THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Development of the “Ignis” Training Program: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality and Mission in The Jesuit Tradition for Educators and Staff In Jesuit Institutions of Higher Education

A TREATISE

Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Theology and Religious Studies Of The Catholic University of America In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For The Degree Doctor of Ministry

By

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The project sought to address a predicament now facing the Society of Jesus in the United States. With the current decreasing membership in the Jesuit order and the steady increase of laity serving in Jesuit institutions of higher learning, an ongoing difficulty is how to successfully preserve and impart the Society of Jesus’ charism, vision for mission, and brand of spirituality at its twenty-eight sponsored institutions of higher education. Given this situation, the Ignis training program at Fordham University in New York City was presented as an eight-hour introductory seminar offered to a select group of campus ministers, faculty members, student-life administrators, and campus leaders. This was done in an interactive program that sought to promote greater awareness and appreciation of the Jesuit tradition of both spirituality and education. To foster this awareness, the project drew from several interdisciplinary resources: a) the Church’s pastoral plan for adult formation, b) the history of the Society of Jesus, and c) the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola and the Ignatian Examen prayer.

Upon completion of the seminar, participants were asked to complete a thorough written evaluation of the program. Results confirmed that most had learned a good deal about the Jesuit charism and vision for mission, and were eager to learn more about Ignatian spirituality and its practical application in their daily lives. The project therefore
achieved its goal in that regard. A particular contribution of this project is that it provided an adult formation/orientation program that could play a vital role in enabling non-Jesuit colleagues to receive the gifts of Ignatian spirituality, thereby allowing them to help the Jesuit legacy to thrive and flourish in American Jesuit colleges and universities.
This treatise by Philip Florio fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Doctor of Ministry approved by Rev. Raymond Studzinski, O.S.B., Ph.D., as Director, and by Rev. Msgr. Stephen Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D., as Reader.

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INTRODUCTION

“To bring people to God, Ignatius sought to form those
who in turn would influence many others.”

The Need for Good and Effective Training

A current predicament facing the Society of Jesus in the United States is how to
preserve and impart its particular charism, vision for mission and spirituality at its
twenty-eight institutions of higher education. The problem is how to transmit, in a
productive manner, the virtues of Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit tradition to those
non-Jesuits who serve in its sponsored universities, particularly the younger generation of
professionals who are increasingly “un-churched” and detached from any sense of a
religious tradition. Given this situation, what is it that the American Society of Jesus can
offer to its colleagues that would help them to engage Ignatian spirituality more deeply,
thus facilitating their learning about the Jesuit mission? Is there some way to make
Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit tradition of “mission” more accessible and relevant to
lay faculty and staff in these institutions, and to show them the particular strengths and
merits of this spirituality as a way to form their own professional service? The answer is
obvious: a training program for laity that results in a greater knowledge and appreciation
of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, as well as the way they provide a
particular vision for service and the Jesuit way of proceeding in higher education.

1 The Boston College Jesuit Community. “Jesuits and Jesuit Education: A Primer- A Working Paper for
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How This Resource Can Best Serve a Jesuit Apostolate

The *Ignis* Training Program: *An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality and Mission in the Jesuit Tradition* offers a common, standardized and comprehensive approach for instruction in Ignatian spirituality that is both current and practical. *Ignis* (the Latin word for fire) can help those charged with maintaining and promoting an institution’s Jesuit and Catholic identity to adopt a constructive and vibrant approach for training their professional staff in the time-honored charism and spirituality of Saint Ignatius of Loyola as well as the vision of service and mission of the Society of Jesus which he founded. *Ignis* can be used flexibly for lay persons of varying levels of education and experience, so that all invited to participate in formation for Jesuit mission will better understand and appreciate the charism and particular spirituality which animates their respective college or university as a Roman Catholic and Jesuit-sponsored institution of higher learning. The pontiff emeritus, Benedict XVI, affirmed this same sentiment when at a recent gathering of the worldwide superiors of the Society of Jesus, its 35th General Congregation, he confidently enjoined the Fathers:

> I ask you to focus special attention on that ministry of the *Spiritual Exercises* which has been a characteristic feature of your Society from the outset. The *Spiritual Exercises* are the fountain of your spirituality and the matrix of your Constitutions, but they are also a gift that the Spirit of the Lord has made to the entire Church: it is for you to continue to make it a precious and efficacious instrument for spiritual growth of souls.”

*Ignis*, for this reason, provides the appropriate tools needed to instruct participants effectively in becoming better acquainted with the particular dynamics of the *Spiritual

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Exercises of Saint Ignatius, the life and history of Ignatius Loyola, the various aspects of Ignatian spirituality, and the founding and development of the Society of Jesus. Furthermore, Ignis can help one to gain familiarity with the historical context of the major themes of Ignatian spirituality and its relevance to contemporary Jesuit education, especially with regard to its potential for forming persons whose lives are to be distinguished by a deep-rooted love for God and others, in service to justice in the world. Ignis is intended to be an eight-hour introductory training seminar. An institution’s Mission and Identity administrator, the Campus Ministry Director, Director of Ignatian Programs, the local Jesuit Superior, or a suitably appointed staff person who is properly trained in Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit way of proceeding would best present the program.

