bridge and other games, reading, and talking.

Each of us also had a weekly apostolate experience in the Santa Barbara area doing things like teaching CCD, tutoring, and working with scouts. Most saw the novice director monthly for spiritual direction, and for reasons of number and fit, other staff members took on novice directees as well. Through the conferences and preaching, Leo encouraged us to develop an interior life through finding our own habits and rhythms of prayer. Our morning classes provided material for our introspection and personal growth, all aided by intense conversations with one another, and we all preached at the time of the homily at Mass once in the latter part of common order.

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<sup>4</sup> John P. Mossi, *Bread Blessed and Broken: Eucharistic Prayers and Fraction Rites* (New York: Paulist Press, 1974). “BB&B,” as it was called, was a collection of eucharistic prayers and fraction rites written by JSTB graduate students.

Thursday was Villa Day. The province had acquired a ramshackle beach estate as collateral for a failed loan years previous, and we would drive or walk the five miles there after breakfast. These days were unstructured, and since we had no money, they mostly consisted of the beach, exercise, reading, and watching TV. Villa day concluded with Mass in the living room and dinner brought from the novitiate by the staff member who was the Mass presider.

We had more free time on Saturdays than on other days, and we usually took turns cooking the evening meal. On Sundays, we opened our 10:00 a.m. liturgy to the public and in the evening joined the permanent community for social hour, after which the week began again.

We gradually learned that the province did not universally support Leo and this style of novitiate. He shared with us his written *apologia* of sorts, entitled “The Novitiate: What We Do and Why.” In essence, it reasoned that, by stripping away the dead habits of an earlier era—clerical garb, devotions, highly structured schedules, and the like—novices would more easily reflect on their vocations and understand how God works uniquely in each of them to answer the call to Jesuit life.

“What you most deeply want is what God most deeply wants” was a common rejoinder from Leo. As such, he cautioned us not to pay heed to unknown critics—“They criticize the novitiate . . . who is this ‘they’?”—and he inspired us to be grateful for the freedom we had received. Learning how to engage the freedom that God gives us was arguably the key novitiate task from Leo’s perspective.

Engaging such freedom meant departures were a regular occurrence. They began during the Exercises, when one classmate disappeared on day four and resurfaced six weeks later in New Orleans, asking for his black shoes and breviary. During common order, three classmates left. By the end of novitiate, nine of the twenty-seven had departed, about half at the invitation of the novice director. While statistically typical, we did not always find this ongoing exodus easy. Still, it prepared me for the reality that a call to the Society is sometimes one stop on a man’s journey.

We had two weeklong classes with outsiders during common order. One was with JSTB liturgist James “Jake” Empereur (1934–2024), whose boundary-pushing presentations engaged and challenged us. The other was a week on literature and social justice led by Oregon Province Jesuit Don Foran, then a deacon from JSTB who later left the Society. The novitiate staff told us that they had other courses planned which had fallen through.

We did have diversions. A novice family visit might include a lunch or dinner out for that novice and a friend or two. A candidate whose application had been unintentionally stalled entered in January and began the Exercises in February. Many of us attended the catechetical congress for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, then and still today, the largest religious education gathering in the country. The novitiate regularly welcomed for retreat and relaxation Jesuit guests, several of whom, benefitting from Leo’s therapeutic gifts, became *de facto* community members.

A highlight of common order was Holy Week. We opened our liturgies to the public, and most of us had never celebrated them so creatively or intensely. For example, Palm Sunday’s reading of the Passion included scenes from *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Good Friday featured a life-size wooden cross into which every participant drove a nail in place of the usual veneration. The Easter Vigil included the creation story mimed by identical twins in our class, instrumentals and slide shows mixed with standard readings, and a newly written, sung eucharistic prayer. About half of us formed a choir which sang Handel’s *Hallelujah* chorus after communion and reprised it at the nearby Jesuit parish the next day.

By the time late May arrived and our second-year brothers had returned from experiences—and after a massive food poisoning outbreak from our kitchen—we were ready to leave for Applegate, a province villa in the Sierra Nevada foothills northeast of Sacramento. Water skiing, horseback riding, and movies in an outdoor theater were welcome entertainments. From there, we attended the province ordinations in San Francisco and went to JSTB for our summer experience.

Summer in Berkeley was built around a course in autobiography by Peter Fleming (1939–1994), a Wisconsin Jesuit in doctoral studies.

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*After months of a quasi-monastic existence, Berkeley also provided us with an experience of more freedom.*

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After nine months of reflecting on our own experience, we read what Dorothy Day, Malcom X, and others had written about their respective callings. We then did our best to write our own stories in the context of this wider world of faith. After months of a quasi-

monastic existence, Berkeley also provided us with an experience of more freedom. We received forty dollars for the six weeks to spend as we wished, we had options for daily Mass, and we could visit to San Francisco, just a train ride away. All were opportunities to test our Jesuit identity in the real world.

We returned to the novitiate in late July to celebrate Saint Ignatius Day and to make our annual eight-day retreat, preached by the novitiate staff. We then made preparations for vow day, 29 August 1975, celebrated on campus two weeks short of the juridical two years by permission of Fr. General. Beyond general cleaning and preparing for the luncheon, some members of our class made the vow crosses for the seven pronouncing first vows. These crosses were square, made of wood with a bed of gold mosaic tiles of various shapes, and a sculpted figure of the risen Christ.

In September 1975, our second year began. William Cunningham (1930–1989), one of the long-term houseguests, became the minister, and John “Jack” Boyle (1929–2007), a Scripture professor at JSTB, joined Leo and Mike on the team as assistant novice director and helped with spiritual direction.

