

St. Gaspar Bertoni



Parte XII

[CF ## 298 - 314]

of his

Original Constitutions

A Study by

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TWELFTH PART

Concerning the Regime of the Congregation

[cc. 1-2, CF ## 298-314]

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Premise

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TWELFTH PART
THE REGIME OF THE CONGREGATION
[CF cc. 1-2, ## 298-314]

Premise:

[1] This final Part of Fr. Bertoni's Constitutions, while following Suarez' outline, does present here two distinct matters - both of which are related to some extent to the management of the Congregation - in the life-long effort **in spiritual and intellectual progress**, as well as **the excellence of the Apostolic Mission**.

[2] A major challenge faced the nascent Jesuit community: a serious difficulty arose against any other vow of obedience, and against any internal government of the Community, that arose from the practical order. The Companions of Jesus had already decided to place themselves **entirely** at the disposition of the Pope, and therefore, at first, it seemed superfluous and even dangerous, to require obedience to some other lesser superior within the Community. However, the response to this gradually emerged: they simply could not presume that the Holy Father himself could ever assume directly and immediately the responsibility of the daily life of the Community¹. They came to understand early the need of the customary vow of obedience of all religious, along with their unique Fourth Vow to the Pope. For Fr. Bertoni, this regulation rings a familiar bell: - **the manner [modus] of the Regime:** this use of **modus** is also reminiscent of **CF # 2** - the **manner** of living the End of the Congregation.

[3] The term "**denunciation**" - has two dimensions:

[a] The making known of **one's own difficulties** for a better ordering of the progress in the **spiritual life** [cf. St. Ignatius, **CSJ n. 63**]: this is more customarily called **the manifestation of one's own conscience**:

For the candidates' greater progress in his spiritual life and especially for his greater lowliness and humility, he should be asked whether he will be willing to have all his errors and defects, and anything else which will be noticed or known about him, manifested to his superiors by anyone who knows them outside of the confessional and further, whether he along with all the others will be willing to aid in correcting and being corrected, by manifesting one another with due love and charity, to help one another more in the spiritual life, especially when this will be requested of him by the Superior who has charge of them for the greater glory of God [CSJ n. 63; 93; 95; 97; 263; 424; 551].

¹ cf. Giuseppe Pittau, SI, *Il Governo Spirituale secondo il carisma Ignaziano*. Napoli: CIS 1994, p.16.

This is noted under **CF ## 47 [De Profectu sui ipsius]**. The manifestation of conscience has been in religious life since perhaps the time of St. Antony of the Desert. Primarily it was used for growth in the spiritual life. St. Ignatius notably expanded this practice as an instrument to further the subject's spiritual welfare; the government of the Society; and its apostolic works. Abuses need to be avoided that would infringe upon the liberty of individual consciences and the jurisdiction of confessors². The modern Code of Canon Law treats this in **Canon 629 § 5**:

The members are to approach their superiors with trust and be able to open their minds freely and spontaneously to him. Superiors, however, are forbidden in any way to induce the members to make a manifestation of conscience to themselves.

[b] The manifestation of others' difficulties for greater success in the **Apostolic Mission** this is customarily called **denunciation**:

Likewise, the more completely the superiors know these subjects' interior and exterior affairs, just so much the better will they be able, with greater diligence, love and care, to help the subjects and to guard their souls from various inconveniences and dangers which might occur later on. Further still, we should always be ready to travel about in various regions of the world, on all occasions, when the Supreme Pontiff or our immediate Superior orders us. To proceed without error in such missions, or in sending some persons, and not others, or some for one task and others for different ones, it is not only highly but supremely important for the superior to have complete knowledge of the inclinations and motions of those who are in his charge, and to what defects or sins they have been, or are more moved and inclined, that thus he may direct them better, without placing them beyond the measure of their capacity in dangers or labors greater than they could in our Lord endure with a spirit of love; and also that the superior, while keeping to himself what he learns in secret, may be better able to organize and arrange what is expedient for the whole body of the Society. [CSJ, n. 92]

St. Gaspar Bertoni also notes this in **CF #111 [others' temptations]**.

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² cf. *St. Ignatius of Loyola, The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. Translated, with an Introduction and a Commentary by George E. Ganss, S.J.* St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources 1970., pp. 104, f., footnote # 19

[A] St. Ignatius of Loyola

[I] Regime

1. **Fortiter et suaviter**: Perhaps along with the concept that developed from Ignatius' own background, the Jesuits were considered to have a kind of 'military' obedience - a Company of Holy Warriors battling under the Standard of Christ. Any close reading of the Jesuit Constitutions, however, would also show that this is a 'spiritual government' according to the charism of St. Ignatius³. In this may be noted the root of Ignatian authority: **fortiter et suaviter** [cf. CSJ n. 270]⁴.

2. **The Imitation of the Apostolic Way of Life**: The inspiration for the Ignatian commitment was that of a life-long effort to share the same poor and humble life of Jesus Christ with His Apostles. The early Jesuits truly wished to form 'the Company of Jesus' - to be related to the Pope as Jesus was to His Father and to His Apostles. This is the paradigm of life that Ignatius dearly wanted to form:

The Call of an Earthly King: ... Whoever wishes to join with Me in this enterprise must be content with the same good, drink, clothing, etc., as mine. So, too, he must work with Me by day and watch with Me at night, etc., that as he has had a share in the toil with Me, afterwards, he may share in the victory with Me... Eternal Lord of all things, in the presence of Your Infinite goodness, and of Your glorious Mother, and of all the saints of Your heavenly court, this is the offering of myself which I make with Your favor and help. I protest that it is my earnest desire and my deliberate choice, provided only it is for Your greater service and praise, to imitate You in bearing all the wrongs and all abuse and all other poverty, both actual and spiritual, should Your most holy majesty deign to choose and admit me to such a state and way of life...⁵.

The Standard of Christ... Consider how the Lord of all the world chooses so many persons, apostles, disciples, etc., and sends them throughout the whole world to spread his sacred doctrine among all men and women, no matter what their state and condition.