Ignis is best suited for a select group of campus ministers, faculty members, student-life administrators, academic deans, trustees and leaders of Jesuit higher educational apostolates. Participants will be exposed to the dynamics of Ignatian spirituality, with particular attention given to the Spiritual Exercises and other prayer methods developed by Ignatius. With that introduction, participants will then examine selected readings pertaining to the theology of the Ignatian Exercises and the history of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus. Participants will be introduced to Ignatian terminology and methodology, for example, meditation, contemplation, discernment of spirits and the Examen prayer as applicable to the life of laity engaged in Jesuit higher education.

“In order that a man’s natural gifts may be put to account for the salvation of souls, they must be set in motion by interior virtue
How Best to Use This Manual

Those who plan to participate in *Ignis* will, prior to the day of the seminar, have engaged in a careful reading of several handouts designed to introduce participants to Ignatius Loyola and the weight of his brand of spirituality on Jesuit-inspired education. During the seminar, participants will engage in small and large-group discussions based on meaningful questions that invite participants to reflect deeply on the assigned readings and presentations. Moreover, throughout the seminar’s sessions, participants should be encouraged to contribute actively to all group discussions since, from the beginning of his ministry, Saint Ignatius chose to engage others in friendly conversation about their lives, their concerns, and ultimately about God.

“For Ignatius, one discovers one’s soul only when one freely donates one’s life to something greater than oneself. Ignatius called this an election, a choice to be a particular kind of self, to orient one’s life with an abiding commitment to do something good and enduring.”

Howard Gray, S.J.

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CHAPTER I
OVERVIEW

Lay Formation, Colleagues in Ministry

Why a formation program in Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit mission for the laity, those non-ordained women and men, serving in institutions of higher education (as well as in parishes, high schools, middle schools, retreat houses and social apostolates) sponsored by the Society of Jesus? The answer is patently clear. The Catholic Church of the twenty-first century, in many ways for the first time in its expansive history, truly is the “Church of the laity.” Stated simply, this means it is a body of believers (Church) that is increasingly served, sustained and supported by the ministry and work of non-ordained, non-consecrated religious women and men. This reality shapes the contemporary Church in which we serve, worship, pray and live. Currently in the American Church and the extensive Jesuit network of ministries, we have seen a substantial rise in the number of laypersons seeking to serve as ecclesial ministers, colleagues in educational ministry and associates in service. In many of the Church’s and, in particular, the Society’s diverse apostolates, such as schools, colleges, research institutes, retreat centers, charitable agencies and parishes, roles once held exclusively by clergy and men/women religious are increasingly being carried out by lay men and women who are often well trained and highly equipped for the roles in which they serve.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops in recent years has employed the title “lay ecclesial ministers” to designate those men and women who serve in full-time “church ministry” and are recognized “officially” as representatives of the institutional
Church and its local bishop as well as its religious orders. Lay Ecclesial Ministers include but are not limited to: campus ministers, chaplains, some teachers of theology and religious studies, catechists, pastoral associates, spiritual directors, social justice ministers, some social workers and pastoral counselors. To date, the approximate number of “lay ecclesial ministers” in the United States is estimated at thirty-one thousand strong with no immediate sign of decline. As the number of lay ministers—again, those legitimately recognized by the institutional Church and commissioned to serve in its name—continues to expand swiftly in the US, the need to provide for their proper training and development has never been greater. Many of those women and men who truly require and merit this type of training within our Jesuit colleges and universities are those who directly serve the Jesuit mission of education as pastoral and social ministers and who view their service, their daily work, as bona fide church ministry. But where is the line of distinction drawn between church ministry and simply good work done on behalf of another? The Dominican theologian Thomas O’Meara, a respected professor emeritus at Notre Dame University who writes extensively on the theology of ministry, provides what I believe is the best definition of ministry for our contemporary Church: “the public activity of any baptized follower of Jesus Christ flowing from the Spirit’s charism and an individual personality on behalf of the Christian community to proclaim, serve and realize the kingdom of God.”

Ministry, different from good works, relies on the use of one’s God-given talents and gifts for the definite building up of the Church. As Saint Paul proclaimed to the Christians at Corinth:

Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it. Some people God has

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designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work mighty deeds? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts.” (1 Cor 12: 27-31)

Considering all of the above, it is clear that ministry is unambiguously religious, sacred in nature and following the example of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It is unapologetic in its proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the building up of the Body of Christ. Stated simply, ministry is not simply social work; it is religious and spiritual work done for others in the name of God and God’s Church. Unfortunately, some lay persons serving in Jesuit-sponsored schools defer their God-given call to ministry to a member of the order, claiming that “they have no right to take ministry away from the priests,” even if ordination is not required for that particular ministry. Still some others will say sadly that they serve only because there is an acute shortage of Jesuits at a particular institution, ignoring the fact that God calls all people to serve both the Church and our larger society. Without a doubt, successful and effective ministry requires that all work together in respectful partnership—the laity, religious and clergy equally sharing the responsibility for the care and service of God’s Church, “the Body of Christ.” In 2008 the Society of Jesus at its 35th General Congregation, which is a gathering of its worldwide leaders and superiors, affirmed this. In Decree 6: Collaboration at the Heart of Mission, paragraph 30, it was declared:

