

[II] Fr. Jerome NADAL, SJ
Verbi Dei quodcumque Ministerium
[CF # 163]

Vith EXHORTATION

[Those Ministries which are noted in the *Formula of the Institute*]

I. Introduction:

[1] Re-Capitulation of the Preceding - those matters to be kept in mind in striving for our End: You see, my brothers, how the Society in her *Examen* explicates and exposes her End; at the same time, you recognize what we have said to be fully that which we have continuously in our hands, according to which we are trained. Moreover, here there is to be explored what the Society wills that we read in the *Formula of the Institute*, that the Society be committed to what pertains ***to the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine***⁹³. This is said seriously that it be not be engaged only in necessities, or that the Society be content with these principles; but, to that it might always strive for greater perfection and usefulness in life and morals, as well as in the instruction of Christian Doctrine. And indeed in these few words there has been opened up for us an immense field, in which we will be exercised, extending ourselves assiduously always toward the greater. And there is no end to the grace in this mortal life, and so there is no stop in the progress of virtues and in the illustration of the human mind. Therefore, ours is to be committed always to the more abundant fruit in souls to be procured.

[2] The *Ministries* that are noted in our *Formula*: After the treatment concerning the End, time and space demand that we now say something concerning those services through which this End is to be pursued.

Let us hear the *Formula of the Institute*:

...by means of public preaching, lectures, and any other ministration whatsoever of the word of God, and further by means of the Spiritual Exercises, the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity and the spiritual consolation of Christ's faithful through hearing confessions and administering the other sacraments...

[The '*Society*' here means anyone who gives his name to the Society].

Moreover, the Society should show itself no less useful in reconciling the estranged, in holily assisting and serving those who are found in prisons, or hospitals, and indeed in performing other works of charity, according to what will seem expedient for the glory of God and the common good. Furthermore, all these other works should be carried out altogether free of charge and without accepting any salary for the labor expended in all the aforementioned activities. Still further, let any such person take care, as long as he lives, first of all, to keep before his eyes God and then the nature of this Institute which

⁹³ *Formula* n. 3.

he has embraced and which is, so to speak, a pathway to God; and then let him strive with all his effort to achieve this End set before him by God ...

[Thus far the words of the *Formula*.]

[3] The Breadth and Fullness of our *Ministries*: Pay attention to this, my brothers, and rivet your spirit diligently on the plenitude of ministries which God has given us from His singular benignity. You understand first of all that **all these ministries of the Church are given to us and prescribed, which can be accomplished by a simple and humble priest.** For nothing else was lacking which we could overlook. For Sacraments, Confirmation and Orders, pertain to Bishops alone; jurisdiction in the external forum toward others, the right of demanding tithes, or a stipend for ministries: these, though, pertain to the Episcopal dignity or also to the grade of pastors. All the remaining ecclesiastical ministries are ours.

[4] These are accepted from our Foundation as *substantial*: In this matter, the following is to be especially noted: these ministries which are both many, and great, we have not accepted after the foundation of the Society, or after having accepted and confirmed the Institution, but pertain to our very foundation and institution; these are not accidentals and something added on to the Society later, but they are as substantial ministries, and born with the Society itself. For as the Society, through Ignatius accepted this vocation and End and institute from God, so, these means by which one carries out his vocation and would achieve the end accepted from God and would observe its Institute. Then, the Church has confirmed this vocation, End, and Institute, so that by this same confirmation has sanctioned these as our ministries established by the Institute.

These are not extrinsically accommodated to us, but intrinsically accepted and without which neither the End, nor the vocation, nor the Institute can stand and therefore, as the very reason of the Grace, proper to the end of the Institute, discerns and distinguishes this Religious Community from all others, though these ministries might be accomplished by others, or that these same ministries are done by these groups.

[5] This *Institute* has been accepted by the Holy See: We are **preachers, lecturers, by** the apostolic authority of our Institute; we are **catechists**, we are **instructors of prayer, we are ministers of the Sacraments**, by the authority of the Church. These and the other works, which are also ours, **and much else**, by our divine vocation, and by the approbation of the Apostolic See and the General Council of Trent, i.e., we are at the behest of the Catholic Church, etc. Therefore, with how much alacrity will their spirit be in our ministries, and with how much hope ought we to rely, and with how much humility of heart should we conceive of all this, and again, with how much magnitude of mind in Christ!

[6] The *Grace of God* for these *Ministries*: Where we notice and will see such benignity, the broad hand of His goodness that God has exercised in our behalf, do you think, my brothers, that only these **ministries** are attributed to us, and not at the

same time the grace from God to be so generously communicated to carrying all these out for His greater glory?

There is no **ministry** for which we would not receive the singular **grace**; there is nothing for which we are to carry out that the Church does not help us with her prayers, and does not equip us with her privileges; and which, if up to now she has never omitted to intervene with her opportune help, nor from now on will she desist to follow us with her benignity. Therefore, do we think, my brothers, that such effectiveness already realized in the Society, and such a wealth of fruit that has come from these ministries in these few years, unless this is from that vocation of God, from that singular grace of the divine goodness? With these helps from God, our Fathers have sedulously cooperated. With all the more genuine humility of heart, and magnitude of spirit in Christ, in this same direction it is to be diligently insisted upon. As with our men, let us not draw back, for there is the **grace for these ministries**, and also many examples of the Fathers added. And many more intercessions both in heaven, and of our own.

[7] The better Candidates trained for the Future in the Society: For I have no doubt that you, and all who are throughout the Society, live this experience, and are strengthened with the great increase in the Society, i.e., there is ever more abundant fruit in souls for the greater honor and glory of God. Nevertheless, I will add this concerning this matter so that it might increase the spirit in you, as well as hope and alacrity in Christ. I heard, and indeed others heard as well, Father Ignatius when he affirmed that even better in the future would come to exist in the Society after these beginnings. These better indeed he declared out of his own humility. Nevertheless, I always understood **these more broad and more abundant ministries** and fruits of the Society; but, that nevertheless that these would come to be provided if we did not fail in our **grace**, if we did not fail our **vocation**. And indeed I have no doubt that these future and considerable results⁹⁴ will be those **ministries** of ours inflamed by that divine charity, which is implored for the most perfect results and that it always and fervently inflames the hearts of all.

[II. Concerning Preaching]

[8] Here begins a reflection on the Individual *Ministries*: Having placed all of this as a preface, listen now concerning the single ministries, and indeed those **accommodated**⁹⁵ to the very reason of our Institute's being; we say these things to the Fathers and Brothers of this Society, and not to others.

[9] What we understand by *preaching*. Therefore what do we understand this preaching ministry to be? We understand it to be that task of preaching publicly, by which not only is the people taught and what are to be believed, hoped, loved and done, and what are to be avoided, by the Word of God; but there are used those motion of minds, so gentle and attracting toward the virtues, as well as those which

⁹⁴ Fr. Nadal's own hand-written footnote in Latin states: *quid intelligimus verbum Dei...*

⁹⁵ Fr. Bertoni's choice of description comes from this word, in **CF # 262**.

will deter from vices, and the more quickly. And yet, also since we teach only in preaching, so there ought to be that sedate prayer, that it might bear with it that taste, and almost suffuse that odor which will work its way into the hearts of our listeners.

[10] The Spiritual Life and the Spirit that ought to be in the Preacher: This ministry is great in the Church, which is professed in the Church of Christ from the gift of Prophecy [cf. 1Co 10:10; 13:2, etc.]. But, nonetheless the Preachers recognize that this gift of prophecy cannot take hold in them also in those who do not live according to this prophecy. They may speak indeed splendidly and powerfully in their sermon, and yet live in the darkness of their vices, or in the infirmity of life and in their imperfection. These preachers might even be led by a sensitive grace, a grace gratuitously given, that they might each that vices and imperfections are to be avoided, and that all are to strive for perfection; and these preachers themselves, if they need to be gradually reached by some observation, or mortification, and be benefited in deploring their own wretchedness.

What should our preacher do? He is not to trust on his own natural gift [as indeed, it seems that some have been born for preaching]. And further neither should it be that even should the Lord give to him the gift of prophecy, that anyone would rely on that alone; but each must add the purity and example of his own life, and the fervor of his charity. For indeed without this spirit it will come across that his sermons are affected; or, if indeed these do bear some fruit [as we might see at times], let each one see to it that what Christ said will never be directed toward them: *I never knew you!* [cf. Mt 7] – even if you should prophecy and present many virtues; and may God avert anything like this.

[11] This, therefore, is not our way of preaching, in that even the most evil human beings may be able to preach; but that is to be attentively noted: if one's natural ability, or even when this is perfected by the gratuitous gift of God, how can such effectiveness in word be reconciled, when one is not relying on the more excellent capacity of the virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially those of charity and wisdom? Therefore, put on, preachers, that your faculties, which you bring to the speakers platform, that these might accept their capacity, not so much from your natural gifts, or even from those graces gratuitously given, but only by those which enter the whole person graced; and further, you need to join the spiritual medicine of all virtues, which can bring a certain utility to your own preaching. Also keep this in your mind, that you are not only preaching to others, but also to yourselves, first and foremost. You are to teach, and to inspire toward purity and perfection of life, in all affections. Let Christ speak in you, and let it be His Word in you, and efficacious for you; since this is fully infinite, divine, it has majesty, suavity, virtue, and consolation.

[12] The Studies to which the Future Preacher ought to be committed, already thought of By Fr. Ignatius: But to what studies of letters should our Preacher commit himself to? Before I will respond to this, listen to the tradition from Father Ignatius. That wise and excellent man knew well the ministry of preaching the Word of God in the Church, as well as in the Society, is of primary necessity and usefulness. For since our End is that we will procure the salvation and perfection of

souls, no greater force ought to move toward than that of sermons, and **secondly the Sacraments**, which respond of their very work being placed [as the theologian say], are both efficacious ⁹⁶. For **in these two, every ministry of the Word of God is contained, that of teaching, exhorting, moving all affections**, with all industry and vehemence of spirit; in all of these the font of the divine Scriptures, and of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God is opened. Therefore, since Fr. Ignatius know all this and taught it, and prescribed it, no liberal art, no science, qua could bring some utility in presenting the discourse better, should be neglected by our preachers. I have heard that he would find out whether some would read the orations of Cicero, so that some help might be derived for their sermons, would be able to make some impression on the Father. Furthermore this is why he would take care and employ so much diligence and practice in his own sermons, and this is what he legislated. And he treated this accurately concerning the preparation of the sermons in his Constitutions ⁹⁷. Therefore, he instituted what we call *tones* ⁹⁸, which pertain to the delivery and pronunciation in sermons; according to the differences among the nations, this can be different, so that no one would think that whatever tones our men use in Rome, would then have to be done in all the Provinces.

This same custom pertains to those frequent sermons delivered in our refectories of the colleges and houses of formation. For indeed we remember that this was willed by Fr. Ignatius, so that so that those who are endowed with some ability for sermons, that they might be exercised their voice and action on the immense ruins of ancient Rome, and be helped by the observers.

[13] How they are to be formed who do have an ability for preaching: From these traditions of Fr. Ignatius in is sufficiently known toward what studies our future preacher should be committed. And indeed first of all, it should be explored by the Superiors whether our candidates do have some natural faculty and inclination for such sermons; and this should be able to be observed already in the Novitiate, and this should be. For indeed experience does teach us that some, by nature, are inept for preaching, so that no effort, no practice ever seem able to help them; others, on the other hand, will seem quite apt, so that with only little commitment they make great progress in this ability of theirs; and there are still others, in between these two, who, although with some real difficulty, nevertheless they will one day be able to take their place among the preachers.