³ cf. Giuseppe Pittau, SJ, *Il Governo Spirituale Secondo il carisma ignaziano, o.c.*; cf. also: Antonio M. deAldama, SJ, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. The Superior General*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources 1999. [The English translation of the Spanish Original: *Comentario a la IX Parte de las Constituciones de la Compania de Jesus. Su persona y su gobierno*. Roma: CIS 1982.

⁴ Cf. the Qualities of the Prepositus General: CSJ nn. 723-735.

⁵ cf. St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, nn. 91-97.

Consider the address which Christ our Lord makes to all His servants and friends whom He sends on this enterprise, recommending to them to seek to help all, first by attracting them to the highest spiritual poverty, and should it please the Divine Majesty, and should He deign to choose them for it, even to actual poverty. Secondly, they should lead them to a desire for insults and contempt, for from these things springs humility.

Hence, there will be three steps: the first, poverty as opposed to riches; the second, insults or contempt as opposed to the honor of this world; the third, humility as opposed to pride. From these three steps let them lead men and women to all other virtues...⁶

The "**Imitation of the Apostles**"⁷ was long a Church ideal for the religious life - Fr. Bertoni mentions this repeatedly in his rule [cf. **CF ## 185; 189; 195; 259; 272; 273; 287, etc.**]: it is a **Trinitarian Communion, in the Company of Jesus, in Community with the Apostles, celebrated in the Eucharist, with Mary and Joseph**. This is close to a summary of the Stigmatine **Apostolic Mission: a Christological-Apostolic form of life, with Mary and Joseph as our Patrons**.

3. Obedience: The early Companions of Ignatius, after many days of discussion, arrived at the unanimous conclusion that it would be better to render obedience also internally, to someone from among their number. The reasons adopted for rendering obedience to a superior elected from their number are most important and offer a good idea of the purpose and scope of obedience in the Ignatian charism:

- **the wish to fulfill the Will of God**: the early spirit was one to put in place whatever structure in their faith, they believed would help their discernment in living the will of God. They wanted this 'cover' not only for the choices in the Apostolic Mission, already consecrated through their Fourth Vow to God into the will of the reigning Sovereign Pontiff - but, they wanted to prolong, to live out the experience gained in the **Spiritual Exercises**. The ideal remained to seek in everything, and to carry out God's Will in everything. This was not only an obligation on the part of the individual Jesuit. This ideal challenged the superior - to be a man of God - to live in, for, with God, in order to be a truly spiritual man, and to render also spiritual leadership.
- **this structure would offer the 'Company' greater security**: it was clear that if the community could stay together, this would offer advantages - as when the Lord asked His Apostles to carry on in memory of Him, also to

⁶ *The Spiritual Exercises*., nn. 145, f.

⁷ cf. M.-H. Vicaire, OP, *L'imitation des Apotres. Moines, chanoines, mendiants. [IV e-XIIIe siecles*. Paris:du Cerf 1963.

insure the continuation of the Church even after the deaths of the Apostles present:

- this interior structure would increase the possibility to seeking recruits, and of being **prolonged**, following the deaths of the original Companions of Jesus;
 - the over-riding hope in all this was that the original spirit animating all at the beginning through St. Ignatius, would be maintained among them. This **proper spirit**, this **special characteristic**, this **manner of proceeding**, this ***mens Ignatiana*** would remain and be preserved among them.
- **each one would then better be able to handle his own 'area' of competence**: the interior government was designed to be of help so that each one of the Companions would be able to absolve better the Mission entrusted to him. Today this might be called ***the principle of subsidiarity***. The Supreme Pontiff in the Apostolic Mission, and the superior in the daily living of the life, could not descend into the particular decisions - this aspect would have to be left up to the individual Jesuit, to be resolved through his own **spiritual, intellectual, apostolic, and human** competence. Thus, a key idea is **progress, continuing conversion, on-going formation**. With the passing of time, it became apparent with the increasing numbers, that there was a need for regional, local and even departmental leadership - all of these appointments rested firmly in the hands of the spiritual leader, who needed consultation.

4. **An Apostolic, Missionary Community Spirituality**⁸: the word ***Apostolic*** as has already been seen, did not only mean any "**apostolate**" of the Word of God, suitable for the propagation and the defense of the faith, as a service rendered for the greater glory of God, and the greater service of souls - which it did. Furthermore, however, the word kept before the minds of the Companions that they were seen as a continuation of Jesus' relationship to His Father in the Holy Spirit, and the College of the Twelve. The Society of Jesus was seen to be an expression, an incarnation of the Apostolic Mission: that universal mission of the Church, adapted then by subsequent history, according to the needs of the Church. This was a Mission to be exercised using as the paradigm, **Jesus' loving obedience to his Father, in the Holy Spirit**: it was a ***praedicatio [i.e., evangelizatio] in paupertate***, a community mission, a united body constituted by competent individuals, continuing their **progress**, on all levels. This Apostolic Mission was in Obedience to the Heavenly Father, continuing that of Jesus, realized under the continuous action of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the ultimate point of departure for the entire life. In the Original Constitutions of St. Ignatius, the word "community" hardly ever means the local community - there was required of each **an ecclesial sense of service**.

⁸ cf. Manuel Ruiz JURADO, SI, *Spiritualita' Apostolica delle Costituzioni Ignaziane*. 2 a ed.. Dispensa ad uso degli studenti. Roma: PUG 1991.

5. Letter and Spirit of the Constitutions: these are not a doctrinal treatise, as is evident, but they certainly do contain their own 'theology'. The Jesuit Constitutions are the result of prayerful reflection by St. Ignatius on his own spiritual experience - they were born from a life that was already being lived and experienced. The various experiences were filtered through an intense life of prayer, in a theological climate of faith, hope, and love. St. Ignatius described his Constitutions as the fruit of his own daily Mass: each day he would offer whatever part of the document he was working on in his Mass. The end result is a document which has as its purpose that of inspiring, exciting, orienting, guiding in an authoritative, organized manner, the spiritual example of the community. In this document, the juridical elements are all mixed in with the spiritual challenges - while it is a code of juridical concepts, these simply incarnate an earlier **lived spiritual experience**. There are many segments that are far more a contemplation than a juridical contract. For Ignatius, the 'law' is an expression that manifests the divine demands to a determined organization of competent men, continuing the Mission of Jesus Christ. Very often, the terminology seems far more like an urgent suggestion:

- *it would help a lot* [cf. nn. 282; 263; 276; 284; 286];
- *let them try, strive* [cf. nn. 272; 296; 360];
- *let each one seek* [cf. nn. 251; 542];
- *let each one see to it* [cf. nn. 668; 671; 673; 815; 819; 821];
- *they ought to be ready* [cf. n. 569].