In his day, St Ignatius gave shelter to the homeless of Rome, cared for prostitutes, and established homes for orphans. He sought collaborators and with them established organizations and networks to continue these and many other forms of service. To respond today to the pressing needs of our complex and fragile world, many hands are surely needed. Collaboration in mission is the way we respond to

7 All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Bible, (Wichita, Kansas: Fireside Bible Publishers, 2004), unless otherwise noted.
this situation: it expresses our true identity as members of the Church, the complementarity of our diverse calls to holiness, our mutual responsibility for the mission of Christ, our desire to join people of good will in the service of the human family, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is a grace given to us in this moment, one consistent with our Jesuit way of proceeding.  

With this in mind, the current shortage of Jesuits (or other religious) should never detract from the fact that the laity are called to service in and for the Church. Even if we had fifty active Jesuits serving at each Jesuit institution, the laity still have a duty, by virtue of their baptism and confirmation, to give witness to their faith and to serve the needs of the Church in varied ways. This sentiment is confirmed again by the Second Vatican Council’s document, *Lumen Gentium*:

> These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetical, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.

Essentially, ordained and lay ministers are to collaborate with one another if they are to help the Church to realize her mission. The point must therefore be stressed that the clergy and the laity are not “in competition” with one another; on the contrary, they complement one another since all baptized Christians share in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. Again, *Lumen Gentium* points out:

> Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ.

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10 Ibid., 10.
In 2005 the bishops of the United States issued a document intended for the guidance of lay ministers entitled, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. In this most beneficial and significant document the bishops point out, “Lay ministers, just like the ordained, need and deserve formation of high standards, effective methods and comprehensive goals.”\(^{11}\) The bishops offer four segments of formation, similar to those provided for the clergy (bishops, priests and deacons), which are crucial to the lay minister. These areas of formation include attention to the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of the individual. Given that the interior life is central to the life of the one called to serve Christ and the Church, spiritual formation should be of the highest priority for those administrators of mission and identity, as well as for other ministerial leaders responsible for the formation of their ministers. This is central to the goal of the *Ignis* program, which is to provide a positive introduction to Ignatian spirituality that allows for a practical application in one’s life and service. Accordingly, *Ignis* seeks to affirm that Ignatian spirituality may be one of the best-suited schools of spirituality for the formation of those contemporary lay ministers and, in particular, religious educators serving in Jesuit-sponsored apostolates.

Positively, Ignatian spirituality is a time-honored approach to Christian prayer, which over the course of five centuries has proven to be extremely effective in strengthening the spiritual lives of so many men and women of faith. How else would one explain the success of those Jesuit-sponsored schools today on every continent? Remarkably, Ignatian spirituality demands a dynamic listening and vigorous attentiveness

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to God’s voice, thereby fostering responsiveness to God presence in one’s daily proceedings. This responsiveness is a principal characteristic of Ignatian prayer. It is clear that without a well developed prayer life, the lay minister and colleague in ministry—as regards his or her spirituality—is disoriented. With this in mind, those charged with leading the Church’s educational apostolates would do well to take into account that the poor spiritual formation of its ministers can be likened to one having to navigate hazardous and perilous roads without a roadmap. Ignatian spirituality can serve as a roadmap in this regard and truly enrich both one’s personal prayer and the ministry that subsequently flows from this prayer. In his book, *What is Ignatian Prayer?* the recently deceased and much esteemed Jesuit author David Fleming writes: “The goal of the spiritual life, as Ignatius conceived it, is to ‘choose what best leads to God’s deepening life in me.’ This is a dynamic goal. We are to choose—to freely unite ourselves with God in prayer. Most of the time this means that we are to join with God in active work (ministry) in the world.”

Bearing in mind that, first and foremost, all service and ministry flows from God, prayer and a solidly formed spirituality can help one to encounter the living God intimately so as to remain firmly rooted in God—Father, Son and Spirit—who has called one to service. “The Triune God is the first source of any ministry, for all ministry is ultimately rooted in the mission of the Word and the Spirit.” Thus wrote the noted theologian, Professor Edward Hahnenberg, who served as an advisor to the American Bishops’ Subcommittee for Lay Ministry. Similarly, regarding the formation of lay ministers, the bishops maintain that these ministers need “a spirituality and practice of

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prayer that root them in God’s Trinitarian life, grounding and animating all they do in ministry.”

Indeed, the Ignatian method of prayer can serve as an indispensable tool that can help one to deepen his or her relationship with the Triune God.

For this reason, it falls to the leaders of Jesuit ministries—and all ministries, for that matter—to see that those who have answered the call to service are given ample opportunities for adequate preparation and formation in the life of the Divine Spirit. Frankly, a minister who is neither grounded in prayer nor supported by an abiding personal relationship with God is in a highly precarious position and is, consequently, a genuine liability to the mission of the Church and to the Society of Jesus. As Co-Workers states so well, “If ministry does not flow from a personal encounter and ongoing relationship with the Lord, then no matter how ‘accomplished’ it may be in its methods and activities, that ministry will lack the vital soul and source needed to bear lasting fruit.”