In the first category, they are not to be applied to this, other than for their mortification; and this holds true even when their ineptitude is not yet sufficiently

⁹⁶ Cf, *Denz.* # 851.

⁹⁷ *Const., P. IV, c. 8, n. 3, B, C = CSJ nn. 402, 404, 404 – P. X, n. 3 = CSJ n. 814.*

⁹⁸ There are three *tones* in vogue for a long time among Jesuit Scholastics in practicing sermons: the first enunciates; the second, moves the affections gently; and the third, deters – cf. *Monumenta Ignatiana. Series Tertia: Constitutiones et Regulae S.I., Vol. 4, Regulae Societatis Iesu [1540-1556]. Romae: Monum. Hist. S.I., 1948, pp. 254, note 9; 254-255; 276-280; 289, 322, 550, 559.*

clear. As for the second group, even from the Novitiate the eyes should be upon them so that real, accurate training should be administered to them. For the third group of candidates, every diligence is to be employed so that their natural difficulty and lack of ability might be overcome, at least to some extent, so that some hope of their progress might be manifested.

[14] In the Novitiate: There ought to be great care extended to those who are to be destined for preaching, so that they might most diligently exercised in the Novitiate, first so that there might be removed by the very roots the 'old man' and that they might come out from all this as real lovers of every mortification; so that they might be outstanding in obedience; that they might be excellent in every type of prayer, that they might emerge in great simplicity of heart and humility. In brief: that they might be most endowed with all religious virtues. And the superiors should give every effort to teach those in the first category until they might know the very Institute of the Society, and that their hearts might become profoundly impressed with our end. Now, all these matters which I have presented here, are to be diligently worked out in all the Novices; but, for those destined for giving sermons, that there be employed greater care and effort in their regard, that the greater fruit which is hoped of them, and even further commitment, that they suffer no detriment, which might indeed befall them, unless they come forth from all this formation as perfect religious. Even though they might be naturally endowed with an excellent intelligence, or they are blessed with extraordinary ability, they are still to be instructed with every care. For indeed this will not be the scope which any superior might intend, by applying anyone to all of this prior to his literary studies; yet, this is the End that is to be kept uppermost in mind.

[15] When they are engaged in their Studies of Letters and in Philosophy and Theology: Furthermore, these spiritual studies are not to be pursued only in the Novitiate, but these are to be continued when these future Preachers are dedicating themselves out to their studies of letters also, and to the extent that this is possible, they are to increase their daily prayer, receiving the help from the Sacraments, having inflamed their hearts with love of our End, in the exercise of virtues, with the repetition of the practices of the Novitiate in their time free from their studies.

For indeed that which pertains to their studies of letters, our preacher is endowed with a magnitude and amplitude of intelligence, that he might be able to dominate his full study load, he is to be exercised in all of these. And first of all surely, on which this future preacher bases his hope, that he must conserve and also polish his native language, without any and every affectation. Then, he must be well versed in Latin letters, and also, that he might be able to properly, copiously and elegantly write and speak it. For to which faculty there must be added the art and study of Rhetoric, as his principal and primary care, in all diligence and in much practice. He will make much use of this art in future sermons. And indeed it is the hope that once this art of rhetoric has been found, so that the Christian Orator should be instructed on how to make the most effective sermons to the people. In this art they are to be instructed, as Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian developed it; and our candidates will add that which these others ignored: namely, the virtue of the

Christian religion, the power of the virtues, the efficacious nature of the grace and the Gifts of God, the deep meaning found in the spiritual sense. In brief: that this be the art of oratory through which the spirit and the sense of the sacred be impressed in the hearts of all listeners. Concerning this matter, we will treat more fully another time, with the help of Christ.

Following all this, our Orator will make sufficient progress in these studies, dependent upon the view of the Superior, after having heard the judgment of the Prefect of Studies, then it will be of great price if the future preacher might continue on a year or two in the class of rhetoric. Then he is to be instructed in natural philosophy and moral. Yet, every care is to be taken so that these studies of human letters and rhetoric in no way be looked down upon, but that the fruit that one receives from these, must be conserved. Let him give every effort so that he might speak and write in Latin concerning philosophical matters. There should be an even more diligent effort given to taking up the studies in Logic and Moral Philosophy, while he is to treat of the rest of the philosophical matters in a most careful way. Then, each is to be committed to being instructed in his studies of theology; and each is to be exactly versed in Scholastic theology, so that he will be able to produce much fruit in the future from such erudition. His erudition of Scholastic theology is to be outstanding, in addition to the method which it conveys and a near perfect grasp of this doctrine of all of theology, so that the Preacher himself might hold firmly to the definitions in all discourse about religion, that he not be wavering in most serious matters, as so often occurs with those who do not attain to Scholastic theology, and only slightly delve into it. Such lack of certitude was always and vehemently to be avoided, and in this present storm this could very well be pernicious. From this study of Scholastic Theology, there is developed that certain and learned firmness and constancy of the whole field of theology.

[16] Indeed, in these studies our future Orator should not become excessively insistent, but that these are simply to confer his understanding of the sacred letters. And so, that this undertaking might reap benefit to him, in the first and also in the second year of the theological course, each is to hear only Scholastic theology, so that later he might listen attentively to the lectures on the sacred letters, and apply himself and adapt himself to those studies. He is to be sedulously exercised in repetitions and disputations. There should be added to all this a certain erudition in the Greek Language, and also the Hebrew; each should have **not a mediocre knowledge** of the Church Councils⁹⁹, of the Church Canons, Church History; and the exercise in the solving of those cases which they call 'Cases of Conscience.'

Along with all these studies, about which I have spoken thus far, where they are treated, the future Preacher will not omit that help that might come from embellishing and improving on his sermons; that he make observations of all that he reads, hears, thinks over and prays; and that he jot down in a book the common places which later might prove to be of use to him.

⁹⁹ St. Gaspar Bertoni uses similar ideals for Stigmatine knowledge - *non vulgaris scientia* [cf. CF# 49] – *eruditio non mediocris* [cf. CF # 159] - *in magistris sufficientia ac diligentia* [cf. CF # 175] – cf. also CF # 125

[17] After the End of His Studies: once an end has been placed on these preparatory studies, each one not only has to undergo with exactness that Third Year of Probation¹⁰⁰, but also his studies, which will need always related, toward future practice in that time, from the prescriptions of the Constitutions¹⁰¹. This will care not only for the mind as previously, and to be related toward practice, but will regard the use, the execution, the will, the observation of the mind, the vibrant spirit and prudent intention in Christ.

[18] Studies are to be conducted in a Spiritual Way: I will add that, even though it could be said above, nevertheless I wanted to defer it to this last place, so that it might the more sublimely impress your hearts. There must be vehemently avoided so that our studies be never be handled in a secular fashion and imperfectly, but rather always religiously, as should be conducted all that we do. This will occur if, with the intention of the mind and the exercise of studies be joined the fruit of prayer and the spiritual senses be connected with our studies; it is as though you might say that our studies ought to be 'spiritual', and that they all attend to this purpose, the arts and the sciences, that they might produce benefit. I do not say this only as for the principles of the sciences are concerned, but moreover that they might penetrate even further, to where the Author and Source of these Principles is, God Himself. Besides, this matter of the program of studies will be treated again, when we treat of our Scholastic or Professors.

[III. Concerning Lectures [*Lectionibus*]

[19] The Distinction between Sacred Lectures and those delivered in our Colleges. The Distinction between Lectures and Sermons: Now I see that something needs to be said about Lectures. There are some of these that merit to be called **sacred because** they are usually held in church; and there are others of a **mixed nature which are delivered in the class room**. Our End is reached through **both of these**. And in this place both of these will be treated: more fully concerning the **Sacred Lectures**, for the proper place for the others is where we will speak of our Colleges.

Sacred Lectures differ first of all from those delivered in our Colleges, even when these concern theology, because these most principally deal with speculation, and for the erudition of the intellect which pursues these most difficult matters. In practice, **Sacred Lectures** concern are delivered adapted to the common grasp of the people and for their edification. Furthermore, these **Ecclesiastical Lectures** are distinguished from **public preaching** because for the most part, these latter are geared to moving the affections of souls; whereas, these **Sacred Lectures aim** at teaching truth. **Lectures** are to have a sedate delivery, pronunciation, and elocution; where **preaching** aims at the emotions in all these matters. And yet [which I touched

¹⁰⁰ cf. CSJ n. 16, etc. – *Schola Affectus* –cf. Suarez, p. 811 a. St. Gaspar Bertoni, CF # 152.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Const. P.V, c. 2, n. 1* = CSJ n. 516

upon above] there needs to be connected to the **Lectures** that the affections of the spirit be inspired, not by any artificial display of oratory, such as anything that smacks of the lecturer's being pompous - but always quietly, placidly, and gently. For even though the delivery and the pronunciation of the Lecturer ought to observe the requirements of what we call the **First Tone** ¹⁰² [as we refer to it] ought to be employed. Nevertheless, the Lecturer ought to appear, out of the simplicity of his spirit and humility, for his devotion and spiritual sense, and having been imbued by all his, he is to deliver his Lecture. He will indeed make every effort that this sense of the spirit come across to his listeners, and that it be instilled with that clear meekness and joy in Christ, which is the great fruit of the Lectures. Should the lecturer not reach this level, he will at least not omit being of benefit, that his delivery might be most practical, i.e., that he not only teach the intellect, but that he also instruct the will toward the observance of the commandments and the counsels of God and of the Church; if he prepares himself with this in mind, and insists on those paths, and appeals to those reasons, he will bear fruit. If all these matters are dealt with, it will perhaps come about that even though the one delivering the Lecture might not permeate his delivery with the sense of the spirit and devotion, nevertheless, anyone who hears him with devotion will receive these values and will impress them on his own heart. May the **Lecturer** make every opportune effort as the **Preacher** must do in his field, so that the listeners might be led to the frequency of the **sacrament of Penance and Sacred Communion**.

Furthermore, our End very wisely prescribes these two Ministries of Preaching and Lectures¹⁰³, as there are various intelligences of human beings, and natural faculties for speaking, as we have said. And one, who may not be suited for sermons, could be delegate to giving **Lectures**, provided that he be sufficiently learned and pious.

These things that have been said here can be seen of themselves that there might be understood the precise nature of Lectures. However, it nonetheless might happen that one who is a preacher might also be one who lectures. What is the difference, then? Would it be right to mix up the actions of a Sermon and those of a Lecture? If one is to act properly and with order, this would not be proper; but, for the proper nature of **Lectures**, the preacher who happens to give a Lecture, ought to accommodate himself to this, and remember that he is giving a **Lecture**, and not preaching, nor should he commit by his oratorical delivery so that other **Lecturers** might seem to cast a hasty opinion, where they will not explain the oratorical fibers. Truly, I do see a future that there often be a confusion often with preachers, even though, once they are admonished, they will have recourse to their own genius.

¹⁰² cf. again: *Regulae S.I. [1540-1556]. Monum. Hist. S.I. Romae: Series III, Vol. 4, Alphabetical Topical Index, under *Toni*, p. 586 b*

¹⁰³ This reflects the over-all progress of candidates – as well as our neighbors: **Progress in the Spiritual life, and Intellectual Life** [cf. Fr. Bertoni, Part IV of his *Original Constitutions* – CF ## 47, ff. - St. Paul: 1 Tm 4:16: *attende tibi et doctrinae...*!]