6. Authority and Obedience: St. Ignatius was perplexed when it came to writing the Constitutions - the reason against so doing were:

- the 'Company' was not his, but it was the Company of Jesus. Therefore, the manner according to which he should carry forward His work was Christ's responsibility;
- the Holy Spirit had already inspired the enterprise within the Law of Charity.

However, the reason for writing the Constitutions proved stronger:

- divine Providence awaits a specific cooperation on the part of His creatures;
- the Vicar of Christ, and centuries of Church legislation, demand this;
- the example of so many other Founders/Foundresses.

These regulations, for Ignatius, have as their specific purpose that of making clear the sense of the internal law impressed by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of each one. The Jesuit was understood and only received if indeed he were a spiritual man, or on the life-long journey to become one. Throughout, the appeal is made by the legislator that if the law and the community authority are to express the content of the Spirit's work, then the attention of both the superior and each confrere ought to direct himself according to the manner of acting of the Holy Spirit, who in the Ignatian Rule:

- **directs**: ...charity and discretion of the Holy Spirit will indicate the manner which ought to be used in the **dismissal**, if God, our Lord, should permit the necessity of doing this... [cf. n. 219];
- **inspires**: ...it is the supreme providence and direction of the Holy Spirit that must efficaciously guide us to bring deliberations to a right conclusion in everything, and in **sending**...
- **impresses**: ...more than any exterior constitution, **the interior law of charity** and love which the Holy Spirit writes and engraves upon hearts...[cf. n. 134] - the Holy Spirit moves to the **election**...[cf. n. 700].

Neither the Constitutions, nor the Superior take the place of God - the ideal is that their injunctions **flow from, and lead to**, this interior law of charity, infused within all in the state of grace. The key underlying, overriding, permeating principle throughout is: **Jesus Christ is the Head**:

- Christ should be seen as though present in the superior [n. 6];
- authentic obedience does not look at the person to whom obedience is due [as the cook], but for Whom he obeys - it is the Lord Whom all are called to obey [n. 84]. One obeys always God and only God - in faith, the Superior, the Constitutions can be seen as a visible, audible sign of the divine intervention in our lives -the command - even of the cook - proceeds from Jesus Christ, our Lord [n. 85];
- Divine Providence directs the Jesuit through the Superior [n. 304];
- obedience is perfect only when there can be mustered this interiorization of motives [cf.nn. 284; 424; 550];
- hence, the need to express reverence for the superiors, considering and revering Jesus Christ in them [n. 551] - the challenge is to live them with all our hearts, to live life in a spirit of love, without keeping from them anything that might help the community mission, whether it be internal or external. The manifestation of conscience is one means of personal spiritual progress, and a contribution to the betterment of the Mission;
- in faith, the superior, the Constitutions, may be seen as the Mediator of God's Will, and these hold the place of Jesus Christ in our lives [n. 552];
- in a spirit of love the challenge is always to hold before our eyes the person of Jesus Christ our Lord. The voice of authority is the voice of Christ our Lord - hence, the ideal obedience is prompt, joyful, persevering [n. 547].

7. Discretion and Discernment: from his entrance, the Jesuit needs to be a person of judgment [cf. n. 154]. There needs to be balance between what one asks of his physical and intellectual forces [cf. nn. 298; 462]. The formed Jesuits, the Brothers, all should be endowed with this good judgment [cf. nn. 431; 582] - as should the Assistants General [n. 779] and the General himself [n. 729].

Much was left to prudential judgment of the Superior:

- to shorten, or lengthen the time of rest [n. 301], of prayer [nn. 341-343];
- the choice of studies [n. 460];
- to provide in a fitting manner for food, sleep, and the necessities, or conveniences of life [n. 581];
- in caring for the corporal, spiritual works of mercy [n. 650];
- dispensation of cloister [n. 267];
- assignment to various duties [n. 149];
- in obedience [n. 285].

It is often necessary to weigh the circumstances of persons, times and places [n. 211] - physical constitution [n. 297; 301]; temperament [n. 142]; habits [n. 297]; age, intelligence, cultural inclinations [n. 354]; talents received from God [n. 522]; social position [n. 142]; the ability to withstand challenge [n. 285]; the ability to accept, or not, corrections, a penance [n. 269]; the common good which is hoped [n. 354]; the greater service of God and universal good [n. 659].

Discernment is most important, particularly **in the choice of Missions**. It is necessary to give much attention for the choice of places, purposes, persons, and manner, and duration of specific 'missions.' The central principle always is: ***the greater service of God and the more universal good***. [cf. **nn. 618; 622; 623; 626**]. There are two ideals to be kept in mind in the practical choice:

- **the more universal the good** [cf. Part VII, c. 2]: the greater necessity for that specific place; the fruit expected; the duties that have been contracted with that locale; the good that can be worked out there. Special attention should be given to the persons of greater importance there;
- **the greater and better good**: greater urgency, fidelity to the charism [the specific field of the Institute **[n. 623 d]**]; difficulty in physical work **[nn. 623-624]**; those of a spiritual order **[n. 624 c]**; there are needed light, help from God, prayerful reflection, the courage to deliver, decide, and to act.

Thus, this quality is a real capacity of gathering and analyzing in a context of prayer, consultation and reflection, all the data that might concur to zero in on a specific choice⁹.