Our Christian tradition teaches us and maintains that living in Christ bears fruit. This is evident. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a person remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; for apart from me you can do nothing.” (Jn 15: 4-5)

A goal, therefore, of the lay ecclesial minister or lay partner in ministry is to live in communion with the Lord so completely that his or her personal spirituality leads to a flourishing ministry that actively points to Jesus Christ. In Collaboration: Uniting Our Gifts in Ministry, Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano, authors and presenters on Catholic spirituality and ministry, note, “Ministry is the embodiment and expression of spirituality. While action may be good, it is not ministry unless it is an expression and an

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14 USCCB, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, 34.
15 Ibid., 38.
overflow of one’s relationship with Christ.”  

Without a doubt, the model for Christian living, prayer and personal sanctification for the individual of faith is Jesus Christ. This is true most especially for those laypersons that have responded with generosity and zeal to serve the needs of the Church in our present day. In this vein, Saint Paul wrote the following to the emerging “lay” Christian Community at Philippi:

Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus, who, though he was God, did not consider himself equal with God. Instead he emptied himself taking the form of a slave, in human form. And in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a tree. For this reason God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend—in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue should confess, to the Glory of God, that Jesus Christ is Lord! (Phil 2:5-11)

Programs are to be provided to enable lay people to acquire a greater knowledge of the Ignatian tradition and spirituality and to grow in their personal vocations.”  

Overview of Ignatian Spirituality for the Laity

As previously stated, a fundamental means for Church leaders and religious orders to aid those lay colleagues in ministry in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and for imitating Christ’s manner of humble service and fidelity is through the espousal and application of a particular “school of spirituality” within the Church. Once again, Co-Workers points out, “Lay ecclesial ministry has no single spirituality, beyond common grounding in God’s word, and the sacraments, in the pastoral life and communion of the Church, and in the one Spirit who has been given to all”  

At the same time, each of the major religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church—Benedictines, Carmelites,

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17 GC 35, D. 2, 11.
18 USCCB, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, 38.
Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and Jesuits ("Ignatians")—has its own distinctive school of spirituality that can assist one on the path to sanctification. Here again Ignatian spirituality, which seeks God actively working in the world, provides an approach for reflective and interactive prayer that can truly deepen the spiritual life of the layperson amid the busyness of the world. This seems especially true for those trustees and board members at Jesuit-sponsored educational institutions, many of whom are corporate executives, who, in addition to the multifarious demands of their external work, are charged with the task of providing the president and his administrative officers the counsel and guidance for directing the institution. It is common knowledge that some of these generous men and women are not Roman Catholics or even persons of faith and, while this does not necessarily preclude them from serving as trustees of Jesuit institutions, it can impede their knowledge of matters Catholic and Jesuit. For this reason, trustees in particular, along with all who serve in those Jesuit sponsored schools, can most certainly benefit from the benefits of participating in the *Ignis* program.

Ignatian spirituality and greater knowledge of the Jesuit vision for mission can truly help one to prayerfully make “right choices” that will be reflected in his or her loving service of others. With its emphasis on contemplating “God in all things” and meditating on the life and mission of Jesus Christ as presented in the Scriptures, Ignatian spirituality has the capacity to assist one in realizing that Jesus calls each and every person to share vigorously in His ministry.

Notably, Ignatian spirituality was born of the conversion experience of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the sixteenth-century mystic and founder of the Society of Jesus. From its inception, not only Jesuits, but also a wide range of men and women immersed
in the life of the Church, have found Ignatian spirituality appealing. This is due, in part, to its simplicity and scrupulous focus on the imitation of Christ. For Ignatius, imitating Christ means imitating the values that Our Lord both promoted and lived.

In view of this, Michael Buckley, S.J., a distinguished lecturer on Ignatian spirituality, once stated, “Imitation of Christ is not merely perfect duplication, but appropriation of His virtues and qualities and taking them into who you are.” Without a doubt, this imitation of the Lord is fundamental to the mission of the lay partner in ministry. To appropriate those qualities and virtues of Christ, as Father Buckley suggests, Ignatius instructs us to reflect on what Jesus said and did in his relationship with God and with others. As we know, at the nucleus of Jesus’ life was prayer, and for Ignatius, prayer was meant to resemble an “intimate conversation” between the “Creator” and “His creature.” In this regard David Fleming, S.J. observes, “Conversation has broader meanings as well. It means ‘to be conversant with’ something or someone—that is, to truly know them deeply. To converse with someone is to know him or her and to be involved with his or her life. In the Ignatian scheme of things, to converse is one of our ways of loving.”