[20] The Studies of the Lecturer: The studies for the Lecturer will be similar to those which we have prescribed for the Preacher, although this latter will not so anxiously take up the rhetorical art; nonetheless, he will take up the theological endeavor with utmost diligence. For the more learned is the one who lectures in Church, has for that reason the greater authority and teaches more profoundly and fully; hence, even though other aspects are missing, the greater fruit is to be hoped for here. For indeed the Lecturer ought to be most exercised in the sacred letters, and in teaching Catechism not only learned, but also abound with explanations and be clear.

[21] The End that is intended for the Scholastic Lectures: When it is a question of Scholastic Lectures, since this is to be treated elsewhere, I will only say this in this place: the Society was never to accept that ministry, unless at the same time it would see her way clear to take on instruction in morality as well. And so there are not to be those **Scholastic Lectures**, which beyond number seem to be sterile and dictated by a spirit that is alien from the End of the Society; among these there should be at one and the same time, exercises in which both the salvation and the perfection of the listeners is sought to be procured. And so, those lectures and all Scholastic exercises are to be employed by us as a kind of a fish hook, for catching the souls of human beings. For, concerning these matters, we will deal with them more opportunely and more fully in another place. Now, let us proceed to the other ministries.

[IV. *And Any Other Ministration of the Word of God whatsoever.*]

[22] The Excellence of the Word of God and its Principal Parts: It is a great grace of God in the Church, an excellent office, to be the **Minister of the Word of God**; what we understand in the spirit, brothers. Christ is also the Infinite Word of God; and we are **the Ministers of this Word**; for he sends us, He Himself teaches us, He is the interior Word to us; He gives to us the possibility that we might hear the Word of Doctrine and proceed from this; He Himself gives us effectiveness and endows the charity of our sermon and a divine power. The magnitude of the Ministry **of the Word** cannot be explained by us; it is grasped only in the spirit in Christ.

The principal parts of this **ministry**, about which we have already spoken, are sacred **sermons and lectures**. And yet, immediately we are taken up in the fervor of the spirit into **the universal reason of ministering the Word of God**; for this universality will not seem to be able to be explained swiftly, since other ministries of the Word are subject to it. But, it is usually this way with the sacred letters; for some of these are said by participation. But, what are these Ministries of the Word, in addition to those which have already been partly explained, and partly to be added?

[23] The Importance of the Spiritual Conversation¹⁰⁴: First of all, we will treat of the private spiritual conversation, in which, there is an exquisite help and assistance for helping our neighbor. Concerning this, Fr. Ignatius was accustomed to say very clearly and also to teach of its immense values; for that which **Preachers** and **Lecturers** do in a public manner before a multitude of listeners, **private spiritual conversation attempts to bring supreme assistance privately among individuals**¹⁰⁵. In this approach, there is greater freedom, and a greater force as well, where there can be accommodated the message according to the responses and affection of the listener. And so it was much like a prey caught in our web this was conducted, so that, with the help of Christ, it might result if indeed we are men in Christ.

[24] Fathers Favre, Xavier and Ignatius were outstanding in this ministry: Some of our men received from God an outstanding ability in this **ministry**, among whom was Fr. Peter Favre, the first companion of St. Ignatius. Fr. Favre was primarily most effective and powerful in holy conversations; there was simply no one he approached, even though he would have been most alien from spiritual interests, who in the end would not be totally transformed. About him, Fr. Ignatius used to say: 'Peter draws water from a stone.'

In this **ministry**, Fr. Francis Xavier, that great father of the Indians and Japanese, was also excellent. In this, too, Fr. Ignatius himself was admirable. For he was so inflamed with charity toward his neighbor, so outstanding in the discretion of spirits and moral prudence, and he was so remarkable in his brevity and gentleness of discourse, that when he was active among others, he accommodated himself to them, and so won them over that he was able to draw forth in them marvelous motions of their spirit; and he was so adroit in contemplating those present to him, that it almost seemed as though he was able to gain access to their very spirit and interior life; he was able to address himself in such a way that his discourse could never be contradicted. Add to all this that which I cannot even describe something of divine virtue and light that seemed to shine out from his face, that those who would see him were not a little spiritually inspired.

¹⁰⁴ Fr. Bertoni has dedicated his entire **Part XI** of his *Original Constitutions* to this: cf. **CF ## 267- 297**. cf. also: **Thomas H. Clancy, SJ, *The Conversational Word of God***. St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources 1978.

¹⁰⁵ cf. Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Dec. 8, 1975, n. 46: *...praeter illam Evangelii nuntiationem, quam generalem publicamque opportune dixerimus, semper probanda est suumque tenet momentum alia tradendi Evangelii forma, ab altera ad alteram pertingens personam, ea enim ipse Dominus persaepe est – quemadmodum colloquia cum Nicodemo...Zacchaeo...Samaritana, Simone Phariseo...; ipsique Apostoli usi sunt...*[Fr. Bertoni insisted on this form of the Apostolate many times in his *Original Constitutions* - in addition to his entire **Part XI**, and to administering the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and conversations - he emphasized much **private** catechism instructions, tutoring seminarians in their studies, the youth in piety and their studies, etc.]

[25] How Fr. Ignatius used this Ministry: Ignatius himself accomplished very much that was outstanding through this Ministry of the Word of God. And he made use of this especially when he added to himself those first nine companions. He brought to this **Ministry** every artifice of the preachers, wherever the possibility presented itself and he matter at hand demanded. Yet, it is more proper to the conversationalist that he might sedately and placidly influence himself upon the minds of others, as he would gently interact, and bring to the fore his fervor of charity. And so that you might attain to something of all that we heard from Fr. Ignatius regarding this Ministry, just listen.

And concerning all that I have been speaking of, he not only treated of it quite fully, but he personally made much use of it; after having brought forward a gentle fervor of charity toward the individual whom he was engaging, he would apply his whole heart to the spirit of this person. He would indeed exercise his love toward this person, even though the man might have been the most infamous, Ignatius would address him also lovingly toward his nature, faith and any virtues, should he manifest any, or good works, should he perhaps have occasionally done some, and he would emphasize the significance of this. Ignatius would join his zeal for the salvation of this soul, against all which could be adverse to this project, especially against the devil, the author of all vices and inciter toward them. He would offer instruction so that there might be made very clear under what condition this other individual should live, how he had lived, keeping in mind his intelligence, his physical health, i.e., whether he might be choleric or phlegmatic, or perhaps melancholy, and what he had done in his life, and what he still could do.

In the beginning he did not add anything concerning the man's sins, or about the virtues that he still needed to exercise, but he was conversant about indifferent matters [if the occasion presented itself] and especially about those that this other person might be accustomed¹⁰⁶; to soldiers, he would talk about war; to merchants, he would speak of the world of trade; to the nobles, he would converse about the magistrate and those matters which were being conducted and happening in the republic or the realm; to an ecclesiastic, he would speak of Church matters, the government of the Church. In like manner, with all persons, he would deal with matters of their state in life; or he would propose to them as the matter of his conversation those areas needed to be cared by them, and that all this would be received with a grateful soul, and it seemed that this approach was never taken badly, even though his theme might seem secular.

[26] The matter of his Conversation and its Manner: In all these spiritual conversations, there is to be attentively noted that this matter of the conversation be tied together so that we might be able opportunely to bring about the salvation of the other person. This manner of acting, Fr. Ignatius usually explained in Spanish: entrar

¹⁰⁶ As is well known to Stigmatines, Fr. Bertoni noted this wonderful principle of Pastoral Theology in his Spiritual Diary, August 20, 1808 [cf. **MP**]: ... *Bisogna entrare in casa d'altri a modo altrui per uscirne a modo nostro...*

con la [senda] dellos y salir con la nuestra¹⁰⁷; i.e., to go approach others in accord with their will, but to move forward to what interests us. He made clear that we are not immediately to take up the matter of vices, virtues, the Mysteries of Christ, and the ultimate matter of life and death; nor, before they are willingly listening to us that we might drive them away from us with the importunity of our misplaced zeal, and bring it about that there is nothing that they want to hear. Nor, even though they might willingly be listening to us, should we right away insert into our message the necessary hatred of sins; but, only after the conversation centers on human and political matters of interest, even before we take up the deeds of the saints, the life, doctrine, death of Christ, and the virtues is treated; and then the transition to the detestation of sins in general may be proposed. Not should we right away come to the vices of the other person with whom we are conversing, unless he provides a way of access, which we might then very placidly undertake. And also sometimes [as Fr. Favre used to say], there might be declined by the other the taking up of that particular and very individual treatment of their vices.

And yet, if this other person never brings up, or seeks counsel on his own matters, then surely the right time will come that we might be able to suggest Confession, first of all, a Particular Confession, and then alter on, the General Confession of the other's life, the frequent reception of the Sacraments, a manner of praying, of striving to do good deeds, in serving God. However, if it should happen that someone might freely make use of our custom both freely and frequently, and yet nevertheless does not wish to speak of spiritual matters which pertain to his own salvation, then the method of approach is to be very open with such as these, and bring up not merely trivial matters, even though that is what he wants to discuss, but to turn the talk to hell, the last judgment, the horrible fate of sinners, and the hidden judgments of God. This will either lead him to a different field of interest, or send him away annoyed so that he will not come back to waste our time.

[27] Other ways of exercising this Ministry: These are but a few hints. There are no hard and fast rules. Circumstances of time and place, and the character and temperament of the person involved, might indicate another approach. The resourceful apostle will be guided by a holy tact in all his conversations.

Our men might profitably make use of this type of **Ministry** after Sermons and Sacred Lectures; for on those occasions more easily will the spirits of our listeners be moved and will they listen to us a pious conversation and receive some fruit from it.

Furthermore there will also be a fruitful use of this the spiritual conversation in our colleges, by both our beloved Brothers¹⁰⁸ and Fathers, to whom there is given the

¹⁰⁷ This might be rendered: *to go into the subject of the conversation with that which would be of interest, and to eventually come to that which is of primary interest to us* i.e., the spiritual benefit of the other.

¹⁰⁸ In his Domestic Exhortations on Fr. Bertoni's *Original Constitutions*, Fr. Lenotti presents **Bro. Paul Zanoli's ministry** among the Austrian soldiers, bivouacked at the

custom of having with our listeners this approach, from which it should be brought about that they be promoted not only to the better leading of the Christian life, but also so that God might lead a very choice few to the Society.

This ministry is also useful when we meet men in the squares or in public places, that our men might go forward and so ingratiate themselves on those whom they meet by chance, so that little by little they might lead them and also conduct them to Confession; in Rome, excellent results were obtained in this manner, where good numbers were lead to Confession among the merchants and rustics; and first they are to be taught by someone on how they are to examine their consciences and confess their sins, and then shown how they are to prepare themselves; and finally, they will be conducted to the Confessor.

Our men should exercise this **Ministry** not only directly, but also through others that it might be suggested to those whose confessions they hear, and with whom they have some spiritual dialogue, that they might persuade and employ this method among their domestics, relatives and friends; and women too, can be convinced in this way, that they might persuade their female relative, domestics, family members. This Ministry, however, should never be counseled to men and women toward each other, unless they are legitimate spouses, in order to avoid all sinister opinion.