8. Superior for Life: this was noted by Fr. Bertoni as his desired ideal early in his Original Constitutions: ***CF # 8: Regiminis ratio sic est, ut sit omnibus praelatus ad vitam, quam sibi elegerit Sodalitas***. St. Ignatius handles this stipulation - and the various reasons for it in **CSJ nn. 719b-722**:

...There is a possibility of electing him in either of two ways, namely, for a determined period, or for his whole life. But since his experience and

⁹ For these pages, cf. Giuseppe Pittau, SI, *Il Governo Spirituale. Secondo il carisma ignaziano*. Roma: CIS 1994, pp. 3-31, *passim*

practice of government, his knowledge of the individual members, and the prestige he has with them, are a great aid in performing this office well, his election will be for life, and not for a determined period. Thus too the Society, being universally occupied with important matters of divine service, will be less disturbed and distracted by general congregations [CSJ n. 719 b].

Besides the reasons mentioned in this Constitution, there are still others for having one general who is elected for life:

- One is that thoughts and occasions of ambition, which is the pestilence of such offices, will be banished farther than would be the case if elections had to be held at fixed times.
- Another reason is that it is easier to find one capable person for this charge than many.
- Still another reason is the example of the common practice among the most important government offices, which are held for life. So it is with the Pope and bishops among churchmen and with princes and lords among laymen.
- Furthermore, the remedy for certain disadvantages which could follow the holding of such a charge for life will be treated below [in Chapter 4, nn. 773-777] [CSJ n. 720].

The superior's prestige will be greater if he is unchangeable than if he is elected for some one or several years: greater with the externs because he will be better known by all, and greater with the members of the Society for the same reason. On the contrary, the knowledge that he must relinquish his office and be equal or inferior to the others, as also his being new in the office, can diminish his prestige. [CSJ n. 721].

It is certain that the congregations of the whole Society will occur less frequently if the superior general holds office for life. For the majority of the congregations will be convoked by him, and other occasions will be few [CSJ 722].

Three ideas are found here of some value, but not accepted by all:

- experience is needed for government, knowledge of people and time is required for all this. This is particularly so in spiritual government in which

the members are not ordered around like parts in a faceless machine of big business, but 'guided' according to God's will for each. This is also so that no one will be placed in a situation beyond their capacity in dangers, or labors greater than they could endure in the Lord. Knowledge of personnel is difficult in a missionary order, where the members are quite spread out - yet, the government being centralized, the General needs a more thorough knowledge of his men. [It is interesting to note that in the 450 year history of the Society of Jesus, the average years of service per General are about 14].

- the prestige of a General for life: however, in truth, being known can increase authority, as well as diminish it.
- that there will be less disturbance to the all-important apostolic mission: Part VIII of the Ignatian rule will legislate in unusual manner: general congregations should not be convoked many times [nn. 677; 689]; so as to spare the Society as a whole from that work and distraction [n. 677] - and when convoked, every effort should be made to finish as soon as possible [n. 711]¹⁰.

9. **The General Council and General Congregations [Chapters]:**

- a. **General Council**: the Assistants are mentioned in CSJ n. 767, and specified in n. 779:

... In regard to what pertains to his expenses, the care of his person and other matters of small importance, there is no need of a Congregation. But the Society should depute four assistants...

Originally, these were only three, but Ignatius himself asked for 'four.' These should be taken from among the Professed Fathers with Four Vows. They should be men of discretion and zeal for the good of the Society - the early emphasis was on moral and spiritual qualities, not on intellectual gifts.

However, there seems to be a significant shift in this in Part IX, c. 6, "Aids to the Superior General in the Good Performance of his Office". This Constitution [CSJ n. 803] needs to be mentioned:

¹⁰ For these few thoughts, and many others, cf. Antonio M. deAldama, SI, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. The Superior General*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources 1999, pp. 7-17, *passim*.

... Consequently, it seems that there ought to be in the place where the Superior General resides, some persons of prominence in learning and all good qualities, that they may assist him and with special care take charge of attending to the universal affairs of the Society which the General entrusts to them. These charges could be divided among them to enable them to penetrate all things better. One, for example, could observe the affairs of the Indies, another those of Spain and Portugal, another those of Germany and France, another those of Italy and Sicily and so on successively as the Society spreads into more regions.

Each one would offer special prayer and be mindful in his Masses of the region especially entrusted to himself, and he would consider what could be more helpful toward achieving the objective which the Society is seeking. Furthermore, when something seems highly apropos he could discuss it with the others and, after further examination, they could represent it to the Superior.

Likewise, the aforementioned persons would deal with the matters which the General, or the Secretary of the Society proposes to them, in order that these affairs may be more thoroughly analyzed and then proposed to the Superior. In general, these assistants ought to alleviate and aid him in considering and settling the problems of doctrine and action which require greater thought. And in addition to this and to their being able to make better provision for many things, they could attend to preaching, lecturing, hearing confessions, and other good and pious works which contribute to divine glory and the aid of souls. [CSJ 803].

**In this connection, it might not be out of place to remember this
Constitution of Ignatius:**

... The promise to instruct the children and the uneducated persons in conformity with the apostolic letters and the Constitutions does not induce a greater obligation than the other spiritual exercises by which the neighbor is aided, such as confessions, preaching and the like. Each one ought to employ himself obediently in these according to the assignment received from his superiors. But the promise about the children is placed in the vow that this holy practice may be held as something more especially recommended and may be exercised with greater devotion, because of the outstanding service which is given through it to God our Lord by aiding the souls which belong to Him, and because it is in greater danger of being allowed to fall into oblivion

and dropped than other more conspicuous services such as preaching and the like [CSJ 528].

- b. General Congregations [Chapters]:** these are discussed at various intervals in the Jesuit Constitutions: when convoked [nn. 677-681; 782-786]; their power [n. 820]; statutes [nn. 712-718] ¹¹.

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[II] Manifestation of One's Own Conscience; Difficulties of Others [*Denuntiatio*] and Fraternal Correction

These three matters - somewhat inter-connected - are rather broadly treated in the Ignatian Rule:

- 1. Manifestation of One's Own Conscience:** the Constitution regarding Novices is pivotal:

...They should be advised, too, that they will tell the [Novice Master] not only their defects but also their penances or mortifications, or their devotions and all their virtues with a pure desire to be directed if in anything they have gone astray, and without desiring to be guided by their own judgment unless it agrees with the opinion of him whom they have in place of Christ our Lord [CSJ n. 263; cf. also nn. 8; 91-97; 261; 278; 300; 424; 551; 582].