The Sacred Scriptures reveal to us that Jesus’ prayer propelled Him toward loving service of all and as a servant He welcomed the outcast, fed the poor, washed the feet of His disciples, consoled the weary and made people whole. He was, in many ways, the perfect model of the servant leader. In exploring the subject of spirituality for the laity, it is fitting to note that Jesus was neither a formally trained rabbi, nor even a member of a specific religious movement such as a Sadducee, a Pharisee or an Essene. Jesus was a

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20 Fleming, What is Ignatian Spirituality?, 51.
simple carpenter from a modest family in Nazareth and, overall, a faithful and ardent Jew who served with great compassion and love. In this vein, Jesus was a lay minister in the truest sense of its contemporary characterization. This does not minimize the fact that the Father anointed Him (Lk 3:21-22) and sent Him to sacrifice His life so as to save God’s people as our great “High Priest” (Heb 4:14-16). Indeed, Jesus Christ the God-man is our “high priest” and the prototype for all ordained to priestly ministry. In view of this, this statement is not meant to diminish His priestly nature or detract from His role as our “High Priest”; rather it is only meant to state the obvious: Jesus was not a “formally ordained minister” or “priest” as we commonly understand this concept today. Again, Jesus of Nazareth was a simple carpenter who, in perfect obedience to His Heavenly Father’s command and mission, became a minister to all. To the world Jesus continually preached a gospel of peace, hope, equality, justice and love. Subsequently, Jesus summons all people to join Him in preaching this gospel in both word and deed. Ignatian spirituality, therefore, attempts to incorporate these same gospel values in an effort to help one to draw closer to God and God’s people. Like all forms of spirituality, it stresses the need for daily reflection and prayer so as to discover how God truly calls one to live and serve in the world. This is one reason why Ignatian spirituality may be an ideal spirituality for the lay colleague who seeks to serve Christ and the Church while living and working amid the chaos and confusion of our contemporary world. This is consistent with the National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers that emphasizes, “A lay minister demonstrates personal and spiritual maturity in ministry with the people of God.”

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In their document, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*, the American Bishops support this notion when they write, “We believe that the Church’s path into the new millennium is marked by a faithful listening to the Spirit in the midst of God’s people.” \(^{22}\) This active commitment to seeking God's will, a major tool of Ignatian spirituality, is what is referred to as “the discernment of spirits.” By properly discerning the spirits at work in the human heart, Ignatius would have one come to recognize the strategies of both the good and evil spirits and then, only after acknowledging which spirit is at work, appropriately make his or her choices in light of that spirit’s movements within the deepest recess of one’s soul.

Before one can espouse Ignatius’ various methods for prayer, it is important to identify that Ignatian spirituality is first and foremost “incarnational,” meaning that it views the world as a place where Jesus Christ is very much alive, present, and active. The authors Sofield and Juliano point out that for those engaged in ministry, “the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has likewise (for lay ministers) emphasized an active spirituality that embraces all of life, and at its core is an incarnational spirituality.” \(^{23}\) Ignatian spirituality truly views the world as a place to encounter the living God, and is, as the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins so eloquently stated, “charged with the grandeur of God.” \(^{24}\) This too is congruous with the elements of spiritual formation for the lay minister provided for in *Co-Workers*. It states, “Incarnational love

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willingly enters into the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our world, making one as fully and faithfully present to every person and culture as Christ is.”

This world, then, is a place, as Ignatius maintains, “to find God in all things,” including every joy and triumph and every trial and tribulation. Consequently, Ignatian Spirituality affirms our capacity to be like Christ in the world despite our daily struggles against sin and evil that ultimately leads us away from God. For this reason, Ignatius Loyola, the former soldier turned pilgrim and eventually saint, bequeathed to the Church two great spiritual gifts for engaging in this struggle, the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Examen*. Both of these can serve as effective spiritual tools in the hands of the layperson committed to serving in the apostolate of education in the Jesuit tradition.

_The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius are ways of meeting God and of discerning in our experience what is of God and what is not of God._”

William Barry, S.J.

**Description of the Spiritual Exercises**

John O’Malley, S.J. in his book *The First Jesuits*, writes, “The first Jesuits recognized the importance of the *Exercises* and occasionally spoke of them as giving their life and ministries their fundamental orientation.” Juan Alfonso de Polanco, S.J., Ignatius’ personal secretary and collaborator in the writing of the *Constitutions* and his letters, called these Exercises “the compendium of all the Jesuits had for helping souls.”

According to Ignatius’ introductory explanations in the *Spiritual Exercises*, the term "spiritual exercises":

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28 Ibid., 372.
… denotes every way of examining one's conscience, of meditating, contemplating, praying—vocally and mentally, and other spiritual activities. For just as strolling, walking and running are exercises for the body, so ‘spiritual exercises’ is the name given to every way of preparing and disposing one's soul to rid herself of all disordered attachments, so that once rid of them one might seek and find the divine will in regard to the disposition of one's life for the good of the soul.  

Consequently, the *Spiritual Exercises* is not so much a book to be read, but rather a manual for guiding one through the masterwork of Ignatius’ spirituality, the thirty-day silent-directed retreat. This systematic program of meditations and contemplations, based on the life of Christ, is rooted in Ignatius’ own experience of mystical prayer at a wayside cave in the Spanish village of Manresa. The sole purpose of the Exercises is to bring about greater communion between God and the human person. All Jesuits, from the order’s founding, experience the full *Exercises*, the “long retreat” or 20th Annotation thirty-day retreat, during the first year of formation (the novitiate), and again after years of active ministry as a tertian (third stage of formation) priest or brother. Even so, Ignatian spirituality was never intended solely for the spiritual training of Jesuits nor exclusively for clergy and religious. In fact, Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises* at Manresa while still a layperson, a number of years before he and his companions would establish the Society of Jesus and later receive the sacrament of Holy Orders.