The class of 1975 started with twenty-five members. Those first weeks, we complained about how loud the new novices were, to which a staff member commented, “If you think they are loud, imagine how seven second-years felt with twenty-seven of you last year!” The cycle repeated: welcoming, grape season, and the Exercises, for which we planned and often preached the liturgies. Jack Boyle gave the second year a class in the Synoptic Gospels during the retreat.

While a few older classmates started their experiences in September, most of us left Montecito in January 1976 to test active Jesuit life for a five-month “long experience.” Each of us wrote a letter to the novice director expressing what we hoped for during that time. Most of us went to province high schools, while a dozen of us who had not finished college spent the spring quarter at Santa Clara University, where we took undergraduate classes and lived our vocations in an academic setting.

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*Looking back fifty years, the defining quality of our novitiate was its lack of structure and the experience of discovering our vocations through choices made.*

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After Applegate, and ordinations in San Francisco, the novitiate moved to Loyola Marymount University (LMU) for the summer. We lived in the on-campus juniorate, and most of us took New Testament Greek and a university class. We also wrote formal letters asking the novice director for permission to pronounce our first vows. While LMU wasn’t as confined as Montecito, suburban Los Angeles definitely wasn’t Berkeley, and the summer felt like a holding pattern. When asking the novitiate staff why we switched sites from JSTB, we never got a clear answer. It seemed “they” thought LMU was better than JSTB for novices.

Summer of 1976 also saw the transition to new novitiate leadership, and the incoming team was with us at LMU. When we returned to Santa Barbara in late July, we felt the second-year experience of returning and not fitting in. A new program was beginning, and it was time for us to move on.

Looking back fifty years, the defining quality of our novitiate was its intentional lack of structure and the experience of discovering our vocations through choices made. Since there was little we *had* to do, what I chose to do became the foundation of my Jesuit life.

Especially in the open space of common order, I learned to pray and to experience prayer as what I try to build my day around—a trait I still carry with me.

I engaged our novitiate’s focus on liturgy and the belief that it can and should involve everyone present. While the mid-1970s was a

different era from today, I still believe that liturgy should do that. Presiding well and preaching well matter to me and to my understanding of priesthood, and a pattern of daily Mass remains a part of my life.

The unexpected gift of the novitiate was building my capacity for friendship. Far more often than not, I filled open time with others rather than spending it by myself. Yes, I am a confirmed extrovert, but it is our communal reality that has kept me a Jesuit. Friendships with Jesuits, ex-Jesuits, and people I've met on the journey have made a huge difference in my life and ministry, and I'm grateful for the training ground the novitiate offered for such.

I also learned to play bridge and cook for large crowds, two skills that have served me well in the Society!

What could have been better? Entering in 1974 meant the renewal of the Jesuit/Ignatian charism that we now take for granted had not yet arrived on the ground. In my current assignment at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, in Berkeley, I work with young Jesuits whose grasp of our spirituality far exceeds what I had in formation. I'm happy for them and maybe a bit envious. This is no one's fault; rather, it is simply the way things were during the huge cultural shift for the church and the Society in the wake of Vatican II.

At the margins I could have used more apostolic activity and structure as a novice. For example, more "experiences" off the hill would have provided a more balanced introduction to Jesuit life. The schedule was in some ways too open for me, and there probably was not enough *cura personalis* to support such openness for our large, relatively young class. For example, habits of examen and spiritual reading did not take root in me over the two years.

But the unstructuredness played an essential role in my Jesuit identity. My Jesuit life has always had an open horizon, and I have had a willingness to try new things—to take risks and not settle for the status quo. God was always engaging me more deeply and broadly, and my novitiate had enough space for that to happen; my great desires were somehow God's great desires. It took many years of formation for God to make all this work cohesively—so far, so good!

Ultimately my novitiate was a testament to the personal nature of leadership in the Society. Ours was a novitiate program that Leo Rock could lead. It was transitional—progressive in its rationale, yet traditional in its structure. It did not last, and that is not a failure.

Now to finish the story. Back at CQP, we made an individually directed eight-day retreat in August and prepared for the post-vow luncheon there. As the novitiate chapel was too small, the vow mass took place at St. Joseph's Parish in nearby Carpinteria on 28 August 1976. We eighteen members of the novitiate class of 1974 pronounced our vows after the homily and received our vow crosses: square, polished wood with leather Alpha-Omega rings supporting a leather corpus of the risen Christ, made by a group of our first-year brothers. We left Montecito the next day to begin the next phase of our Jesuit lives.

## 4. Reflections of a Missouri Province Novice

William T. Oulvey, SJ

### 1. The Genesis of a Vocation

I applied to the Society during my senior year at Rockhurst College, Kansas City. I arrived from the St. Louis area to Rockhurst, four years before, thinking I would be either a teacher or medical doctor. There were many Jesuits at the time at Rockhurst, particularly in the chemistry department. I was impressed by the Jesuits' devotion to duty, serving the needs of the students, being innovative and in love with God's people and the Church.

As second semester senior year commenced, my future plans were vague at best. I liked being at Rockhurst and did not want the experience to end. Fr. James D. Wheeler (1923–2016), who taught chemistry at Rockhurst, and was my adviser, approached me with the question that changed my life: have you ever thought about becoming a priest? We discussed this question, and I argued with God in my dormitory chapel for several weeks. Then, during a campus ministry retreat, I felt God's call to enter, and I responded.