[28] Spiritual Conversation conducted among many the examples of Messina, Roma and in our College in Genoa: There is, however, between **Sermons** or **Lectures**, and this private Ministry of the Word of God, another medium type of Ministry, i.e., where many men might come together so that they might discuss familiarly concerning spiritual matters, with someone leading the group and directing the discussions. We begin to make use of this type of approach at Messina in Sicily, where that College of ours has been erected, but only in a certain incipient way. Almost every day, some pious men would gather in our Chapel and they listened to our Ecclesiastical Lectures, in our building. One man had a book prepared for this, which one person read, and the others attentively listened to him; and then they would at times converse among themselves about spiritual matters. This practice, I hear, was later interrupted. In Rome, after that time, there was instituted a congregation of secular priests ¹⁰⁹, in the style of the divine Jerome, which observed a similar procedure: they met in a large hall; and when they had taken their seats there, one would get up and come to the speaker's post, and then there would be had a brief exhortation to the gathering. One would be first designated by a priest, who would take over the gathering; it was not necessary for the one who would speak that he be of the priests of the House, as frequently he was from the outside.

Stimate, as fulfilling the 'End' of the Congregation, by leading these men to the Sacraments.

¹⁰⁹ This is quite reminiscent of **the priestly gatherings with Fr. Bertoni** – which Fr. Marani also continued, and to which the Founder refers in his Letters to Fr. Bragato: ... *con dieci dodici sacerdoti, sul gusto di quella nostra antica di S. Fermo...* [cf. Letter 4, *Epistolario* pp. 315, f. – **numeri marginali, ## 1049, ff.**].

When he had been heard, at times he would respond to those interrogating him about other pious matters. They would often pray together; then they would commend that prayers be offered for current circumstances. At the end, the cantors would sing would render some pious and beautiful hymn. In this way, the gathering is dissolved.

We accepted a similar practice ¹¹⁰, not too long ago, in our College of Genoa, however this custom was not approved by the Father General, as **far as I** know. Nevertheless, this custom did exist in Rome in our College and also at the *Germanicum*, so that there would be had those congregations of scholastics, in which there would be discussed those matters which pertain to piety, with one from our number exercising the role of leader. And indeed, if one should ask me my opinion on this, I would think that this type of **Ministry** belongs to our Houses, especially to those of the **Professed**. However, there should be designated and instituted a certain manner of conducting these gatherings, which ought to be observed, and I would hope that for the future many souls might be promoted in this manner to piety, and many would be won over for Christ¹¹¹.

[29] Exhortations delivered during Confession. This is very suitable when joined to the Sacrament: There is another **Ministry of the Word of God, which**, even though it takes place in Confession, and does not develop in response to questions so much, but **unfolds as through a private sermon**, where, once one's sins have been heard, their gravity is explained; then there is inculcated a cleansing fear and terror, and then the spirit of the one making the confession is nourished with a sweet hope. And this procedure has a very broad amplitude. For there is nothing of affection that might not be used here to move one's soul, or that should not be employed. And this kind of ministry has that unique privilege, for the other **ministries** of this kind are not conjoined with the sacrament; for in Confession, for preparing the soul of the sinner that he might assume an attitude of contrition, this should be done by the Confessor, for it is the Confessor who is able to absolve. This, its effectiveness of all this will be excellent; in that whatever is connected with the sacraments, receives a greater efficacy, a greater merit, efficaciousness and usefulness: as the prayers which may be imposed as a Penance, the fasting, alms-giving likewise for those prayers which are read in the Mass, when they are employed in the administration of the other sacraments. In order for these private [as I might call them] sermons be fruitfully had, our priests ought to commit themselves to great studies, and that from these, they might prepare their penitents for authentic contrition, with Christ being propitious, and these penitents also might be led to that genuine and constant resolution to avoid all sins, and to the changing of their entire manner of life into something better.

¹¹⁰ Credit for this style of gathering is given to St. Philip Neri.

¹¹¹ A rather general, but better translation of these ideas of Fr. Nadal regarding **Spiritual Conversations**, may be found in: **Thomas H. Clancy, SJ, *The Conversational Word of God...*, o.c., pp. 51-57.**

[30] Bringing Assistance to the Dying ¹¹²: Furthermore, this following is in this type of apostolate a most outstanding **ministry of the Word of God**, when those who are laboring in the last throes of life, we bring to them our help. The extent of the necessity and usefulness of this work is shown by the danger in which these souls find themselves, due to the utmost weakness of their strength, both exterior and also interior, while at the same time they are undergoing those savage and pestiferous attacks of the devils. As a result our priests ought to prepare themselves diligently for this office; and the superiors ought to take every care that our men are not lacking for this, and that they will willingly commit themselves to it, and wisely with the utmost energy of their spirit.

Even though it is not, as it is commonly said to be the case, that those laboring under these extreme situations are tempted in all aspects regarding the faith, that they see the devil; this is certainly not the case. For there are those who died most placidly, not being agitated by any temptation and or upset by any sinister vision. And yet, at the same time it has also been noted, that some are indeed customarily disturbed unto death with temptations of faith or of hope or of those other matters which they are as it were, not of their own choice, leaving behind, and there have been instances of the demons terrifying them and coming upon them with horrible specters.

This is to be handled first of all in this apostolate, that those who are facing death be fortified by the Sacraments of Penance, of the Sacred Synaxis and Extreme Unction; and that as to what pertains to their faults, their consciences are to be secure and quiet. Lastly, if there should be anything for them to take care of through the Sacramental Penance, they are to do this and they will be efficaciously directed to do so. And so likewise with all the human goods, they will constitute their Last Will and Testament; and in this manner, that if they have anything belonging to others, they might take care of this while they are still alive, that this be accomplished with all diligence. Should all this not be possible, then in so far as whatever will be possible for them to do so, their most firm disposition will be discerned and established as to what they might make restitution, and at the very first opportunity, this will be handled.

When all of these matters have been taken care of, the sick person is to be exhorted that since he is no longer fully in this world, but should already be in that future and celestial world, in his spirit, thought and desire. A certain contemplation might be represented to him: that God is indeed present, also Christ according to His humanity [as we have often done], and also totally according to His divinity, there is the Guardian Angel, and the other Angels as well; that the Virgin Mother of God is present, as well as the saints, and especially those toward whom the ailing person might have been devoted. Certainly from heaven, since all the Saints and Angels are invoked, and they see this person in his suffering, and they favor him, and pray for

¹¹² Fr. Bertoni commits to this Ministry to the Dying, his **Chapter V, of Part XI** [On the **Apostolic Mission of Familiar Conversations**] in his Original *Constitutions* - **CF ## 291-297**.

him; that there is a divine light in the patient's room, and the demons [if any of them have been present], they are set to flight terrified and confused. There should be confirmed in the sick person his faith and hope and charity in God; he is to be most minutely cared for so that to a very few things there might reduced all the thoughts and invocations addressed to the triune God, through the merit of Christ and His Cross, that the ailing person be directed toward the intercession of the Glorious Virgin and to the Guardian Angels, and in one over all embrace, there would be included universally all the saints and the Angels. And he should be opportunely advised so that should there be anything from his past practices and memories should there be anything to disturb him, or should any present temptation prove to be upsetting and stand out in his dread, he must be encouraged in all of this suffering and struggle and he is to take under consideration those devotions which for him during life proved to be a source of strength.

Lastly, from these present matters the occasion ought to be seized upon so that the proper counsels might be brought forward to assist the dying man. In this way there is to be attended that if he should mention or say that he is thinking about anything that might prove beneficial to his spirit, that this path be followed for his soul, calling upon his devotions that he might persevere. Many other aspects in this **Ministry are** to be exercised and they can still understand and can still be instructed. I wanted only to touch upon the headings of these matters, to which others might be thought of and added to mine, to counsel the sick person in Christ.

[31] How impending Death is to be announced to them: There should be joined with this type of approach also the announcement of one's impending death, where they doctors have had to give up on the sick person; and it so often happens that there is no one present who would like to hear declared the danger that the sick person is facing. However, this must be done with great caution and circumspection, so that the sick person may not be overwhelmed with this calamitous announcement, and the sick person fall into desperation, or delirium, or that he come to experience the illness in a ore disturbing manner, or that something precipitous might ensue. Therefore, if the danger presents some delay, gradually the sick man is to be led with these pious considerations, so that he might not come to think on account of the certitude of his imminent danger that he might come almost to deplore his situation; but, rather on account of the security of his conscience and devotion of will, and his contempt of worldly goods and the desire for the heavenly goods, that he might come to look upon the better and the more secure counsels to be embraced.

Let them take care at the same time that prayers be offered by others and that the celebration of Mass be held, and the sick person is to be accompanied in his journey as passing through these preliminaries, as it were, which I have just stated are to be done. Then, gradually the danger he is in must be opened up to him, and first, since this is the more useful and the more secure path for the sick person, so that each might be prepared in spirit, if indeed he is passing through the ultimate stage of life; then, we usually encourage those who are still quite well and strong that they might live from now on in the same manner as though they, too, would be dying on that day, while they are in the presence of the one seriously ill. For it is the

more secure path, more worthy of the Christian, when he comes to think of himself as dying, and he should so conduct himself as if his entire hope is to be placed in God, and not in any human supports and helps. It is to be presented that their challenge now is to be converted totally toward God, that their spirit, hope and thought be directed toward Him. And further, what we almost can never do while we are in good health, is that we come to depend on the Providence and Mercy of God, and that we have received a marvelous gift from God, if we should come down with some illness.

[32] The Proper Disposition for Death: Therefore, this is to be attentively and opportunely persuaded, so that they might be so disposed for death, that might be coming within that hour or on the very next day. There will be a refuge for the sick person, if he comes to understand what the Council of Trent taught:

...It teaches furthermore that so great is the liberality of the divine munificence that not only by punishments voluntarily undertaken by us in atonement for sin can we make satisfaction to God the Father through Jesus Christ, or by punishments imposed by the judgment of the priest according to the measure of our offense, but also [and this is the greatest proof of love] by the temporal afflictions imposed by God and patiently borne by us....¹¹³.

Therefore, the teaching is that all these difficulties and sufferings of the illness, and even those of death itself, patiently tolerated, are to be placed in the payment of the penalties for sins.

Lastly, in this entire matter, the following are important: the wretched and calamitous condition of this world is about to be left; one is about to go to that blessed life, most full of all amenity and gentleness; justly, can one consider death over this life. For we can consider nothing other, concerning the passing life in this world – nor should we – than anything more than a stretched-out pathway toward dying and its necessity; this entire life is nothing more than a transition toward eternity, which we consider death to be. Lastly, it will be of supreme assistance to the dying person, if he has some sense of the crucified and dead Christ, the omnipotent Son of God, impressed on his heart, and that Christ in His own agonies, in His death has been mindful of those ailing, as He offered up His own bitterness and death for them, to God the Father.

[33] The Assistance to be offered for those already in the Throes of Death: To this class of **Ministry** there should also be perceived that help and those works which we offer to those afflicted with their last agony; what we are accustomed to doing with a holy avidity and promptly, and also with great fruit and edification. Concerning this, I will note only two aspects. One is that great effort and commitment is to be brought to bear so that the one being afflicted will patiently tolerate his death, that he be persuaded that he is being justly punished, and that he even merits a greater penalty; moreover, so that he might be possessed, in so far as this is possible

¹¹³ Cf. **Council of Trent**, Nov. 25, 1551 – **D-S # 1693**

for him, with a certain peace of mind; and that all of this be done so that Exhortations might have some effect upon him.

The second aspect is that should it happen that sometimes these who are sick might fall into a kind of desperation, from their memory of their past life and its consideration, as well as from their present disturbance, and this is firstly useful – and not just once has this happened to our own men], that the Confessor, should he see the person beyond any spirit of desperation, should see him in a good state of mind, he will offer to him confidently that he be the sponsor before God of that conscience, and in this manner he would dispel all disturbance. They are always to be fortified with the sacraments of Confession and Communion.