- 2. Manifestation of Others' Defects [*Denuntiatio*]:**

For the candidate's greater progress in his spiritual life, and especially for his greater lowliness and humility, he should be asked whether he will be willing to have all his errors and defects, and anything else which will be noticed or known about him, manifested to his superiors by anyone who knows them outside of confession...[CSJ n. 63 a].

- 3. Fraternal Correction:**

...and further, whether, he along with all the others will be willing to aid in correcting and being corrected, by manifesting one another with due love and charity, to help one another in the spiritual life, especially when this will be requested of him by the Superior who has charge of them for the greater glory of God [CSJ n. 63 b] .

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¹¹ For these matters, cf. Antonio M. deAldama, SI, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. The Superior General*. o.c., pp. 71, ff. [Complete Authority]; pp. 119-135 [Appointment of Superiors]; pp. 159,ff. [the Assistants]; pp. 190, ff. [the General's Ministers] *passim*.

[B] St. Gaspar Bertoni
[CF cc. 1-2, ## 298-314]

Premise:

As Fr. Stofella pointed out more than 50 years ago, that this **Chapter 1** of Fr. Bertoni is based upon the customary study of Suarez - and for this Chapter, **Book X**, entitled: "Concerning the Regime of the Society, both in General and also in Particular, and consequently, concerning its Prelates [Superiors]" ¹², provides the background. And Fr. Stofella suggests further that St. Gaspar's **Chapter 1, "On the Manner of the Regime"**, is based on Suarez' first three chapters - and research shows the following:

Chapter 1: "Whether the Society is fittingly governed in the Manner of a Monarchy?"
¹³ Fr. Bertoni made use of Article 8 ["The Resolution of the Author is proven from Authority"], which responds to his previous Article 7 ["Why the Prelates of the Society alone vindicate to themselves the determination of what is to be done"]. This Article 8 is the source of **CF ## 298-300** ¹⁴.

For **CF # 301**, Fr. Bertoni utilizes most of Suarez' Article 10 here: "Blessed Ignatius has imitated these above-mentioned Fathers for many reasons" ¹⁵.

For **CF # 302**, some of the wording is taken from Ignatius' Formula n. 2, dutifully noted by Suarez in his Article 15: Another Difference that arises from the Preceding" ¹⁶. This, too, takes some wording from the Ignatian Formula n. 2.

For **CF # 303**, this is also taken from Article 15 ¹⁷.

Chapter 2: "Whether it is necessary for the General of the Society to be Perpetual?" ¹⁸
 Fr. Bertoni took only one of his Constitutions from this Chapter. For **CF # 304**, the Office of Admonitor, this may be found near the end of Article 9: "Two dangers eliminated regarding the Perpetuity of the General of the Society" ¹⁹.

For **CF # 305**, this follows right along here in the Suarez text.

Chapter 3: "Whether the rest of the Prelates are instituted in a fitting Manner in the Society?" ²⁰.

¹² cf. Suarez, o.c., pp. 1057, ff.

¹³ o.c. pp. 1058a-1063 a.

¹⁴ o.c. p. 1060 b.

¹⁵ ib., p. 1061 a.

¹⁶ ib., pp. 1062 b, f.

¹⁷ ib., p. 1063 a.

¹⁸ ib., pp. 1063 a- 1065 b

¹⁹ ib.,p. 1065 a -b.

²⁰ ib., pp. 1065 a - 1072 b.

For **CF # 306**, this is based on Article 1 here: “The Other Prelates in the Society are ordinarily created by the General”²¹.

For the last Constitution in this Chapter, **CF # 307**, this, too, is based on the Formula n. 2 and on Article 5 in Suarez; “An Affirmative Resolution is proven by Authority”²²

Now, more in particular:

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Chapter 1 The Manner of the Regime [CF ## 298 - 307]

CF # 298: As has been noted, Fr. Bertoni takes this Constitution of his **Part XII, c. 1**, from Book X, c. 1, Article 8 of Suarez. In the previous Article 7, the Jesuit theologian asks the question: “Why the ‘Prelates’ alone of the Society vindicate to themselves the Definition in Practical Matters” - and he follows this up with Article 8: “The Author’s Resolution is proven by Authority”. And the first ‘authority’ St. Ignatius adds is noted in this context: ‘Nevertheless, it is to be stated that our Blessed Father Ignatius has elected this form of regime, and not without the example of the early Fathers, nor without sufficient reason. This is proven, for in the first place the Divine Benedict, in his Rule, Chapter 3, indeed admonishes that the Abbot should govern with the counsel of his brothers, but nevertheless adds: ‘Let it depend on the judgment of the Abbot, that whatever he might judge to be the more salutary, the rest are to obey him.’

Suarez then continues his commentary adding the thought from c. 65 from the same source: the rule has constituted all in the judgment and will of the abbot, even though it clearly states that he must make use of the counsel of his brothers who fear God.²³ [And this is the thought rendered here by St. Gaspar in his **CF # 298**].

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CF # 299: Fr. Bertoni continues right here with the Suarez text, who cites another ‘authority’, St. Basil: ‘Then, St. Basil holds the same thought, should one read attentively in the same place, for in Rule 48 of his more Profuse Rules, he first states: ‘No one is to seek to find out the Superior’s plans, nor to anxiously inquire about what is being done, with the exception, however, of those who by dignity of their grade, or the prudence of their counsel, are the closest to the Superior.’ And St. Basil immediately adds: ‘He, however, whenever deliberation is to be made concerning a given matter, necessarily will make use of the counsel and mature consideration of these, i.e., submitting himself to the precept: *Do everything with counsel*²⁴. [There are

²¹ ib.,p. 1065 a.

²² ib., p. 1067 a.

²³ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1060 b.

²⁴ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1060 a.

added here several possible biblical references - not, however, noted in Suarez' text: **[Si 32:24; Pr 13:10 & 16]**.