The application process, I learned later as vocation director for the Missouri Province, was in flux. I filled out the application forms, wrote an autobiography, requested the usual documents, including high school and college transcripts, baptismal certificate, and so on. I had a physical exam, met with two psychologists, and was interviewed by four Jesuits, all of whom were on the faculty at Rockhurst. Each of these interviews and examinations were quite thorough.



During Easter break of 1974, I informed my parents that I had applied, and they were supportive. At graduation, I let my brothers and sisters know that I had applied, and they were bowled over. While we were at lunch with Fr. Wheeler, my youngest brother, Joe, age nine, said, "Why won't you take my brother to be a Jesuit?" I had said to my family that I applied but had not been accepted, yet. Love of the oldest and youngest has always been strong.

I received my letter of acceptance in early June 1974 and, with it, came a list of items to bring and not to bring to the novitiate, directions to the novitiate, and information about the entrance date. As it turned out, because the novitiate, Kostka House, was located across from my college residence, I would be "traveling" 150 yards from where I had lived the past four years. In the interim, I spent the summer taking a class in calculus and working at a steel plant in Granite City, Illinois, which kept me busy and helped repay my student loans. The summer before entrance thus resembled the previous four summers, including a job, studies, and time with family and friends.

## 2. A New Life

On, 24 August 1974, my parents drove me to Kansas City with my trunk, a hand-me-down from one of my uncles, who was a diocesan priest, and they dropped me off at the novitiate. Fr. Ed O'Brien (1927–2011), the novice director, met us at the front door of one of the four houses that comprised the novitiate, greeted my parents, and escorted me into the novitiate. I kissed my parents and crossed the threshold of this new way of life. As I look back, it was odd that my parents were not invited to see where I would be living or meet any of the novices or staff, but who was I to question the novice master?

For our two years of novitiate, the staff consisted of our novice master, Ed O'Brien, and his recently-ordained assistant, or socius, Fr. Mike Harter (ucs). A woman in the neighborhood cooked dinner five days a week. The house consisted of six second year novices, thirteen first year novices, Ed, and Mike, along with Fr. Joe Damhorst (1936–2021), who worked in pastoral ministry. The four two-story houses into which we were shoehorned were quaintly named Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and Loyola.

Shortly after we arrived, we began our five-day probation retreat at the Trappist monastery in Ava, Missouri. It was a true eye-opener for many if not all of us. The austerity, disciplined lifestyle, and simplicity of liturgy and meals made a deep impression on us. Ed O'Brien, who met with us every day on retreat, introduced us to the beginnings of Ignatian prayer through the use of Scripture. He could do this because the group was divided into two separate subgroups, each coming for five days.

Our novitiate day began at 6:00 a.m. with private prayer followed by breakfast, novitiate classes and/or experiments in Kansas City, lunch, time for rest, and exercise. In the evening, we had Mass at 5:00 p.m., followed by dinner; cleanup; recreation, such as TV or boardgames; two hours of silence for spiritual reading and private prayer; and then bed. On the weekends, we had house jobs, and we occasionally visited the Jesuit Community at Rockhurst College and took excursions in the area. We also met weekly with Ed for spiritual direction, classes on the vows, updates on the deliberations of General Congregation 32, and received lessons on the history of the Society from Fr. William V. Bangert, (1911–1985).

In addition, each of us received, and learned how to use, the one volume edition of the Liturgy of the Hours entitled *Christian Prayer*, and the staff expected us to use it while on experiment or at villa. They also expected us, during the two hours of private prayer and study each evening, to read from the life of St. Ignatius Loyola, the *Autobiography*, the lives of Jesuit saints, other spiritual writers, and the preliminary documents of GC 32.

During first semester, we had two three-day retreats, one given by Fr. Richard "Dick" W. Dunphy (1941–2012) on alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous. Because several in our group were struggling with alcohol use, this helped introduce us to a better way of living. The second was an Advent triduum at the Monastery of the Augustinian Recollects in the Kansas City area.

When Lent arrived, our class made our long retreat at the Conception Abbey, the Benedictine monastery located two hours north of Kansas City, in Conception, Missouri. For the last four weeks of

Lent and the first few days of Easter, we stayed in one of the residence halls on the property, ate with the monks, and experienced the *Spiritual Exercises*. With twelve of us and only Ed O'Brien to direct us, we saw him one-on-one for thirty minutes every other day. At night, he would give us points, one page at a time, from the translation of the *Exercises* by Fr. Louis J. Puhl, SJ (1888–1971).<sup>1</sup> Ed said he did not want us to race ahead. The structure was a mix of the thirty-day preached retreat, as given before Vatican II, and the individually directed retreat that most novices and vowed Jesuits now experience. In the starkness of a northwestern Missouri winter, a great change began to occur in me: I was becoming a Jesuit and learning what it meant to be what GC 32 would later describe as “a sinner, called to be a companion of Jesus as Ignatius was.”<sup>2</sup>

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*In the starkness of a northwestern Missouri winter, a great change began to occur in me: I was becoming a Jesuit.*

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During the course of the long retreat, we witnessed, up-close, the life of a monk, silence, reading at table, wearing the habit for liturgy and meals, manual and intellectual labor, and the importance of well-prepared liturgy. As such, Holy Week and Easter Week were solemn, rich in history, and uplifting with the music, singing, and choreography that all helped raise my spirit to God the Father, Jesus our brother, and the Holy Spirit.