[34] Disputation with Heretics and the Writing of Books: We also place among these **Ministries of the Word of God**, that when there is given the legitimate faculty of disputing with heretics, as when some among our men are deputed by the Superior General for writing against the Heretics, or even other kinds of books that might be useful for promoting studies which we pursue; this is especially should we write anything concerning theological matters, and those who might inform souls about piety and devotion.

[35] The Breadth that is contained in this Ministry of the Word of God: Lastly, we include in that universality of ***any Ministry of the Word of God whatsoever, and*** where we inspire our own spirits, and almost extend to our readiness of assisting our neighbor also through ***those Ministries of the Word of God which*** do not occur to us to expose here.

[V. The Spiritual Exercises]

[36] What is to be understood by the *Spiritual Exercises*: There follows these in the *Formula* of the Institute: ***...and further by means of the Spiritual Exercises...*** From His goodness God gave to us, and he Apostolic See attributes to us, that outstanding **ministry** of assisting both ourselves and our neighbor through the ***Spiritual Exercises***, i.e., through the doctrine and method of meditation, contemplation and prayer. However we understand not only our own method, the author of which is Fr. Ignatius, but principally his method. In this matter, we recognize the benignity of God; for He has given us beyond any order, that certain particular doctrine, by which we would be instructed for ourselves and also for our neighbor in prayer, since the basic instruction in this matter is common to all. This **grace of God** is made all the more certain by the Apostolic Authority, where Paul IIIrd confirmed our manner of imparting the **Exercises**. So, this is why we need to place great hope in our style of giving the **Exercises**, especially since we see how these have brought such profit to our own men and to others as well.

[37] The Origin of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius: The author of this method of the **Exercises** was Fr. Ignatius, by the benefit of God and His instinct. And in that time in which he had gone aside for penance and prayer to the city of Manresa, far from his home district in Catalonia, a Province of lower Spain. For he went aside so that he might be exercised spiritually and give effort to penance.

Therefore, this method was impressed upon him, and it was of benefit to him, and from these experiences he thought that these **Exercises** might be useful, and so he drew them up in book form.

[38] The Fruit of the *Spiritual Exercises*: As he lived by these **Exercises**, even from the very beginning of his conversion, he made use of them for himself and also for others. He lived by these already in Spain, before he came to Lutetia of Paris and promoted many to piety. By means of these, at Lutetia he drew to himself those first nine Companions, that they would renounce the world and would his proposal of spirit for assisting their neighbors, since he had first moved them privately by conversation to piety. By the **Exercises**, those first men were drawn to the Society. And so, up to the moment we see that the Society had received through them both its beginning and also its increase and to be governed by this, all those whom God has called to the Society through the **Exercises**.

There came to be the most ample fruit of our **Exercises** in every order of men. Courses of these **Exercises** were given beyond counting, not only to individual monks, but to entire monasteries. It came to pass, what I have noted, that monks, who were to be accepted into the Novitiate, and secretly sent to us, came to be instructed in prayer by these **Exercises**.

Through the **Exercises** many were likewise led to our Institute, and many to other religious communities. And I came to admire this Institute among all the others, in that men outstanding in doctrine, and indeed even excellent theologians, then first came to understand what it was that was lacking to them, even after all their studies and reading and books and disputations. For even the minimal interior spirit that Lord benignly is accustomed to enlarge, and this offers to souls an exquisite consolation and satisfaction.

[39] How this Fruit of the *Exercises* is to be explained: thus, ever grater admiration often overtook me, what causes this then, since we know that our style of the **Exercises** has nothing other added to them, nothing other than what is taken from the Gospel and the doctrine of the of the saints: for we present in the First Week nothing other than a certain common method of preparing for the contrition for sins. What else in the Second, Third and Fourth Weeks, other than meditations on the **Life, Death and Resurrection of Christ**. To the Fourth Week we also add for the achieving of the love of God one meditation in addition to the manners of praying; a few notes and observations. Since all of these matters seem so common, and within the grasp of any theologian, and obvious to anyone who is versed in the ways of the Spirit, then how is it that the **Exercises** have had such effectiveness in the souls of men and informing them with piety and devotion? You see that almost all men are so changed after making these **Exercises**, and they are so moved toward piety, that they inspire admiration in all, while some even take from these the occasion of detracting, or calumniating, us as though we were making use of some evil art. I could still say much more as to the source of their efficacy and the strength that comes through these **Exercises**. The spirit of anyone who makes the **Exercises** **uniquely** comes to see his spirit applied and almost compelled, beginning with hope,

withdraws, experiences a frequency in prayer, the method of giving these **Exercises**, notes the prudence of the Instructor, an accurate observance, and benefits by the help that is given, should there be any disturbance that might come to him.

All these, though, are from the human perspective. So, I am accustomed to preach that **Grace** is particular to God, and indeed connected with the **grace of our vocation and our Institute** which He bestows by His benignity so that we might first imbibe into the depths of our own hearts the spirit of the Gospel of the Son, that we might accept that power of impressing this on others. For that **Grace** gives to all aspects and the whole reason of the **Exercises** a particular energy and efficacy, by which spirits are intimately moved toward piety and devotion. And, if I might put it this way, through that manner of meditations as God wills that there be restored that which by the supreme sorrow of the pious retreatants, is deplored.

For by what other manner can one achieve the true nature of prayer, or could anyone achieve that authentic understanding and sense of spiritual matters? Who could obtain greater efficacy of the Word of God, who could penetrate in the depths of his heart and spirit any further the mysteries of the **life, passion, the death and the Resurrection of Christ**, who could be excited by these toward His imitation, or toward changing one's life for the better? In brief: we have seen people casting aside prayer, their devotion perish, their contemplation ignored, being exiled in their spiritual sense, becoming hardly Christian even though who are considered as good, in a speculative sort of way, and worn down in their piety. For God has willed through the **Spiritual Exercises** to bring some assistance to this part of those working in His Church.

[40] Other Methods of the Exercises: You might say: this would be far too arrogant if we preach that through our **Exercises** we are able to shore up a waning prayer life. But, we do not presumptuously arrogate this to ourselves; for we have said: we do not only understand our own **Exercises** in this way, but this method of our own we do indeed principally employ and embrace; nor, are we doing anything other here than stating the history of the facts regarding our method. May God allow that others might discover and even more helpful method of instructing all toward a life prayer and of a knowledge and practical use of spiritual realities.

[41] The Importance which St. Ignatius attributes to the Exercises: Fr. Ignatius attributed to this **Ministry** just as much as it was possible for him to do so. He was accustomed to maintain that that the giving of the **Exercises** was the supreme weaponry for our preaching, through which God **desired** such efficacy¹¹⁴ in His service, nor did he ever choose to give, or to permit any other method of prayer¹¹⁵. He constituted the first of his **[six¹¹⁶] experiments [experiences]** of these **Exercises**; he wished that all those who give themselves over to the Society should

¹¹⁴ cf. *Const. P. IV, c, 8, n. 5* – CSJ n. 408; *P. VII, c. 4 F* – CSJ n. 649.

¹¹⁵ cf. *The full Month of the Exercises: Examen c. 4, nn. 10, 41* = CSJ nn. 65, 98.

¹¹⁶ cf. CSJ nn. 64, ff.

be instructed through these **Exercises**; for thus he knew the principles need to be accepted and then we would be able to come to the strength, and all perfection of prayer, and even, if you wish, come to the heights of it. Through the **Exercises**, if one should find himself weakened in spirit, he willed that they be reconstituted and re-created; and, if I might say it in a single word, he wished that we should strive to live the spiritual life through the **Exercises**. Through them, he wished that we would become instructed; and that through them there might be conserved and increased in us a certain spirit and devotion; for, although sometimes we might have to withdraw from undergoing them in the most fruitful manner possible, there ought to be among us the perpetual use of them in our daily meditations and prayers.

[41] Those who are to be chosen to give the Exercises: As in the other **Ministries**, so for this one certain fathers should be chosen, who seem to be capable of them by their natural ability; for not all enjoy this ability; but if there are those who by nature, are orientated toward prayer and piety, if they are prudent, cautious and circumspect and lovers of the virtues. For not only in these is there to be noted their natural aptitude, but also their virtue, devotion, the exercise of their own spiritual practices and their regular use of them, and then the instruction which each one might receive from those who are adroit in giving the **Exercises**.

[42] How they ought to act: As I make one point, and then pass over to others: the one who is to give the **Exercises**, ought to be proficient in giving them, and so moved by his own spiritual sensitivity, so that out of the abundance and the virtue of his devotion and sense in Christ, even though with a few words he is to act, yet, he might be able to impart this strength to the one whom he instructs. He also ought to be helped with prayers, with the sacrifices of the Mass; these he must seek from others to intercede for him. Anyone who is to be trained, should so first prepare himself, so that having excluded all curiosity, with simplicity of heart and humility so withdraw, so that having separated himself from this entire world, he should accede to the reign of God and to conversation with Him through the **Exercises**, **he might come to understand just what it is that the Lord wills, what it is that he is saying, and be moved by that desire so that by divine instruction he might be moved to carrying out His will.** Up to this point, therefore, we have treated of the **Exercises**.

[VI. Concerning Christian Doctrine]

[44] The Importance of teaching Christian Doctrine: We have already spoken about **Catechism, or Christianity**, as this is found in the **Formula**, as it follows in the Papal Document: **...the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity...**¹¹⁷. If indeed there would be employed that diligence, either by the sponsors, or by the pastors, so that the baptized, as soon as possible, would be rendered capable of this doctrine, they would already be sufficiently instructed in **Christian Doctrine**. However, since we have seen extraordinary efforts have been given from our part, we moreover come to understand that **this duty is assigned to**

¹¹⁷ cf. *Regimini Militantis*, n. 2; *Exposcit debitum*, n.3

us and is supremely commended. For you will not find any other ministry from our vows, whether of the *Professed*, or of the Coadjutors, that is expressly named and stated, other than this one¹¹⁸. This is placed here, not because the other ministries are not necessary, or that they are not *proper* to our institute, and even some are **more worthy; but, there is no office, that is so necessary that it could be ever set aside from any reason whatsoever, nor should there be anyone who would consider it to be of an inferior value, which has been so greatly celebrated in the Society; for indeed all of our men are to be motivated toward this ministry**¹¹⁹. The need for **Catechism** is so great, since it is necessary for the Christian man to know what it is that without which one cannot please God [cf. Heb 11:6], or, to achieve eternal life and to be able to avoid the eternal pains of hell. For unless you know the art, or your way for your destined journey, of necessity you will not be able to keep to the end of your art, or your journey; it might be one thing to be lacking in an art, but not knowing your path, God and eternal life are lost.

[45] What the heretics bring to bear on this point: There is needed in this matter, my brothers, a zeal that is not insignificant, since I see the confluence of the heretics, spreading about their catechisms with so much study, care, diligence, fury, writing them, publishing them, teaching them sweating over them; we, then, cannot be negligent or uncommitted to a duty that is at one and the same time, so useful, so necessary. The heretics will promote with all their strength the doctrine of the demons; will we who pertain to Christ not take care to bring about His fruit? They, with so much contention, by their catechisms, cast the unhappy youth in to hell; will we not, by our divine and salutary Catechisms, impel ours into Paradise? Nor should our zeal end here. Do we not always notice how much earnestness of the demon, assiduity, acrimony, furor, how tireless he is in intruding his temptations and evil thoughts? And will we sink into our torpor in repelling him, in detecting his deceptions and combating them, by promoting the doctrine of the Catholic truth and the practice of all virtues¹²⁰?