Suarez immediately adds this comment in his text: 'In these words the Saint requires only a mature consultation. And it seems that he teaches in the same sense in c. 54, where he instructs that Chapters, or Congregations, are to be convoked ...' - and this provides the wording for Fr. Bertoni's next Constitution is based *verbatim*:

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CF # 300: '[General] **Chapters**, or Congregations of the **[Brothers]** Confreres are to be convoked, in which defects are to be corrected, and good conduct is to be praised: "St. Basil seems to teach the same [in c. 54], namely, wherein having made abundant use of the view of the many, there will be judged with greater authority, that what is to be the means to follow. Nevertheless, he does not say that the future definitive judgment is to be that of everyone, nor is that likely, keeping in mind the individual and ordinary defects of the religious"²⁵.

St. Basil then goes on:

"Therefore, he only wanted that all be done with the agreement and the council of the majority, and that all be carried out thereby with the greater authority. In two other places, the Saint does not deal with government, but only with the election of the prelate, about which we will speak later in cc. 2 & 3, and concerning the reception of Novices as we already noted above, in Book 2, c. 3, n.7²⁶.

There follows then in the Suarez text here from **Book X, c. 1, Article 9**, where the Jesuit theologian 'Adduces St. Augustine - the Addition of Navarre is not sufficiently proven.' Following this discussion, Suarez adds his Article 10, 'The Blessed Ignatius has imitated the above-mentioned Fathers for many reasons' - and this provides Fr. Bertoni with a text for his Constitution, again *verbatim*:

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CF # 301: In his context above, Suarez notes that since Blessed Ignatius instituted a new religious family, he naturally would not have chosen any manner of life which would only seem to be expedient because of a lower and imperfect level of living. Rather the Jesuit Founder would seek to establish a more perfect manner of life, and to provide other remedies so that, in so far as would be possible, that improprieties noted elsewhere would not be followed, which perhaps would have cropped up in other groups because of carelessness or the condition of the times.

²⁵ ib.

²⁶ cf. Suarez, o.c., pp. 632 a, ff.

Thus, Suarez continues, **'I think it was because of this reason that Ignatius willed that each and every Superior of the Society...** [here Fr. Bertoni picks up the text]:

'Therefore, each Superior of the Society, according to the nature and limits of his office, is to have integral power, and councilors only, not co-judges are to be added to him.

Firstly, because this of itself, and in its own sphere, is better, [as above in Article 1] we have supposed from the common opinion.

And then, because in the religious state without any doubt this can contribute the best to perfection.

This is because in this manner:

- **there is exercised the purer and more perfect obedience;**
- **and also because in this manner, there is a greater dependence of the members on the head, and thus, there will result a greater union, as there should be among the Father and his children. - And a further reason is because in this way there is removed the occasion of multiplying the dignities of so many judges, and near prelatures in the religious state,**
- **and consequently there is also diminished the occasion of ambition.**
- **And then finally because if orders, judgments and other expeditious handling of matters were to depend on the view and will of many, there are multiplied the dangers of divisions, and occasion of divisions and separations and instigations, which seem to be of greater seriousness and greater frequency that would be in a pure monarchy tempered by the counsels of the wise'²⁷ .**

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CF # 302: for this next Constitution, it is necessary to move ahead through Article 11 ["The Collection of subordinated Prelates is a participation in Aristocracy"] - which continues in Article 12. The Article 13 responds to the "Suppositions noted above in Article 2." In Article 14, Suarez notes that "There intervenes here the manner of Monarchy in Society, and that in vogue in the Church". Further differences are noted in Article 13, where Suarez quotes the first *Formula* in the opening of the Book of the Jesuit Constitutions, that of Paul III, later to be modified by that of Julius III.

Suarez argues that the monarchy is the best under human forms of government in that **it most closely resembles the divine mode**. Therefore, in the Society, those matters of the greatest moment are reserved according to the Bull of Paul III [and

²⁷ cf. Suarez, o.c., 1061 a.

reiterated ten years later by that of Julius III], and this would reserve these to the General Congregation. In Paragraph “a” of Fr. Bertoni’s Constitution, he states the need of the decision of the General Chapter - paraphrasing a bit and adapting to his own situation. Paragraph “b” of this same **CF # 302** describes what these “more grave and perpetual” matters are: to establish or change the Constitutions: to resolve doubts arising from the institute and other more serious matters, such as selling, or dissolving houses [Fr. Bertoni adds here *semel fundatos* - and eliminates the words *collegia semel erecta* as not applicable to his situation]. In the end, what Fr. Bertoni has done is adapt and paraphrase Ignatius’ **Formula 2** as presented by Suarez. This is Fr. Bertoni’s rendition:

‘In matters of greater and perpetual moment, though, it is not the Superior alone, but the Superior himself with the counsel and deliberative vote of the greater part of the professed Confreres to have the right of establishing statutes.’

‘These matters of more than ordinary importance are that of establishing or changing statutes, declaring or resolving those matters which arise out of some doubts, the alienation or dissolution of formed houses once erected, and other matters of a more serious nature’²⁸.

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CF # 303: This is taken *verbatim* from Suarez, who copied the conclusion of **Formula n. 2** - the English translation here is the one offered by Ganss, as often quoted in this study:

‘In other matters which are of lesser importance, the same General, aided by the counsel from his brethren to the extent that he will deem fitting, shall have the full right personally to order and command whatever he judges in the Lord to pertain to the glory of God and the common good.’²⁹

[Fr. Bertoni does not add the concluding words: *as will be explained in the Constitutions* - as is understood logically. For St. Ignatius, this legislation is at the beginning of his Constitutions - while for Fr. Bertoni, this is the concluding Part XII]. This also concludes Fr. Bertoni’s dependence on Suarez, Book X, Chapter I. He will now draw one Constitution from this same Book X, Chapter II, Article 9, i.e., **CF # 304**.

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²⁸ NB: there is an unofficial English translation of the *Formula n. 2* that might be noted here: *St. Ignatius of Loyola. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. Translated, with an Introduction and a Commentary*, by George E. Ganss, SJ, o.c., pp. 67, f. The text is found in Suarez, o.c., pp. 1062 b, f. - with Fr. Bertoni’s own adaptations.