Experiments were a regular feature of our novitiate training. There were the usual house jobs, for which I served as sacristan. Other jobs included setting the table, cleaning, cooking, caring for the lawn, shoveling snow, and making minor repairs as needed. In Kansas City, we assisted the men at the Little Sisters of the Poor retirement home to get out of bed, bathe, and dress. We also served as orderlies at one of the local Catholic hospitals and as catechists at the local Catholic grade schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, ed. Louis J. Puhl, SJ (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1968).

<sup>2</sup> GC 32, d. 2, no. 11; *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 31st–35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, ed. John W. Padberg, SJ (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 2009), 291.

We celebrated our first Christmas in Kansas City with the six second-year novices. And because of the number of musicians and singers among us, music in the novitiate was robust. This was especially evident

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*There were no one-size-fits-all experiments.*

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when Fr. Robert “Bob” Costello (1929–2017), former professor of psychology at Rockhurst College and, during my novitiate, a member of the psychology staff at the Federal Prison at Leavenworth, Kansas, asked our novice

master if we could sing Christmas Day Mass for the prisoners, to which he readily agreed. The Mass was held mid-morning in the inter-denominational chapel in the center of the prison.

The federal prison, about an hour from the novitiate, could have served as the set for the film *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994). Built in the nineteenth century, with thick stone walls, guard towers, and populated by men in blue work clothes, stark and dreary does not begin to describe the atmosphere. The sight of women and children coming to visit their husbands and fathers on this day were heart-wrenching. Yet when we entered the chapel, everyone was polite and kind to us. We sang with full-throated enthusiasm and the men joined in. For an hour, there were no prison walls and there were no life sentences—there was only God’s grace and peace. One of our classmates met an inmate he knew from his neighborhood in Kansas City, and they chatted as if it was a warm, midwestern afternoon over a beer and barbecue. Humans for a moment.

Long experiments, which came later, entailed long distance travel and generally lasted six-weeks. We traveled to our destinations by Greyhound or in the novitiate van, missioned to all parts of the province and beyond. My experiments included teaching high school chemistry; working in several parishes, both Jesuit and diocesan; living in a rooming house; teaching in several grade schools; assisting at Eagle Lodge (a drop-in center for native peoples in Denver); and spending a semester at Colorado Community College studying German. I also participated in the renovation of a building at Loreto Heights College, in Denver, for the Ministry Training Services center that opened in the fall of 1976. Other members of my class studied Spanish, visited Salt Lake City, or worked with the sisters at Marillac Centers in St. Louis and Kansas City. There were no one-size-fits-all experiments.

My sense was that the members of the Missouri Province, by and large, thought the experiments outside the novitiate were a good idea. It seems that reading the English translation of the *Constitutions*, and having novices in apostolic settings and communities, gave ownership to these communities, and ministries to form the next generation of Jesuits. In any case, I heard only positive comments about the training and experiments in the novitiate.

### 3. Special Moments

Three unique incidents marked our time in novitiate: first, the presentations by Fr. Provincial Leo F. Weber (1926–2025) and the Missouri delegates to GC 32, Frs. Gerald R. Sheahan (1921–2000), John W. Padberg (1926–2021), at one of the first province area days; second, the move of the novitiate from Kansas City to Denver; and third, meeting with Fr. General Pedro Arrupe (1907–1991) in St. Louis.

In June 1975, Leo Weber, Gerry Sheahan, and John Padberg addressed the one hundred or so Jesuits in the Kansas City area at Rockhurst College. Leo had sent to Ed O'Brien draft copies of the documents and his notes on the congregation. I, for one, was thrilled to read and study these decrees and thought that all Jesuits would think likewise. I was in for a rude awakening.

As the meeting started with prayer and a presentation by Leo Weber and the other Missouri delegates, the tension in the Greenlease Library was palatable. Several of my former teachers from Rockhurst lambasted the congregation for the obvious “social justice” stance and denigrated the “faith that does justice” orientation of the decrees. As the day progressed, we broke into small discussion groups, with one or two novices in every group. One middle-aged Jesuit called the whole thing “Mickey Mouse,” then spoke over my head to my novice director saying, “Ed, I hope I have not scandalized the novice.” I spoke up and gave him a piece of my mind! Talk about equality among Jesuits.

Looking back on this incident, I realized that Fr. Pedro Arrupe’s way of proceeding as general superior, and the dramatic shift in orientation of the Society of Jesus as outlined in General Congregations 31

and 32, shook older Jesuits' perception of their vocation in the Society. Long-standing traditions that they learned in novitiate were upended, and the orderly, monastic environment was being challenged. Fr.

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*No longer was the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus ensconced behind massive walls to protect us from modernity. Change was in the air.*

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Arrupe was approachable, like Pope John XXIII, who called the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), both of whom saw the importance of renewal and openness. No longer was the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus ensconced behind mas-

sive walls to protect us from modernity. Change was in the air, going out to people where they live became the norm, and many Jesuits found themselves lost, confused, and angry.

Second came the move. For the rest of the summer, the second-year novices were sent on experiments and my class, twelve in all, packed up and moved the novitiate to 1901 Eudora Street, Denver, Colorado, the former convent at Blessed Sacrament Parish, east of City Park. We loaded and drove several twenty-two-foot panel trucks thirteen hours across Kansas and eastern Colorado. After we arrived, we emptied the trucks, moved in, and began to clean our new home. We worked for several weeks then vacationed for one week at Maryvale, the Jesuit Villa in the Fraser Valley. The rhythm of my second year was like the first except we were all under one roof, in a building designed for religious life. Quite a change from Kansas City!