[46] How Catechism should be imparted to the Youth: Look, my brothers, more closely; this Ministry pertains to two categories of human beings: to the **youth** and to the **unlettered**. **Young people**, due to their ignorance of Christian Doctrine place their salvation in jeopardy. And this means also children even before the time of discretion, i.e., that time in which they might be able to sin, they are to be diligently instructed. This instruction is to be given in such a way that even before they come to the use of discretion, they might be encouraged to follow the better path and they might the more easily be opened up to the better choices. And so they are not only to be instructed in **Christian Doctrine** before they come to their discretion, but they

¹¹⁸ cf. *Const. P. V, c. 3 B = CSJ n. 527.*

¹¹⁹ cf. *CSJ nn. 69 [one of the experiments of the Novitiate]; 277 [to be imparted in our Novitiates]; 395 [also in our Colleges]; 437 [to be taught by our rectors for 40 days]; 645, 647[among our Missions, in our Churches].*

¹²⁰ Fr. Nadal's negative view of the Protestant enterprise seems to date from a letter of his to St. Ignatius, July 6, 1555 – after Nadal had been in Germany a while.

must conceive of that doctrine, indeed blandly and efficaciously, so that they might be led to living it, even prior to the point in which they might reject it, should they die even before using the use of discretion, so that they might be prepared for the reception of the Sacrament of the **Eucharist**, and also of **Penance**; even though they might be able to approach Confession even before they reach the use of discretion, as there is no fear in imparting sacramental absolution to them.

There is to be a most accurate preparation when they do come to that state of childhood, in which they begin to be obliged to observing the law of God and they begin to be able to sin. With great solicitude and zeal every care needs to be taken so that they might not lose Baptismal Grace and purity. Therefore, during this time, some taste for devotion is to be imparted to them [even while still young], the knowledge on how to say the Rosary [the 'crown', as it is called], devotion to Christ in His childhood state, toward His Passion, toward His Virgin Mother, and toward the Guardian angel, under whose protection, help, assiduous presence, these children are to be diligently directed. But, at the same time this is to be pointed out: that these devotions of the children should be flowing and fluid, unless by fear of their tender state, they might be more properly brought up and strengthened.

[47] The same for the Adults: Those who are already in the adult stage of life, may be unlettered by nature and in their grasp of the Catechism, so the manner of teaching them needs to be more open; and firstly, indeed they are to be taught that they cannot without sin ignore **Christian Doctrine**, at least to that level which they might be able to grasp. And I will prove this, if they are first taught the faith in a general way, so that they might believe that which the Church, i.e., the Roman, believes, particularly that which the Church celebrates each year in her feasts; they need to be taught that hope, so that they might hope to obtain Paradise from God, if they will keep His precepts; and they need to be instructed in that charity, so that they will love God above all else. I would add whatever obtains both regarding detriment and danger, if someone should sin mortally and offend the omnipotent God. For these I would order them to confess and in a general manner; to this Confession, the Confessor should set aside a suitable and free time, so that he might interrogate them diligently and teach them from what sins they are to abstain. In this confession, their lethal sins are to be pursued. Then [if it seems that the penitent is to be absolved] he will be ordered to learn **Christian Doctrine**. Whether he is absolved or not, he is to be instructed in so far as he needs to make his sins clear so that he might be absolved, and indeed he is to be encouraged that he might come to learn **Christian Doctrine**. Then, he is to be persuaded that he might frequently confess, for that confession might take the place of the **Catechism**, when it is received fruitfully.

[48] Fr. Ignatius himself often engaged in this Ministry. In this Ministry, not only the intellect is to be reached, but also the will and it is to be informed regarding piety: In order that these spirits be helped, and also the youth, there should be no **Professed House** of ours, no **House of Formation**, no **College**, no pilgrimage of ours, where **Christian Doctrine** is not taught publicly. And Fr. Ignatius himself saw to this, not only in his Constitutions [as has been seen above], but also in

his Rules; as well as in the **General Congregations** ¹²¹ **this Ministry is so necessary**, and it is one that is so **salutary**, so we must most diligently take it on. I would add here in the last place one more point: all effort must be brought to their enterprise by those who teach **Christian Doctrine**, that they might not only instruct the intellect, but at the same time, and even principally, that they might reach the will; and at the same time, the Evangelical Light must be impressed on hearts and the will so moved, so that what the intellect learns, a ready and devout will be inculcated into them and that by their efficacious spirit each listener might decide to carry out into execution. Hence, there should not be any mere speculative treatment of the **Catechism**, but, one that is practical and one that would enkindle the spirit toward piety.

[VII. The Administration of the Sacraments]

[49] **Which Sacraments are now to be treated:** The **Ministry of the Sacraments** is placed here in the last place, **among the principal offices of the Society**, by which we ought to assist our neighbor. For this is how it is read in the ***Formula: ... and the spiritual consolation of Christ's faithful through hearing Confession and administering the other sacraments...*** And this is a great privilege, my brothers, that we might administer the Sacraments also from **our Institution and our vocation**, once we have the faculties of the Church and her approval¹²²; without this approval, we cannot carry out this ministry. But which sacraments are intended here? First of all, **the Sacrament of Penance**, then the other sacraments which can be administered by a simple priest; i.e., except for Confirmation and Holy Order, all the rest of the Sacraments. For, concerning these two, he could not have had these in mind; and so, it was not necessary for him to express these in the Rule. But, what does it mean that we can administer 5 Sacraments, with emphasis on the sacraments of **Penance** and the **Eucharist**? The following must be most diligently observed, that in our ministries, we are not to impede the hierarchy, or the role of the Church; but, we are to serve this, and promote them, and which for us will be for our greater humility, we will obtain permission. Therefore, Baptism we usually do not confer, nor extreme Unction, nor the sacrament of Marriage. And this is the reason for this: it is necessary for the Pastors to be sure of just who is Christian in his Parish and who it is, and under what condition, is each who dies, and therefore, they should ordinarily administer Extreme Unction; and they must know who in their parish are legitimate spouses.

[50] **Why we insist on the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist:** And so, we leave all these other sacraments to the Pastors. We will administer **the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist**, and moreover, these are to be held as necessary for

¹²¹ cf. **Ist Gen. Congr., Decree 138; IInd Gen. Congr. Decree 30**, after the Elections; **Decree 58** [*...this is also to be commended also to the Father General, and this ministry must never fall into oblivion among our men, since we include this in our Profession of Vows...*]; **Decree 65**.

¹²² There is re-iterated the constant need of this approbation of the Church – Fr. Bertoni expresses this also *in obsequium Episcoporum...*

the obtaining of our End, nor do they impede the work of the Pastors. For, since we must commit ourselves with dedication to the salvation and the perfection of our neighbor, and since the assistance of **Penance** is united to salvation, and the Sacrament of the **Eucharist** increases grace and every effect that material food and drink accomplishes for corporal health, this assistance achieves the same regarding spiritual health¹²³ it was necessary that we should be committed to the assistance shared in these sacraments.

And so, we administer these sacraments as those principal arms for extirpating vices, both our own, and those of our neighbor, and for trampling the demon underfoot. It is true that we are moderately involved in Eucharistic ministry, as this is made clear in the discipline and duty proper to Pastors. For we do not administer the **Synaxis** at Easter, other than as Viaticum, so that the Pastor might be able to know in what state of conscience his parishioners are living, and also in what state they recede from the living. And in order that we might confer perpetually the Sacrament of **Penance**, this is indeed the situation in which there is not to be disdained the assistance which we give to Pastors. For since these Pastors need to have substitutes for the **Ministry of the sacrament of Penance**, so this burden and commitment is partly assumed through our men. From the ministry, then, which we exercise, of these two sacraments, the supreme fruit is obtained, so that many might not only once in the course of a year, but that they might frequently accede to these two Sacraments. Therefore, since these **two Sacraments** are justly connected, we administer them; whereas, we are not regularly ministers of the remaining three Sacraments.

[51] When we might administer the other Three Sacraments; and to what extent we might exercise the Office of Pastor: You might say: what is to be said of the fact that we receive the faculty of these, which we are not to lose, or that it become inactive, which is not customarily the case with these gifts of God and the Church? In necessities, we can always use that power. And so it does not remain inactive, but is reserved for necessary use. Even though in these Catholic regions, for all practical purposes, this power is not regularly employed, whereas it is in India, in the regions of the heretics, or it is wherever there might be lacking Pastors and souls are endangered regarding their salvation. For this all pertains to the Apostolic See, so that in the entire Society there is commitment to this ministry, so that souls might not be lost on account of the lack of ministers of the Church. And so, I will not spell all this out here in this place, as the matter is to be copiously and diligently taken up elsewhere. Even though we cannot assume the regular care of souls, nevertheless all the duties of Pastors are ours from our Institute and the **confirmation and faculty of the Apostolic See**, we would do nothing other than what has been instituted, in those areas where there are no Pastors, and especially wherever there cannot be Pastors, then it is that there our men will be sent who would exercise all the duties of the pastor, not though from any juridical right or obligation of the Pastor, but indeed from our Institute, or from our **Mission**, whenever a regular Pastor cannot be assigned. This then is to be both noted and cared for fully that we can never

¹²³ cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, III, q. 79. a. 1; Denz. 698; 875.

arrogate to ourselves the right of Pastor, and so nothing under that title can we receive, neither revenues, nor income. Nor first-fruits, nor oblations left at the altar or any other means of financial contribution. But, for assuming all these prerogatives, the Bishop, should he choose, or the Supreme Pontiff will designate procurators who will handle them, whereas our men will assume no responsibility in this matter. We are to live, though, from simple alms-giving, and far from us there have to be all fund-raising projects, even that taken on by begging. And in like manner would all the other matters be handled. Now, let us return to the other two Sacraments.

[52] Observations for Confessors. All are to be persuaded of its usefulness, and here should be had common places for demonstrating the seriousness of sin: And regarding the **Sacrament of Penance**, our members receive quite a number of instructions, both from the Rules of the Society, as well as from books written by our men, as well as from the institutions laid down by our Superiors. And yet, there are a few things that I will note here.

1. Wherever our men administer the **Sacrament of Penance**, they always strive for the perfection of the penitents, as they ought to do by reason of the End of our Society; nor can they ever be content if they simply say, or command only those matters which are necessary. They should rather counsel and seek to persuade those things which are useful.

2. They will have at hand those common places from the Scriptures and Sacred Doctors, as well as examples from the histories and from elsewhere, and all those sharp insights and full of stimuli, which they will bring to bear for this purpose, so that they might demonstrate the fault, the guilt and the gravity of mortal sin¹²⁴; and that they might strive with every effort, care diligence, and zeal to impress on their hearts the intimate sense of this whole matter. For wherever the human consciences need the knowledge and the sense and affection of the spirit, it is here that they need this in a special way. And there is customarily impressed upon our confessors the great solicitude, and not rarely also some ambiguity, whether the contrition which the penitents manifest is truly suitable. And then if at times they can perceive this intimate sense on their hearts, all would be easy and secure, and all exhortations would be gently received by them and they would willingly accept all satisfaction for their sins.

[53] They must bring to bear a certain magnitude, and not be overtaken by scruples:

3. Our **Confessor** should bring to his chair a certain magnanimity of spirit, and must think of himself as manifesting the Person of Christ and of the Catholic Church, when he carries out this duty that he is serving in the authority of Christ and the Church; and that he is waging combat not only against one, but against the many diabolic deceits, and then these are defeated, he will be able to assure one soul for heaven.