It is worth noting here that Jesuits are members of a “sacredotal order” or religious order comprised mainly of priests (though there are brothers and seminarians) that are charged with priestly duties. Jesuits are classified by the Church’s law as “clerics regular,” since they are received into the clerical state (clerics) and follow a *regula*, or

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“common rule,” for living. Thus it is both ironic and remarkable that the Society of Jesus’ greatest treasure, its Ignatian spirituality, was shaped while its founder was a layperson. The question begs to be asked, then, is this mere coincidence or God’s design? The answer to this question still remains to be seen. Either way, lay men and women have been and continue to be decisively encouraged to embrace Ignatian spirituality in its many forms, but most especially in the form of the 19th Annotation retreat or “Retreat in Daily Life.” Ignatius initially designed this form of the long retreat for the laity, “those outside of a religious community, novitiate or seminary,” and predominantly those “involved in public affairs or worldly occupations” (#19 SpEx).

The world and Church of Ignatius was quite different from that of today. Given this, it is safe to state that, since lay ministry was virtually non-existent, the sixteenth-century world of Ignatius could not fathom the idea of laypersons ministering in the Church and its varied apostolates as they do today. Conversely, given Ignatius’ passionate sense of mission and service to the Church, it is reasonable to assume that he would maintain that his 19th Annotation was ultimately designed with the current lay colleague in mind, since he or she both lives in the world and serves in the Church. Unlike the full thirty-day retreat, the 19th Annotation is made on a daily basis over the course of roughly an entire year and includes weekly meetings with a trained and competent spiritual director.

Since Vatican II there has been a renewed interest among the laity in these types of retreats, and currently thousands of men and women around the world are annually enrolled in 19th Annotation retreat programs under the guidance of experienced Ignatian spiritual directors. Here again, this is consistent with another one of the methods of
spiritual formation provided for in *Co-Workers*. Under the heading of *daily prayer and spiritual practices*, *Co-Workers* stipulates, “Retreats and days of reflection are an essential component in all ministry formation programs.”  

I have personally guided, in addition to priests and seminarians, several lay ministers through the 19th Annotation retreat, and have also guided one lay ecclesial minister (a prison chaplain), a religious sister and a priest, through the full thirty-day *Ignatian Exercises*.

My profound experiences with these men and women of faith have left me convinced, without a doubt, that Ignatian spirituality is truly suited to the spiritual life of the lay colleague in ministry. The task at hand, nevertheless, is twofold: firstly, to convince our lay colleagues in higher education, as well as our administrators and leaders of Jesuit-sponsored institutions, of this “spiritual match,” and, secondly, for their respective institutions to make the appropriate provisions for lay colleagues to encounter Christ through the spirituality of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. This is most certainly costly, time-consuming and arduous for all involved, yet this remains the single purpose of *Ignis*.

> “The Church of the future will be called “the Church of the Laity.””

30 USCCB, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, 42.

CHAPTER II
APPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

Application of the Exercises to the Formation of Lay Colleagues in Ministry

Given what has been stated so far, the next question is: Why in today’s busy and hectic world, with its varied demands on the laity, is Ignatian spirituality so suited to these persons? It seems that there are two major reasons; the first is practical, the second spiritual. The practical reason is that Ignatian spirituality is readily available in many places and at many opportune times. There are numerous parishes, religious houses and retreat centers—over thirty retreat centers sponsored by the American Jesuits alone, (see http://www.jesuit.org/ignatian-spirituality/parishes-and-retreat-centers/retreat-centers/) which have a long history of ministering to the spiritual needs of the laity. Therefore, at any time of the year, in comfortable and often beautifully situated facilities from coast to coast, men and women can take advantage of these Jesuit-endorsed resources that support their spiritual growth. Likewise, the spiritual reason for embracing Ignatian spirituality is that it emphasizes faith as a continuous dialogue and relationship between the individual and God. This dialogue is, for all intents and purposes, as Ignatius instructed, a lasting “intimate conversation between friends.”