²⁹ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1063 a

CF # 304: the theme of Chapter II of Suarez is the Perpetuity of the Reign of the Prepositus General. Article 9 explains how ‘Two Dangers that would arise from the Perpetuity of the General are **amputated!**’ What is discussed here is the office of the Admonitor, and Suarez cites the Constitutions of St. Ignatius, Part IX, § 4, CSJ n. 770:

The third concern pertains to his soul in relation to his person and office, since even in perfect men there could be some need of this concern. The Society should have with the Superior General [and the same practice can be employed with subjects] some person who has the following obligation. After he had had recourse to God in prayer, and has asked light from His Divine Goodness, if he judges right he should, with proper modesty and humility, admonish the General about anything in him which he thinks will be the more conducive to the greater service and glory of God. This person could be the General’s Confessor, or someone else appointed by the Society, who seems suitable for this purpose. [CSJ n. 770; cf. also 810, 811].

The underlined words of this Ignatian Constitution are found in Suarez, and copied by Fr. Bertoni for his Constitution here: Fr. Bertoni, however, adds also Suarez’ comment: *For this office toward Prelates is very necessary, as St Basil has taught in his Rule 27 of the more extended.* Fr. Bertoni’s rendition is almost *verbatim* from Suarez:

‘An Admonitor should also be constituted. After having had recourse to God in prayer, with proper modesty and humility, he should point out to the Superior anything he thinks will be the more conducive to the greater service and glory of God. For this office with respect to Prelates is very necessary, as St. Basil teaches [Rule 27 of the more extended].’

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CF # 305 For this Constitution, Fr. Bertoni simply continues the Suarez text here, copying *verbatim*:

‘The same St. Basil then adds: So that there be no injury to ordinary discipline, this admonition is to be delegated to those who stand out both by age and prudence’³⁰.

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CF # 306: For this next paragraph, Fr. Bertoni adapts the wording from Suarez, who quotes several Ignatian Constitutions:

³⁰ ib., 1065 b.

First of all, the provincial superiors whom the General appoints with his own hand [*Generalis ipse per se constituet*], should be obliged in the sight of God our Lord to consider and to do what they ought to do for the universal good of the Society in regard to what has been said which refers to the General according to what they think in our Lord [cf. CSJ n. 781; cf 757].

Likewise the General may revoke their authority, and extend or restrict it, and require from them an account of their administration. Furthermore, if he communicates his own authority to the Provincial for the appointment of local superiors and rectors, it will remain his part to confirm or remove them [...*erit eosdem confirmare vel remove...*] [CSJ 759].

Fr. Bertoni's text is from Suarez' Chapter III here ["Whether the rest of the Prelates be instituted in the Society in a fitting Manner"], and from the response found in his Article I ["The Other Prelates in the Society are ordinarily created in the Society by the General"]. Fr. Bertoni's adapted text reads as follows:

'The Superior of the Congregation, with his own hand, will constitute the Director in every other house, which will be founded, or which might be founded. Or, if he has communicated this power to another, it will remain his part to confirm these same local Superiors, or remove them'

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CF # 307: Fr. Bertoni copied this from Suarez' Chapter III, Article 5 [The Affirmative Resolution is proven by Authority" - in response to Article 3: "Whether it is fitting to create Superiors through the Judgment of One Superior"]. And the Jesuit theologian offers his reasoning:

'Nevertheless, [despite objections] I believe that it was not without the special providence of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the Blessed Ignatius has left behind this manner of regime for the Society, and I think that this is among the top priorities for the conservation and advance of the Society, especially for its peace and tranquility. And to prove this, in addition to the authority of the Founder and his Companions, and the perpetual consensus of the entire community, we have through these words, the authority of Paul III and Julius III, in their Bulls of Confirmation of the Institute:'

³¹ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1065 b, bottom. NB: the English translation here follows that oft-quoted work by George E. Ganss, SJ, pp. 321; 316.

[Here Suarez quotes *verbatim* the opening words of **Formula n. 2**, placed at the beginning of the Jesuit Constitutions:

... Consequently.... The decision about each one's grade and the selection and entire distribution of employments shall be in the power of the Superior General, or ordinary who at any future time is to be elected by us, or in the power of those whom this Superior General may appoint under himself with that authority, in order that the proper order necessary in every well-organized community may be preserved...

The wording that immediately follows in this **Formula 2**, as has already been noted, comprises **CF ## 302** and **303**. This English translation again is from Ganss³².

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Chapter 2: Denunciation [CF ## 308-314]

Premise:

[1] Fr. Bertoni has already alluded to this earlier in his Constitutions:

- **CF # 47:** speaking of Spiritual Progress, in the first list of 'means' there is 'Denunciation made out of charity' to the Superior;
- **CF # 111:** concerning the particular means of preserving chastity, all temptations and dangers should be manifested.

[2] In Fr. Stofella's Footnote here³³, he states that these numbers should be found in Suarez, o.c., Book X [""], Chapter 7 ["Whether Fraternal Denunciation is correctly had according to the Rule and the Particular Regime of the Society"]. However, the first few Constitutions in this Chapter 7 are from the Jesuit theologian's Chapter 9 ["Whether the Evangelical Denunciation proceeds correctly in the Society"], Article 7 ["It is proven *de facto* from the Authority of Certain Religious Communities"]³⁴. This last chapter in Fr. Bertoni's Original Constitutions proceeds in this manner:

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³² cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1067 a. cf. *St. Ignatius of Loyola. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. Translated, with an Introduction and a Commentary* by George E. Ganss, SJ, o.c., p. 67

³³ cf. *Costituzioni del Ven. Servo di Dio. D. Gaspare Bertoni. Fondatore dei Preti delle Sacre Stimmate di N.S.G.C.*, o.c., p 186.

³⁴ cf. Suarez., o.c., p. 1106 a.