The third major event occurred in December 1975, when we learned that Fr. General Pedro Arrupe would be in St. Louis and preside at a Final Vow Mass for twenty-eight Jesuits. We begged Ed to let us go to St. Louis, and he gave us permission. Our novitiate visited with Fr. General for forty-five minutes, and I found the experience to be life changing. Don Pedro spoke to us and we to him as “friends in the Lord” on the same mission to serve the church.

What was so special about meeting Fr. Arrupe? Why was it “life changing” for me? I realized that we Jesuits are men on mission for Jesus and for God’s people, and Don Pedro emphasized giving all we are to care for the poor, the marginalized, and the outcast – even as novices.

That evening, I witnessed twenty-eight Jesuits called to full incorporation after decades of perceived living as second-class citizens in the Society. On that point, Fr. Arrupe, and the members of the general congregations, had tried to eliminate the class structure in the Society or at least reduce the distinctions, all of which appealed to my egalitarian, American way of looking at reality. We are all created in God's image and likeness, and all voices and opinions are important. Finally, Fr. Arrupe put forth this renewed vision with a gentle smile, a kind word, and a desire to serve God through the Holy Father as Ignatius did.

#### **4. First Vows and Looking Back**

**T**he crowning event of my novitiate was to pronounce first vows on 25 August 1976, in St. Ignatius Loyola Church, Denver—our provincial Leo Weber's home parish, at the time staffed by Jesuits. This event marked the wonderful culmination of two years of learning to be members of the Society of Jesus. While our training was not finished, novitiate had provided a solid foundation on which to build.

In numerous ways, of course, the experience of my 1974 Missouri Province entrance class was unique. To begin with, we were not bound to the post-Restoration/pre-Vatican II structures of Jesuit novitiates. For example, our novitiate was located in the city, not the country, and we lived in a neighborhood, not in a large building on a farm in Florissant, Missouri, as before the novitiate moved to Kansas City. In addition, our daily order was structured but not rigidly programmed. Furthermore, we found the level of familiarity with our novice master, our socius, and other Jesuits comforting and welcoming. Partly for this reason, while moving a novitiate is not something that happens very often, we did it admirably when called to do so.

And the lessons of my novitiate—the “way of proceeding”—has never left me. On this note, beginning with my family experiences, my love for the People of God has never wavered. As an index of this, the trunk I brought with me from my priest-uncle provided a continuity with those who had gone before me. Furthermore, in my family, the love and support of my parents and the amazement and encouragement of my brothers and sisters has kept me going to this day through



challenging and euphoric events in my life. And perhaps, most importantly, experiencing the care and concern of the Jesuits at Rockhurst College taught me that, in this way of life as a Jesuit, one is never alone. The brotherhood is strong in our least Society.

As for takeaways and lessons of our novitiate, I offer the following.

1. We are men on mission. The *Constitutions* outline, to absorb into our DNA, the variety of paths we take to become Jesuits and in so doing amplify the desire to be at the service of others. In addition, my experiments prepared me to travel, to listen with deep care, and to accept with gratitude the missions that my superiors have given to me. On this note, four years serving in the general curia in Rome solidified my commitment to accept missions from the Holy Father through the ordinary governance structures of the Society. And to see the fraternal love of Pope Benedict XVI (1927–2022) for Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach (1928–2016) when the later retired as general superior renewed my faith that we are sons of Ignatius and sons of the church. In fact, the very thing Fr. Pedro Arrupe said to us as novices, I experienced in Rome, and during fifty-plus years of study and ministry as a Jesuit. We begin with the Sacred Heart of Jesus as our core while reaching out to the frontiers of human reality. Really, all missions of Ours are imbued with the spirit of the *Magis*, as we go to place and people to whom no one else goes, bringing the Good News of salvation and companionship of Jesus our Lord and Brother.
2. Community is vital for growth and development in the Society of Jesus. In the novitiate, we built community—a comradeship that is different from the fraternity I joined at college or the all-men's floor in my dormitory. Community is based on common experiences in the novitiate, including living together under a common rule, taking long bus trips and van rides, and serving with another member of one's class in a parish, hospital, nursing home, or school, all of which helped define who I am as a Jesuit. Then, first studies, regency, theology studies, and tertianship, along with my ability to grow spiritually and in communion with my brothers, led me to a depth of prayer and commitment to the church. In each of these arenas, I found the give-and-take of the daily round, the learning curve of the parish, scholastic



endeavors, and the maturity that descends on those who give themselves wholeheartedly to Our way of life.

3. We always experience the struggles and disappointments woven into the fabric of our lives as Jesuits. Community members leave, a superior is ill-suited for the position, the clergy abuse scandal shakes our confidence, and giving up cherished apostolates leads to doubt that what we are doing and why it is worthwhile. Being part of a birth family carries its own frustration and regret: death of parents and siblings divorce, loss of Christian faith by family members, and rigidity by others all can feel like a rejection of that to which I have given my life. These experiences are real because we are human, and so is the Society of Jesus. Again, we are sinners, called and loved by God, as Ignatius was.
4. As I look back on my novitiate experience, I see some decisions that seem misguided to me. For example, it would have been helpful to have a deeper sense of stability given our frequent travels. Knowing now that directors of the full *Spiritual Exercises* do better with a smaller number of directees, having more than one director for our long retreat probably would have improved the experience for all of us. Yet these concerns pale when I compare them to all I have learned and experienced for the good.
5. When I and my classmates pronounced first vows, little did I know the depth of change that would take place in me in the coming years. The seeds planted in my being led me, and continue to lead me, as a companion of Jesus, fallen yet redeemed, fallible yet courageous. That gave me, and continues to give me, the *yes* to God's dreams for me as articulated by the leadership of our province, by our general superior, and by the Holy Father.