Currently the layperson lives and works in a world in which he or she must constantly confront rapid change, uncertainty and even hostility toward matters of faith and values. Ignatian spirituality recognizes this at a very deep level and invites men and women to engage in a process of ongoing conversion and dedication to God amid this
chaos. Interestingly, the ministry of the Ignatian *Exercises* is quickly becoming a
ministry to and of the laity, since it has proven to be extremely successful in helping them
to cultivate—as the US Bishops’ document for Adult Faith Formation, *Our Hearts Were
 Burning*, indicates—“a mission in and to the world.” 32

Historically, the *Spiritual Exercises* emerged at a time of great searching in the
world, and while the Church’s mission to proclaim the gospel has remained the same, the
sixteenth century was very much an age of transformation, reformation and new
discovery. Our present day is not so different, in that the mission of the Church remains
the same while seemingly so many continue to be searching for greater meaning and
purpose in their lives. At the same time, a new way of “being Church” is unfolding as the
Church grows and evolves in the wake of Vatican II. Yet again, more and more lay men
and women are serving in ministries at Jesuit-sponsored institutions that were once
exclusively reserved for Jesuit priests, brothers and scholastics. Consequently, both Jesuit
and lay leaders of the Society’s institutions continue to look to these men and women to
share in their pastoral ministry. For any number of reasons—most clearly the promptings
of the Holy Spirit, new opportunities for mission are opening up to the laity, and the
universal call to holiness is gaining momentum. As the need for their service and
prophetic witness increases, lay men and women are being asked to recapture the spirit of
the royal priesthood that was conferred upon them at their baptism. This is illustrated in

*Lumen Gentium*:

> Therefore all disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should
> present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Everywhere on

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earth they must bear witness to Christ and give answer to all who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them.  

To succeed in this holy mission, one must be open to God’s grace at work in their hearts and in the world. Stated simply, one must be free in the Holy Spirit. This is where Ignatian discernment can be most helpful for attaining the freedom that is required of one immersed in the world and called to service and ministry.

“The form of prayer known as the “Ignatian Examen” or “Examen of consciousness” is another “spiritual exercise” that has proved to be helpful in allowing people’s lives to be increasingly in-tune with the Spirit of God.”

David Lonsdale, S.J.

Use of the Ignatian Examen for the Layperson in Ministry

The nexus of the Ignatian discernment of spirits is ultimately to live as Jesus lived, that is, fully immersed in the world. According to the Standards for Certification, one of the core competencies for a layperson engaged in ministry is that he or she shall “discern and respond to the call of the Holy Spirit to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ.”

Additionally, the Second Vatican Council asks the layperson to “recognize and understand the world in which we live, its explanations and its longings.” To succeed in this mission, the layperson needs to articulate his or her experiences so that others can listen and follow. The objective, therefore, is to help the person to articulate what impels his or her choices. For this reason, reflection on one’s experience is essential to see what distracts us in life and what leads our hearts closer to God. The great seventeenth-century master of Ignatian spirituality, Louis Lallemant, S.J., taught, “We have in our heart an

33 Second Vatican Council, Lumen Gentium, 102-105.
35 National Association for Lay Ministry, National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers, 27.
36 Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes, §4.
emptiness which all creatures, taken together, cannot fill. It is not able to be filled except by God who is our source and our purpose."³⁷

Hence, one’s prayer demands a spiritual response to God that is at the same time intellectual and affective. Although the intellect is indispensable for the discernment of spirits, Ignatius also has us pay close attention to the movements of our heart, our affective movements, since these too clearly shape our attitudes and behavior. As Paschal once noted, “The heart has its reasons which reason does not know.”³⁸ In spiritual terms, we feel God in the heart that God has touched. At the same time the anonymous author of the Cloud of Unknowing wrote, “By love can God be sought and held, but by thinking never!”³⁹ Ignatius authentically sought to integrate both the intellect and the affect (the heart and the mind) in a method of prayer that could help us to recognize God’s presence and will in our lives. In regard to this, during the project presentation on June 1³⁰, a newly hired administrator commented, “I have heard this elsewhere, from a now deceased campus minister at Loyola Marymount, Sister Peg Dolan, who once said, ‘It seems that what Ignatius is telling us is to think with the heart and love with the mind’.”⁴⁰ Hence, Ignatian discernment effectively joins the mind and the heart and sees them as working together in unison. When they are not working together, Ignatius declares this the work of “the enemy” or “the evil spirit.”

Consequently, the challenge before us each day is to examine our minds and listen to our hearts, as God would have us. This is where the Ignatian Examen plays a major

⁴⁰ Sister Peg Dolan, RSHM, as quoted by Daniel Paterson. (“Ignis Training Program- project presentation,” Bronx, NY, June 1, 2012).
role. The *Examen*, performed daily, can literally help one to take stock of his or her soul by examining, in the light of the Holy Spirit, those places where he or she has failed or succeeded in imitating Christ. A popular Ignatian scholar, Timothy Gallagher, O.M.V., in his book *The Examen Prayer* notes, “The prayer of the *Examen* is the specific searching every day to find where God’s love is active this day, where God’s love is leading today, to discern what within me may be resisting that leading and to discover the growth to which God is calling me tomorrow so that this deepest desire may be fulfilled.”

The *Examen* prayer involves five basic steps: thanking and acknowledging God, asking for God’s grace, reviewing one’s day before God, asking for God’s forgiveness, and making a resolution to stay close to God. Accordingly, it takes into account one’s daily triumphs and failures in Christian living. For Ignatius, failure to live and serve like Jesus is nothing more than sin. Sin, as we know well, is a threat to the spiritual life, since it has the capacity to demoralize the spirit and devastate the soul. Long before WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) bracelets were made popular several years ago, the Ignatian *Examen* had as its goal to truthfully evaluate one’s actions in imitation of the Lord. The *Examen*, when done correctly and faithfully, may be one of the greatest weapons in the Church’s arsenal in the battle against evil and sin. Prudently, *Co-Workers* recommends that a key element for the spiritual formation of the laity is that he or she grows in “an awareness of sin.” The document states, “In times characterized by a weakening or loss of the sense of sin, sound spirituality must cultivate the restoration of the proper sense of

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sin so that one can hear the Gospel of mercy with grateful joy, genuine repentance, and renewed conversion.” The Examen and Ignatian Spirituality in general fit this bill perfectly.