¹²⁴ cf. CSJ n. 407.

4. But, he should not act scrupulously, as though he were not sufficiently instructed for the hearing of confessions, nor should he conduct himself as though he had no mandate, and had not been sent legitimately by his Superior; rather he must know that he has been sent with a full and constant spirit, and that he place his trust in Christ, in the Church, in the Society, in the grace of Christ, and that he indeed as an individual represents the Society and furthers it, and that he goes forward to bring assistance, supported by the prayers and merits of the Church and of the Society.

5. He will institute and govern his committed efforts from the direct prescript of his Superior, in good faith and with accurate diligence.

[54] He will understand clearly the faculties he does enjoy; and might even seek others:

6. He will come to understand from his superior, and this quite precisely, what Faculty he has from the Society in the bestowing of absolutions, both from sins and from censures as well, and what Faculties he enjoys for commuting private vows.

7. He is to take every care that he avoid all scruples and uncertainty of conscience or judgment. And yet, should it occur, that he might encounter something more serious than what he should be able to be content with his own judgment, with every observance of the Seal being protected, he will consult someone who might relieve him of that difficulty.

[55] Perfection in protecting the Seal:

8. So that in all our undertakings and actions established by our Institute, we ought to aspire toward perfection, so with a singular sincerity the Seal of Confession is to be conserved by our men; and so that this might be accomplished with ever greater diligence, that I would not attempt to have a conversation with those matters that have been heard in Confession, even though those matters which have been heard in Confession, and which pertain in any manner to the Confession, even though these are not sins, nor even the circumstances of sins, nor would I ever permit the custom from developing; nor would the excuse in my view have any weight that what might be narrated would not refer to any particular person.

And it should never happen that the one who narrates something which he heard in Confession that it is not something he has seen as what he heard, and so he recites in all simplicity that which might refer which in his personal judgment may not refer to any individual, someone else might be able to figure out the person to whom it might apply. Therefore, all those things which are heard during a Confession are to be totally stopped up within. For if nothing other, certainly, than in the good faith, or in the most secret place those confessing remain, those matters which do not pertain to the Confession, we can answer in good fidelity, since otherwise it might happen that those matters which are narrated from Confession by those listeners, might somehow reach the ones making the

Confession in the first place, and this would result in a most supreme offense for them.

[56] Nor should they be mixed in with those matters which do not pertain to Confession:

9. Every care must be taken by our men that the confessions that they hear might be pure, nor under any pact might they permit those making the confession to mix in those other matters which do not pertain to either the necessity, or the perfection of the Confession. For there should be no reason to have any doubts, or fear, that they would not be the most exact observers of the Seal of Confession; furthermore, I would hesitate from ever coming to know anything from these. Nevertheless, those making the Confessions can be interrogated, if they might wish, from their Confessors concerning the difficulties of their consciences and the doubts which pertain to their consciences; about other matters, they should ask nothing, and if they do ask, nothing should be responded to them, and not even heard from them.

[57] There should be absolute gravity in conversing with women and what our conversation should be with them:

10. The Confessor must conduct himself with utmost gravity in Confession, and be not only father, but also judge; and not only this, but that he exercise the role of father and judge in the Person of God. Not should he ever permit himself anything which might seem to be levity, or familiarity; not should he ever permit the person making the Confession to speak, or act in any other way than as one guilty before God, and even one as worthy of hell; and yet, the Confessor can exercise the meekness of Christ and the Church, in His place; and that whatever he does, let him do so with the utmost gravity.

11. If it should ever happen, which I hope and trust in the Lord that it would never take place, that someone, especially a woman, should indicate some affection toward the Confessor, and that he should judge that matters are not proceeding in a good spirit, but rather pertain more to the slippery nature of the flesh, in this case the Confessor should not proceed that he might try to bring healing to this person; but he should most gravely withdraw from ever again hearing such a Confession, and he should dismiss her, or that he himself should leave the Confessional, if she should not depart. Nor should he ever again hear her Confession. Nor should he open up under any reason his own suspicion, and yet should take every care that he might not incur any such suspicion.

12. There is never necessary to engage in any conversation, or familiarity with women outside of Confession. For in dealing with women he should only engage with them about those matters which pertain to their consciences, or with others about these matters; in order that they be interrogated, or that he might give some response to them, the proper place for this is in the Confession. About other matters,

there is absolutely nothing about which the Confessor should either question, or respond.

And so there is almost nothing at all that would cause our men to speak in Church, outside the Confessional, and much less would there be any reason for ours to go to their homes; nor could the occasion ever arise that it could ever come to pass that someone would have to say anything regarding their devotion, to be conserved in the house or College. They are primarily to be instructed in our Ministries, as they want from our men, but they are not expected to visit those offices. Nor should our men hold any conversation with women, in any other place, than in the Confessional, and always about those matters which pertain to their consciences.

In this place, I will not add anything else. When I repeat what the divine Jerome stated in his Life of Blessed Hilarion, the Hermit: *The Matrons*, he said, *are a grave temptation for Christians!* - this would suffice from what I have heard from that most holy Doctor.

[58] Little presents are not to be accepted:

13. This, too, is to be observed, and not only diligently, but even severely, so that no Confessor will ever accept from his faithful of the Confessional any small gifts. For the greatest care is not only to be exercised here, so that they might not accept these little gifts, which, by Christ's help, might never happen; but, that those goods that are sent from our children in the Confessional to someone else by name, let us not accept them, even though this is not to be handed over to him, especially if we can question this gift being given.

[59] How Confessions are to be heard in private homes:

14. In their homes, unless in those of the sick, they ought never to hear confessions, nor in other churches from our own. As for that which pertains to women, select confessors, outstanding for their age and gravity of morals, ought to be sent to homes, having also received a Socius assigned by the superior, as is noted in the Rules of the House. What is stated in this Rule is that both the woman and the Confessor should be in plain view as far as the disposition of the place may allow, is the way I would interpret this, as I have already noted several times in my reflections on the Constitutions.

This is also to be noted from the very phrase of Fr. Ignatius, while those words are not merely to be understood literally, but they refer rather to his intention, that this enterprise is to be undertaken, regarding the dispositions of the place which are to be observed as the Rules commands. Should this not be possible, then this woman's situation should be referred back to the Pastor. This legislation I interpret rather freely, since I know first-hand the severity of Father Ignatius regarding this matter. For there was a situation here at Rome, where he came to hear that the confession of a sick woman by very well proved Fathers, compelled by necessity, in a place where the scene could not be noted by the Socius, his indignation was aroused, so

that he discerned that this was reason to employ the unheard of discipline of flagellation, for the space of time that it would take one to recite the Psalm *Miserere* seven times.

[60] What is to be done when the State of Sin remains:

15. It is sometimes difficult to judge concerning the state of mortal sin; for while one may not see anything wrong in living in this state, but he is not be given absolution, even though he might say that he does indeed wish to abstain from the sinful act itself; nevertheless, all have to withdraw at the same time from the situation of sin, even though one might have practical difficulty in dissolving the situation, which already of itself is a sin, since there is a resulting scandal. There is no state of mortal sin that can be allowed, since a 'state', or situation of sin, of this nature results from the properties and the likeness to a state of living, which is established by a certain state of proposed immobility and obligation. This is what first needs to be done, that the whole manner of this reality be so moderated, so that there might be nothing that would result from this situation of proposed immobility, or obligation; this simply cannot happen with regard to concubinage, unless the woman is sent away from the house, and unless it is not kept going somewhere else, and unless some arrangement would be concocted as though no one would ever see the man so involved with a concubine. And all these matters need to be handled publicly, if the state of concubinage has been public, so that it might indeed be seen by those who have received offense from this situation.

The same judgment is to be made in other situations of sin. It is true that often it is a state of a secret mortal sin, so that if one were to admit this regarding a woman, this would imply that this man would be engaged fully in concubinage. To such a man, the same requirements are to be laid down, so that what he is doing secretly might indeed be perceived as concubinage and he is to be directed as though his situation of sin were known publicly. This might happen that the seal might be broken even if he approached the house secretly, so it would be the more easily done that the man should leave the house, once an occasion presented itself. And so it should be required in any manner that the situation of sin might be contracted, for unless this is fully removed, no power of persuasion, or promises given would induce the Confessor from absolving such individuals so involved. And if this is the situation, the full culpability falls upon them; the Confessor is not able to absolve them, and if he does confer absolution, he would sin mortally, and that absolution would be rendered fully null and void.

[61] What should be said about the Dangers of Sin:

16. So far, we have said very little about the dangers of sinning mortally. And regarding other dangers, this matter is to be taken up by the common rules of theology; concerning the danger of falling into a certain aspect of lasciviousness, it is difficult not to make any judgment. I would so consider the matter that any such danger be considered circumspectly and cautiously, whether it be of itself, or by accident. If such a danger should be avoided of its very self, and the matter itself is

no avoided, I would not give absolution in such a case; in dangers of such sin, that may arise only accidentally, I would simply overlook its quality of accident, and if the situation were truly grave and serious, I would not give absolution; if this is not the situation, then I would absolve, and I would counsel the penitent and how to avoid this situation and would provide some help in order for him to avoid it.

So, the question is: how is a danger to be judged as one by its very nature – and one that is only so by accident? Since it is a question here of morality, then we ought to judge in its morality, this ought to be judged according to present factors. And the underlying reason might be taken from the fact that this is of its very nature a danger of sin, and yet it is either of itself, or from its accompanying circumstances so connected with the moral act, that any upright and learned man would judge this from the fact itself that sin will follow. And if someone once fell in this way, he could never again be alone with her, where he could not see clearly, for this is of its very nature a sin.

Likewise if from his easy-going nature and it was easy for him on another occasion to experience this fascination, he should never be alone with another woman, as this would present of its nature a danger for him. And we should not delay in this matter necessarily any longer, a prudent and experienced Confessor will need to take into consideration whether this is all so of itself, or even by accident. The Confessors need to make known to souls that as long as they remain in the dangers, the sinner, *per se*, is not to be absolved as long as the danger remains, which under any circumstance this never could be. But, should someone say: what if the danger cannot be avoided without causing some scandal, that it might lead to sin, or in other words, it cannot happen without some sin occurring?

This just increases the difficulty, but does not remove it; it is not easy for anyone to be exonerated from this. Such a penitent is not yet to be absolved, but even more challenging tasks should be given to him, so that some manner might be investigated that would rescue him from this situation without any sin being committed.

[62] What should be done in Cases of Restitution:

17. I omit those difficulties which may touch upon restitution, and as these frequently occur. I will only take up that one which can sometimes happen, since there is included in it the obligation to restitution, and nothing will stop this from happening other than the will of the one confessing, or his negligence, and nevertheless he is to promise to make this as soon as is possible. Should there be believed and absolution given to him? In itself, it does not seem that he should be absolved by me, if he knows that he is obliged to restitution; for it is certain that there will be the judgment that would not lead him to the efficacious will of making the restitution. He is therefore to be persuaded that he should first make restitution, and then return for absolution.

But should one be totally unaware that he is held to restitution, and there should right away be at least an efficacious will to be formed that he might come to come to the conception that he should come the decision to make restitution, then he might be absolved; but not again, if he does not actually make the restitution. By some accident, the Confessor might come to the conviction that he might be able to offer absolution from the circumstances of the person, or for other reasons. But then if, once having been so absolved, he should come again, and had not yet restored the goods belonging to another, he ought to be benevolently dismissed in order to make the restitution.