And so, as I look back on my two years of novitiate, I see it now as a prophetic gift of God. I appreciated the training to be mobile built into our schedule and the variety of experiences and Jesuits we met along the way. The notion of "men on mission"—apostles on the road like St. Paul—rang true when we studied the *Constitutions*. And as we attended Fr. Bangert's lectures on the history of the Society and made our way through our retreats, I heard the call to follow Jesus deepen.

For all of this, my life as a Jesuit, filled with mobility and grace, I would not wish to trade for anything else. The assignments have been varied, colorful, and fulfilling, and the first training in the novitiate prepared me well for studies, overseas assignments and, especially, the gift of serving as superior of various communities. In all of it, we novices always were on the move, carrying the monastery within—and I still do.

## 5. “In the Room(s) Where It Happened . . .”

Josef Raoul P. Rodriguez, SJ

In Lin-Manuel Miranda’s musical *Hamilton*, there is a song whose refrain repeats, “in the room where it happened.”<sup>1</sup> Earlier in this edition of *STUDIES*, the essay of Fr. Tom McCoog summarizes the *aggiornamento* of novitiates across the United States inspired decree 8 of GC 31. I would have loved to have been there, “in the room where it happened,” as this conversation took place. Were there those who thought that maintaining novices’ radical separation from the world was still a prudent way to keep vocations? Or did all agree that it was no longer relevant to keep a novice within a monastic setting only to be re-released into the world after vows?

In another “room where it happened,” the Second Vatican Council opened the windows of the church to the world. The testimonies that precede mine attest to the doors of Jesuit novitiates in the United States opening to the world in various ways, setting aside the monastic-like period of probation and discernment that Fr. O’Malley wrote about in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The world to which the novitiates were opening—the United States as a whole, and the respective regions of those novitiates—was going through its own changes. The sociopolitical scene was evolving, as fast as technology was developing, and increasing globalization also had a part to play in the changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Lin-Manuel Miranda, “The Room Where It Happens,” *Hamilton: An American Musical*, filmed performance, uploaded by Hamilton Official, July 3, 2020, YouTube video, 4:09, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrkwgEUXyTU>.

<sup>2</sup> See John W. O’Malley, “How We Were: Life in the Novitiate,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2019).

No man enters the Society during a historical vacuum. The moment of history affects and effects the formation that he receives. It affects vocational promotion and recruitment—the quantity and the qual-

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ities of the men who enter. And the historical moment will influence the formators' discernment of which apostolic experiences should shape the Jesuit identity of these young men.

As a Jesuit scholastic, reading the recollections of my confreres, of their time in novitiate, what caught my attention was the historical moment in which they were beginning their lives in the Society of Jesus. Their memoirs continue along the lines of Fr. O'Malley's account of "how we were." As a younger reader, I see it through the lens of "why they are the way they are." In other words, I have gotten a better glimpse of what makes their generation tick—of what were the moving pieces in their formation that made up their generational Jesuit identity.

All of this has led me to reflect on the historical moment in which I myself entered the novitiate. What was going on during my time as a novice? What changes were made in light of the times? What effects did the historical tide have on vocations? What apostolic experiences did we receive? In short, how were *we* as generation of novices, and why are we the way *we* are?

Fifty years of more change have happened since my brother authors entered the novitiate. The last ten years have brought on an intensity of world transformation nearly comparable to what my companions saw in the 1970s. My novitiate experience of 2016–2018 came in the first few years of Pope Francis's papacy, at a time when he was trying to clean up the Vatican's excessive spending and politicking. I entered the novitiate during the dramatic presidential election that led to the political rise of Donald Trump and an exposure of the resentments, prejudices, and divisions of Americans on both ends of the political spectrum. The church was also still reeling from the scandals of sexual depravity, with more allegations coming to light against priests and religious worldwide, including against members of the Society.

Just as my fellow authors entered during, and following, a general congregation, my first year of novitiate saw the convoking of GC 36 as well as the election of Fr. Arturo Sosa as superior general. As such, we novices focused our attentions to decree 1 of GC 36, 'Companions in a Mission of Reconciliation and Justice,' and had several group discussions about it.<sup>3</sup> What did we understand about being Jesuits on such a mission? How did we think we could, as novices, already exercise this mission in our apostolates? And how did we view ourselves as the future? This was also the time when "community as mission" was becoming a buzz phrase, at least among Jesuits in the United States.<sup>4</sup> As each of us were being prepared for our long experiments, to live and work in an apostolic community, we were encouraged to take what we had been experiencing about care in community and to bring it to our older brothers out in the mission field.

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The trend of older, and ever shrinking, novitiate classes, described in the preceding essays, continued through the decades. Fifteen men entered the Midwest novitiate with me in 2016, among a grand total of forty-seven who entered in the United States, Canada, and Haiti that same year, and this number was celebrated as the largest number in the previous ten years.<sup>5</sup> Few of us had received a Jesuit high school or university education. Instead, we belonged to the so-called "Francis generation" of candidates, who had the Jesuits on their radar because of the

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<sup>3</sup> GC 36, d. 1; *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 2017), 17–26.

<sup>4</sup> This colloquial turn of phrase is from GC 36, d. 1, no. 9: "The Jesuit community is a concrete space in which we live as friends in the Lord. This life is always at the service of mission, but because these fraternal bonds proclaim the Gospel, it is itself a mission" (*Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 18).