CF # 308: Smaragdus, the Abbot, is quoted in Suarez' text here ³⁵ in the theologian's reasoning: Since this practice has already been deemed *de facto* as licit, then its immediate manifestation in different religious communities would also be licit today. This is proven first by authority. For, Smaragdus, the Abbot, in St. Benedict's Rule c. 24, states....³⁶ [and Fr. Bertoni's legislation follows *verbatim*:

'Smaragdus offers this Rule, c. 24]: If anyone knows of a confrere who cannot stand the life-style of the monastery, and is thinking of running away, and does not immediately make this known, should entertain no doubt that he is a participant in the other's loss, and he should be separated from the rest of the confreres, until the other might be reclaimed.'

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CF # 309: this Constitution follows immediately in the Jesuit theologian's text ³⁷ - "And from c. 32, from the Abbots Stephen and Paul..." - and the text follows, copied by Fr. Bertoni:

'In the same source it is said [in c. 32, from the Abbots Paul and Stephen]: If someone should see another, in any place, performing in an evil manner, either in word or deed, and puts off making this known about his confrere, should know that he enables the other's sin, and through every consideration, sins in equal manner, because he thereby becomes a most bitter enemy of his own soul as well as that of the other, for whom he covers up.'

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CF # 310: This next Constitution follows immediately, shifting the religious authority, from the Benedictines, to the Dominicans:

'Each one should denounce to his Prelate whatever he has seen or heard, so that vices may not be hidden from him [In the Constitutions of the Order of Preachers, d. 5, c. 13 § 4]' ³⁸.

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³⁵ ib., pp.1105 b [bottom], f.

³⁶ **NB:** there is a slight discrepancy here: Fr. Stofella's Latin edition holds "c. 34" - and the edition of Suarez holds "c. 24."

³⁷ **NB:** once again, a slight discrepancy: Fr. Stofella's Latin edition has c. 3 - and the Suarez edition has c. 32 - Suarez, p. 1106 a..

³⁸ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1106 a.

CF # 311: there follows immediately in the Suarez text, another citation from the Dominican Constitutions, which Fr. Bertoni uses for this Constitution:

‘In the same source [c. 18, § 6]: If anyone has committed something similar outside of the monastery [i.e., a more serious fault], let his brother, who is with him, strive to make known his excess as soon as possible so that he may be corrected.’³⁹

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CF # 312: [There is something similar above, **CF # 107**]. For this next statement, Suarez shifts his “authority” - this time, it is from the Constitutions of the Order of Brothers Minor, the Franciscans. This follows immediately in the same text of Suarez:

‘In the Constitutions of the Friars Minor, it is stated: The Friars, who leave the Friary out of obedience, are held to make known secretly to their Guardian failings worthy of note. [From the Constitutions of the Friars Minor, edited by William Farinario, and approved in a General Chapter].’⁴⁰

For the last two Constitutions, Fr. Bertoni goes back to St. Ignatius of Loyola, with texts presented to him by Suarez, Book X, Chapter VII [“Whether Fraternal Denunciation is properly done according to the Rule and the Particular Regimen of the Society”⁴¹], Article 2: “The Rule of the Society regarding Fraternal Denunciation is proposed and pondered”⁴².

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CF # 313: The Jesuit theologian presents his text as coming from “The Compendium of the [Jesuit] Constitutions, n. 9” - and further on in this same Article 2, he speaks of his source as being from the Ignatian *Examen cum Declarationibus*, c. 4, § 8” - this results as both of these have the same reading, as **CSJ n. 63**, which is n. 8: the first paragraph of this Jesuit Constitution n. 63 is what Fr. Bertoni would then use for his Constitution here. There follows the oft-quoted George E. Ganss, SJ, English translation:

For the candidate’s greater progress in his spiritual life and especially for his greater lowliness and humility, he should be asked whether he will be willing to have all his errors and defects, and anything else which

³⁹ l.c.

⁴⁰ l.c.

⁴¹ o.c., pp. 1089 b, ff.

⁴² ib., p. 1090 a.

will be noticed or known about him, manifested to his superiors by anyone who knows them outside of confession...⁴³

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CF # 314: Thus, Fr. Bertoni's Constitutions come to an **end with hope** for **Spiritual Progress**. This final paragraph of Fr. Bertoni's Constitutions takes its text from the bottom of this same Article 2 in Suarez, in the same column. It is a representation of what occurred immediately above, applied, though to the Novices. The text is almost the same as the immediately preceding, clearly based on the first paragraph of CSJ n. 63 - it is also taken *verbatim* from further down on this same column in Suarez. Before this text, the Jesuit theologian offers this reasoning:

'From these words it seems that there can be deduced that what is intended here are all defects, even if they are grave sins, and totally hidden, that are known by another to have really occurred, must manifest these to the Superior, without any forewarning, nor only after awaiting some sign of emendation. The sole reason is for the sake of greater perfection, submission and humility. The individual words indicate this, if they are pondered, for no other purpose for this is proposed other than *for one's greater progress in the spiritual life, etc.* The matter of this denunciation is clearly declared in these very all-inclusive words - and so, since it is said *all one's errors and defects*, so that one would not think that this is a discussion solely about the common imperfections, there is added: *and anything else that will be noted*. Then, there is added the exception of knowledge of these matters received from the confessional, on which the rule is based. However, if this knowledge comes by any other even most hidden way, it is to be brought to the Superior's attention. Lastly, there is added that each and every one ought to be content that this denunciation be made about him, and no other condition is posited, which is indicated by the words that there is not required any fore-warning. Thus, in the Jesuit Constitutions, *Examen*, c. 4, § 8 [and this is CSJ n. 63] - and Fr. Bertoni picks up the text right here from Suarez:

'St. Ignatius indicates the same: **The future Novice** on entering the Society, is to be questioned at the beginning, whether he would be content to have all his errors and defects, etc. [In *Exam.*, c. 4 § 8].

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⁴³ ib.

A Final Note

St. Gaspar Bertoni's Original Constitutions come to an end here, **with an unfinished sentence** - on a **future note**, about a **Novice** about to enter the Community - and a challenge for **Spiritual Progress**:

Contemplatio ad Spem!

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Finis unius est Initium alterius!