[63] What of one in possession of a number of ecclesiastical benefices, which by common law may not be held:

18. It also comes up to note also something about those who since they possess several ecclesiastical benefices, which may not be retained by common law, yet they seek to be absolved by our men, because they may have these with the legitimate dispensation of the Supreme Pontiff. I will omit to examine whether this dispensation is legitimate or not, or whether under some aspect it might not just be proper, whether it is surreptitious or whether it has been clandestinely received; this is what I would say: since they possess these benefits which by right, they have no right to, their dispensation not being well known; it should appear to us that this is not within the custom of the Society, whether one might be convinced that we are conniving to share in the plurality of such benefices. Furthermore, since we must always inspire our penitents to what is better, it would be more pressing on us to persuade such a person that he should not make use of such a dispensation. And then, with utmost modesty he should be persuaded that he should go to another Confessor.

[64] What kind of Sacramental Satisfaction is to be imposed, and how:

19. I would add one more point, and proceed then to others. It is difficult to impose a sacramental satisfaction, especially on those who many and grave and repeated sins who may approach the Sacrament; and in that tempest, it is all the more difficult where the ancient rigor of the satisfactions has been quite watered down. And yet, the Council of Trent commands this in a grave manner:

The priests of the Lord ought, therefore, so far as the spirit and prudence suggest, to enjoin salutary and suitable satisfactions, in keeping with the nature of the crimes and the ability of the penitents, lest, if they should connive at sins and deal too leniently with penitents, the imposition of certain very light works for grave offenses, they might become participators in the crimes of others [cf. 1 Tm 5:22] ¹²⁵.

Thus far the words of the Synod. And so, I would say, first the penitent must be persuaded that for the gravity and the multitude of the crimes and the weakness of

¹²⁵ Cf. Denz. # 905.

his contrition he should undergo a fitting penalty, especially since satisfaction ought to be imposed not only for the finite penalty that remains, but also as medicine for his weakness, and the avoidance of repeated sin, and the protection of a new life. If he is to be persuaded of all, there is then to be examined the magnitude of his contrition, i.e., the proposal of avoiding sins. And first, these are to be imposed: what he will do, and what sufferings he will undergo and apply the satisfaction; at the same time, for the magnitude of the contrition, the Confessor ought to think of a greater or lesser satisfaction; then there is to be explored the mind of the one confessing, what he would gently receive and if he would hope to take on the penance according to this observance, which usually falls under three different types: prayer, fasting, alms-giving.

But, should it be noted that the one confessing only weakly is contrite and manifests little future constancy, there would be imposed on him a satisfaction lasting a week, and that this should be exposed if he is not up to all satisfaction; and then, after 8 days there might be pardoned the rest of the satisfaction and a lighter penance be substituted for him. For this kind of care is very helpful in assisting those who do conceive a firm proposal of changing their lives into something better, and if it is easy to see that they will willingly return to the frequency of the sacraments. In others, it will not be that efficacious, for it is readily apparent that they are not to return to us.

Such as these are to be treated by a different art, and at the same time a large penance is to be imposed and such as these are to be told that in the future, they are to return to confession with 8 or 15 days, so that their satisfaction might be diminished, or removed altogether; they need to be committed that they abstain from sins. Or, a rather easy penance is to be imposed which is to last until he will confess again; he should be counseled that this take place at least within 15 days, or even within 8 the faculty might be given.

[65] The importance of frequent Confession and frequent Communion. What preparation should be employed:

I wanted to note these matters, even should they not be necessary, they are many aspects of them that would be to our interest. They will testify to my soul certainly and the zeal of the perfect administration of this sacrament in the frequent use of which is placed the reformation of Christianity. For since sins deform the face of the Church, and this is the unique remedy given by God to the Church for removing and deleting sins, for healing consciences, who could be able to doubt that the faithful hasten to make use of this help, without which the Church cannot be restored and established in her luster, splendor, perfection and divine light? This ought to persuade our men that they carry out what they preach, all they treat of, in this regard.

They will employ every effort, especially among those who do not have the practice of confessing frequently, so that they might be led to the frequency of confession. Nor should our men solely insist on this frequency of Confession. Nor is

the devotion of more frequently confessing the sole challenge. The soul must likewise be purged and led always to do what is better. After inculcating the frequency of Confession, all must be led to the frequency of Holy Communion.

And this is the great Ministry of the Society, about which here I will only make mention, so that our men might diligently instruct those approaching the Sacred Synaxis, how much purity of souls is to be brought forth, how much faith, how much hope, how much desire of love; briefly, how much devotion toward Jesus Christ I receiving the sacrament. Nor should they allow that preparation go on infinitely, or get side-tracked in scruples; but to those, if these should occur, our men might impose the manner of proper disposition; and there will be exposed to them how much fruit proceeds from the Sacred Synaxis, and at the same time they will be trained as to how they might often make fruitful use of this Sacrament.

[VIII. Other Ministries]

[66] Why precedence is to be principally intended for the Consolation of Souls: I am yearning toward the end of this treatment. And so, those matters which remain, I will draw up in a kind of *Compendium*.

What is placed in the last place of these primary ministries of the Society, is: *...and principally* ¹²⁶ *for the spiritual consolation of Christ's faithful...* The Society is oriented toward all the above mentioned duties; at the same time it exposes that she is not to be related to every aspect of the necessary fruit, but it is up to us to be so committed that all that is necessary for the salvation of souls be pursued among all these first of all; nor can we be at the same time content with these, but we are to strive for their perfection, and the consolation of souls. For spiritual consolation is usually an indication of some perfection and to aspire for perfection.

This is why the text adds *principally intend* this spiritual consolation, after first showing that there are other ministries toward which we ought to intend our efforts; but, this spiritual consolation is to be held in the first place, as the object of our primary intention and effort in all that we are to do. This is to be preferred before all the others; and if the time and other circumstances are not sufficient for this, they are to be omitted, and this consolation is to be intended moreover, this intention and diligence manifests the over-riding intention to be adhered to in all these ministries.

[67] We are also to undertake other works of charity: Since up to the present what has been said pertains to those which are our principal ministries, and those that are properly ours and it is this we which we profess from our end, and which applies to us almost uniquely; but yet this is not so that that the Society would not reach out at the same time to all the other works of charity. And furthermore, we should commit ourselves not the less, or any more weakly, toward other works of

¹²⁶ In the English translation, the word *praecipue* is not translated as applying solely to this **spiritual consolation**. There is *potissimum* at the head of this list of ministries – and *praecipue* near the end – not unlike the style of the wording in the Stigmatine **Decree of Praise** [*praecipue...praesertim...*].

charity, if this is fitting through the occupation of other works previously; but all must be undertaken with the same fervor, diligence, effort, care, with grace and spirit.

[68] The reconciliation of Dissidents: But, just what are these other works. The *Reconciliation of Dissidents* would be one of these, as it is included as the Seventh Beatitude in Matthew [cf. Mt 5:9]. For we understand by this that peace among men that needs to be reconciled; for in its amplitude there is to be received all **those superior ministries** which serve for this beatitude. The first Fathers, and especially St. Ignatius himself, committed to this ministry much effort and work, and with great fruit. For indeed this is often a difficult undertaking...¹²⁷

[69] Work in Hospitals and Prisons¹²⁸:

Our men, though, are not to be sent into the Hospitals unless with the consent of those who are in charge of it; and this accurate observation is to be employed with the edification and the good work they might expend there. And indeed when our men are assigned to prisons, they are not to become involved in those matters with guilty judgments which are not fitting. It is necessary for them to remember what has been said about a judge, which is clearly laid for us in the Book of Sirach: ... **Do not go to Law with a judge, since judgment will be given in his favor...**¹²⁹

Nor should one believe even one confessing who goes against the judge. For it is not necessary for sacramental confession to condemn the judge, or the witnesses, but then not to confess it as a sin if one has been accused by calumny; the Confessor should counsel the penitent to patience and to remit the entire matter to the exterior forum and to the judge, as this appeal is to be made legitimately according to the official acts and proofs.

And there is still another reason why we ought not to get involved in these appeals for the guilty one; because in this manner, we would condemn the original witnesses and actors in the case. The sacred forum of Penance is to be totally separated from the exterior forum and should be. And yet, if by his false confession one has been adjudicated as guilty, he needs to restore his reputation, and yet not condemn the judge; but, should the convict deny during the trial what seems to have been legitimately proven, he ought to confess this. As for the rest, the theologians should be questioned.

In **hospitals**, or in **places of cure**, there is to be avoided that our men would minister to women, and they should not even visit them; they can, however, hear their confessions and preach to them. Let our men assume all those services which might

¹²⁷ The page ends abruptly here, leaving the thought incomplete.

¹²⁸ The *Formula* reads here: ... *ad dissidentium reconciliationem et eorum qui in carceribus vel in hospitalibus inveniuntur, piam subventionem et ministerium, ac reliqua caritatis opera...*

¹²⁹ Si 8:14[17].

seem to be the more abject; and they should attend especially to those who might be dangerously ill. For in mental institutions, the work is fruitfully undertaken of assisting those who are dying. As far as temporal assistance is concerned, there is a great need in prisons than in hospitals. For hospitals usually draw their own almost, through which the sick are provided for; but this is not the case in prisons.

Likewise, in seeking alms, great care needs to be taken, so that while we are seeking these for the poor, it might come across that we are seeking these for ourselves or that in some way, the benefit from this will come to us. Therefore, no one will seek any alms for the **prisons**, or for the **hospitals**, unless the Superior approves of this; and our men will not accept alms, but will immediately hand over whatever alms one may receive to the prefect of the prison, or the hospital or to some most trustworthy man, about whom no suspicion might be had.

[70] The Remaining Works of Charity:

Let us hasten now through those works of charity which remain: ***In performing any Other Works of Charity:*** So, not only the works of charity in hospitals, or prisons are to be exercised by our men, but everywhere all the works of charity; so that there would never be anything, or any event, or any situation or necessity or occasion by which we would be blocked from exercising the works of charity, or mercy toward our neighbor, that we would not avidly and studiously pursue; the same pertains to the commitment to exercise that promptitude of will and that fervor of charity.

According to what will seem expedient for the Glory of God and the Common Good: There are referred here all those works pertaining to the end of the Society in what grand ***Compendium***. There are to be understood here all those works which pertain to the perfection of the End and its breadth, concerning which much has been related above.

[71] **What do these words mean in the *Formula: ...according to what will seem expedient...*:** When we include these words we signify **that liberty which obtains in the execution of our ministries and which we ought to retain.** We cannot oblige ourselves to these works by any obligation, other than the choice of our vocation, our institute, our charity, according to the free judgment of our superiors.

[72] ***All these works should be carried out altogether free of charge:*** The Society will discuss this in the ***Examen***¹³⁰, and in **Part VI of the Constitutions**¹³¹. Please understand that by *stipend* the Society has understood either that alms, or whatever is usually offered for ministries rendered; and even though by others something may be accepted without any fault, and all those emoluments we constantly have interpreted as a stipendium, and these are prohibited for us to

¹³⁰ cf. CSJ nn. 4; 82;

¹³¹ cf. CSJ n. 565.

accept. This is all done solely that we might look only to God and to expect from him His most clement reward; this is how all our activities take on the strength and purity of spirit, and they blossom in the freedom of the *spirit*.

The Society should show itself no less useful: that is, to our neighbor and to itself. This will happen if its heart, mind, faculties, strength, execution – its whole self, all of its activities, it exhibits for God and to legitimate obedience in Christ, and as offering all these to be moved, directed and governed for the greater glory of the Omnipotent God. Amen.