<sup>5</sup> Doris Yu, "Society of Jesus Welcomes 47 New Novices," September 13, 2016, <https://www.jesuits.org/press-release/society-of-jesus-welcomes-47-new-novices/>.

election of Jesuit Jorge Mario Bergoglio's to the papacy. This inspired us to reach out intentionally to the works and men of the Society of Jesus so as to learn more about what they did.

In our Midwest novitiate alone, during my first year, we were thirty-two novices and four staff—a number that our building, an old convent, could not accommodate. And so, some men lived in a rented flat (a ten-minute walk from the novitiate) while others shared dormitory space with the seminarians of the Archdiocese Saint Paul and Minneapolis (about a five-minute drive away to take the overflow). This unusual necessity had been unheard of, and lasted only one year, since my class had some departures and fewer men entered the following year. My class had a range of ages from eighteen to thirty-five, with the majority between twenty-eight and thirty—“late vocations” to the Society, although some of us preferred the term “second-career Jesuits.”

Our *ordo* in the Fall semester was a simple one: times for communal prayer, which included one hour of the Liturgy of the Hours and daily Mass; community dinner; and blocks of times spread throughout the week for classes on Jesuit history, the *Constitutions*, church spirituality, and ecclesiology. These classes were mostly taught by Fr. Lawrence Ober (UMI), who served as my personal spiritual director and as one of three *socii* to the novice director. However, other Jesuits, diocesan priests, women religious, and lay academics also lectured on those, and various other topics, including chastity and psychosexual maturity, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Christology.

Since many Catholics in the United States speak Spanish as their first language, most novices took Spanish language classes at a nearby language learning center. I and others, already fluent in Spanish, worked instead at a resource office that helped Latin American immigrants find employment.

Fr. Gregory Hyde (UMI), the local superior, and one of the three *socii*, taught us preaching, and we practiced giving homilies and reflections to each other. We also gave two reflection, during community Mass, twice during the fall semester.

We had blocks of time for apostolic ministry as well. In our first year, the novice director assigned us a ministry, whereas in our second year, we were to discern a ministry, in conversation with our spiritual director, and submit that to the novice director for approval. During my first fall semester, three of us were assigned to Learning in Style, an adult education center, led and staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Ministering to immigrants and refugees: I taught English and computer skills. For many of my mostly Somali students, this was their first time reading or writing in any language, so I could not rely on having them read words in their native language and see their equivalent meaning in English. Instead, in the tradition of our missionary forbears in the Society, I learned the pronunciation rules of Somali, so I could at least speak the meanings of the words they were learning.

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During my second fall semester, I discerned to work with Project Rachel at the chancery of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Project Rachel is a national ministry that accompanies post-abortive women through their grieving process. In this capacity, I accompanied a couple of the counselors, a priest and a laywoman, in their work, and helped organize a day retreat for the women.

Of course, we spent just as much time outside of the novitiate as within it. Spring semester brought on the various experiments. In our first year, this included making the Spiritual Exercises at the Eastern Point Retreat House, Gloucester, Massachusetts, with the novices of the Maryland Province and the combined novitiate of the New York and New England Provinces. After that came the vocation tour, in which teams of two or three first-year novices would drive to different Jesuit educational institutions to give their vocation testimonies on the way to their perspective hospital experiments. In turn, we spent spring semester, of our second year, living in an apostolic house, and working in a Jesuit-sponsored work. This long experiment served as the final test-drive of Jesuit life before professing first vows in August.

For my long experiment, the novice director assigned me to Casa Romero Renewal Center, an urban bilingual apostolate in

Milwaukee, led by Fr. David Shields (UMI). There, I assisted with retreat direction for the adult English and Spanish speaking communities and helped lead urban plunge experiences for university students from outside of Wisconsin.

One thing I noticed in reading the preceding contributions to this issue of *STUDIES* was something apparently missing in the 1970s—namely, the pilgrimage experiment. Fr. Eugene Merz (1931–2019) had reinstituted this experiment as novice director of the then Wisconsin Province novitiate in the 1980s and, apparently, its parameters have been the same ever since. Each of us received USD \$35, and took with him a backpack with a change of clothes and some supplies and, should the need for credentials arise, a letter written by our novice director about our status as Jesuit novices. In addition, we purchased a one-way bus ticket to a starting point that we discerned with our spiritual director, but we were not to plan any further than that beginning destination, and we were to avoid Jesuit communities and the easy hospitality that they might provide us.

My class departed on pilgrimage Easter Monday 2017 and were to return to the novitiate in time for community mass at 5:00 p.m. on 16 May, thirty days later. Since the departure date fell on the day after my birthday, I made the joke that no sooner had I digested some birthday cake than I was then being kicked out of the house! Because I had never had substantial contact with Native Americans, I discerned to make my pilgrimage to the Navajo Nation in the Southwest United States. There, I connected with the Franciscans (OFMs) who had been working among those people for nearly two centuries. As Divine Providence would have it, they refused to let me go about the territory on my own. Instead, they took me on as their “Jesuit step-child”—their exact words—deliberating in their chapter meeting an itinerary for me to be passed on from friary to friary.

My pilgrimage took me throughout the Navajo and Pueblo territories and provided me with encounters with the peoples and their cultures. I learned about both the beautiful work and some of the oppression caused there by the Catholic Church. I took time to learn the local languages and the lore of the people. I even ended up spending time with my own people, Filipinos, who were incentivized by the US



government to serve as medical professionals and teachers in those territories. And I saw the terrain of that part of the country, which I could only describe as mystical. In summary, my eyes, ears, and heart were opened to a part of the Lord's vineyard that my imagination had never before conjured.

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The whole experiment worked in tandem with the Spiritual Exercises that I had experienced just a few months prior. Whereas I was praying through the four-week structure of the Exercises during the retreat, the pilgrimage had me living through each of those weeks on a day-by-day basis. I beheld God's creation and the people in it at first from a sort of bird's eye view. Through that experience, I grew in my ability to relinquish control—to leave my nets behind and just follow. In short, it was a true experiment of relying on God's care, of having a fraction of the experience of those in need, and of exercising my trust in the compassion of our fellow human.

Above all, my pilgrimage experiment taught me that what mattered was the present moment and not what may or may not happen tomorrow. As such, I could accompany the Son of Man who had nowhere to lay his head (Mt 8:20). Also, having so little to distract me, I felt more present to listening to others' stories. For example, I learned how to be an "agent of consolation," as Fr. Ober would repeat to us in our Jesuit history classes, despite struggling to find my own consolation. In fact, the moments of cross for me had to do with the burdens of personal history more than enduring external suffering. Indeed, I learned, through the care of complete strangers, who opened their doors and sat me down at their dinner tables, what it means to be a sinner loved by God. Through them, I could contemplate divine love, such that whatever lessons I had learned through prayer during the Exercises were reinforced in a sort of "on-the-ground" way on the pilgrimage.

Returning to the preceding essays, Fr. McCoog raises an open-ended question at the end of his entry: What constitutes a good, sturdy novitiate? Yet again, I wish I was there, 'in the room', where the 1974 novice directors first decided the logistics of how much time and where novices would spend that time outside of the novitiate walls. As I recall

my novitiate experience, I see that, while I have gone in and out of doors leading to various rooms, my experience has proven just sturdy enough for my companions and myself.

Certainly, reading the testimonies of my brothers has made one thing clear to me: theirs was the “room” where change happened. In this sense, they took the first few steps out of the novitiate, out of a stiff *ordo*, and had more contact with the world that they had just left behind to enter. But, as the term *magis* implies, ‘more’ in this case refers not to quantity but depth. As such, while they may not have spent just as much time in the world as before they entered the novitiate, they certainly began to deepen their experience of it. Here, I mean that they saw parts of the world—even if “world” simply meant their local community—that they might not have encountered before. To put this another way, their generation “walked” so that mine could “run.” Granting subsequent generations of novices a little more freedom outside of the novitiate thus has allowed for a more realistic experience of Jesuit life. These changes in turn have allowed *probation* to mean “testing out,” and *experiment* to mean both an “experience” and a “trial run.”

Now, as I reflect on my novitiate experience, I am beginning my second year of theological studies. In another room, I recently had a conversation with a current novice of the Midwest novitiate. He was recounting to me some norms and ways of proceeding that were not a part of my own novitiate experience. I said somewhat facetiously, “Let me tell you how it was when *we* were novices!” He replied, “Come on! You’re nowhere near the age to say the whole ‘when we were novices’ line!” Although I chuckled, paused and spoke seriously, “True, but think of everything that has happened in the world since 2020, let alone since 2016.”

In this line, it would be curious to hear the reactions of our current novices as they read what the five of us have presented in this issue of *STUDIES*. Does our way of proceeding make better sense to them? I hope that they, and successive generations of young Jesuits, gain some insight into how we were and why we are the way we are. I also hope that our reflections spur on their own regarding the formation they are receiving. What is the historical moment in

which they find themselves? What resembles and what contrasts with experience of previous generations?

For my older brothers in the Society, I hope that my reflections, which I have mirrored back to them, elucidate why we are the way we are. Perhaps as they encounter more novices on long experiment, or more regents, who have their own way of viewing the *magis*, of approaching ministry, or of practicing spirituality, they might consider the historical moment in which these young men find themselves.

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In any case, I would submit that novitiate formation, across the generations, still has in common the interior "room" of prayer and discernment of spirits. From this perspective, whether a man received a monastic or a mobile formation, novices have always returned to their interior rooms to discern their call to or from the Society. As such, even though later generations spend more time outside of the novitiate, they still return to close their interior doors for a moment and pray about their experiences. Ultimately then, the novitiate is the place where we learn to ask the questions that guide the rest of our Jesuit lives: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?"<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Spiritual Exercises* 53; *Draw Me Into Your Friendship: A Literal Translation and Contemporary Reading of the Spiritual Exercises*, trans. and ed., David L Fleming, SJ (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 1996), 48.

## Postscript

LAST autumn, the leadership of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States (JCCU) invited *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* to move its publication to an online format, and over the past months, I have updated you of our progress to make this so.

I am happy to announce that, under the dedicated leadership of the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies, Boston College, we launch our first online edition of *STUDIES* this coming October 2025! This makes *STUDIES* free, accessible to all, and more respectful to our environmental efforts in caring for our common home. And as I have shared with you over these past months, we will now have three issues annually: Spring, Autumn, and Winter.

Readers can access the new *STUDIES* webpage at <https://jesuitsourcesdigital.bc.edu/periodicals/ssj/>. This link will go out to all Jesuits of the JCCU and to all current subscribers around the world. We ask our private and library subscribers please to contact our administrator, Anuska Lisec Gras, at [anuska.lisecgras@bc.edu](mailto:anuska.lisecgras@bc.edu) with any questions regarding this new format or for the cancelation/refund of subscriptions.

Finally, please note that every Jesuit community in the JCCU will receive a single printed edition of *STUDIES* including all the published articles of a given year. In this way, each house may continue to build its library collection.

*Michael L. Knox, SJ*  
*General Editor*

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