“In some matters, silence is better than speech” Ignatius Loyola

**Use of Silence in Ignatian Prayer**

As stated earlier, to pray and to discern the spirits in the Ignatian manner, one has to take time for daily prayer and silent reflection. Pertaining to this, Ignatius emphatically directed for personal prayer, “Speak little and listen much.”

Ignatian discernment—listening in silence, to the deepest desires of our heart—can help us to achieve the peace and life that we all seek from God who often speaks in silence.

Ignatius points out that a great challenge in discerning the spirits is learning to “recognize God’s voice and distinguishing it from that of the evil spirit” (#332 SpEx). St. Paul in a letter to the Ephesians speaks of this. “Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth—discerning what is pleasing to the Lord, so that your inner being is pleased with what pleases God” (Eph 5:10-12).

Ignatius, therefore, calls it “consolation” when one’s inner being is pleased or one experiences an increase of faith, hope and love. Accordingly, any decrease of these virtues he calls “desolation.”

A simplified definition for this is: consolation is walking in the light of Christ (bright, joyful and consoled), while desolation is walking in darkness (dark, depressed and desolate). Fittingly enough, one comes to recognize consolation and desolation at work in the soul by the choices one makes. Lay men and women in service, in myriad

43 Ibid., 60.
ways, are often faced with having to make choices, both personal and professional, whose outcomes can have far-reaching affects on the spiritual lives of others. The discernment of spirits can help one to make right choices in the light of Christ’s Gospel. For this reason, a great deal is at stake. Good choices bring about peace, joy, patience and the desire to do more—the Ignatian “magis,” while bad choices bring about despair, depression, anxiety and inordinate attachments. This is the gift of Ignatian discernment: to recognize a spirit by where it is leading one.

Finally, in discerning the spirits the person of faith needs to be mindful that God calls one to Himself and in His love frees one to love and serve Him and others. The Ignatian Examen and the discernment of spirits can help one to attain this freedom and literally rid one of those worldly influences and attachments that prevent a person from knowing God and one’s true self. Only when one attains this freedom through perseverance in prayer, is one able to respond to the divine influences in the heart and dedicate one’s life to transforming the world in imitation of Jesus Christ.

“Few souls understand what God would accomplish in them if they were to abandon themselves unreservedly to Him and if they were to allow His grace to mold them accordingly.”

Ignatius Loyola

Conclusion

This treatise has attempted to show how Ignatian spirituality may serve as a rich resource for the much-needed spiritual formation of our contemporary lay colleagues. Here three major components of Ignatian spirituality have been stressed: the Examen prayer, the 19th Annotation retreat, and the rules for the discernment of spirits that may prove most helpful. By faithfully utilizing the Examen, the lay colleague can earnestly

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44 Ibid., 37.
enter into an experience of daily prayer that is both practical and transformative. The
19th Annotation Retreat of the Spiritual Exercises, paired with frequent spiritual direction,
may prove not only enriching to the lay colleague’s spiritual life but also to his or her
personal development. This type of growth and development can have a profound effect
on the affective love and selfless service required of the one called to service and
ministry in a Jesuit educational apostolate.

Finally, the Ignatian rules for the discernment of spirits may truly serve as a
valuable tool for the lay colleague who desires to grow in greater awareness of God in his
or her spiritual life. These rules can provide one with valuable insights for making right
choices that reflect a genuine rejection of sin and evil, and a sincere acceptance of what is
good and holy. All of these taken together, under the aegis of Ignatian spirituality, may
have a positive impact on the lay colleague’s daily Christian living and ministry that
emerges from living in Jesus Christ. Saint Paul seems to have had this in mind when he
preached to the young Christian community at Galatia, “It is no longer I, but Christ who
lives within me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved
me and gave himself for me.” (Gal 2:20)

In light of what has been presented here, the hope is that those educational leaders
in Jesuit colleges and universities will come to realize the importance of a solid spiritual
formation program for lay colleagues. Certainly this may be a costly and time-consuming
venture on their part; nevertheless, the benefits for God’s people may be far greater. A
major goal, then, is not simply to teach facts about Ignatian spirituality, but to provide
various opportunities and venues of praying that can be truly lived and appropriated in
the life of the lay colleague. Again, at the project presentation mentioned above, an
experienced faculty member remarked, “We laity need to be *formed* in this Ignatian material, Father, not just *informed!*”

Demands from the apostolate, family and personal interests can lead to an unhealthy balance in the life of those who serve in the educational apostolate. Educational leaders, as well as their colleagues themselves, will—we strongly hope—rightly apprehend that spirituality is not simply “helpful” (a highly common misunderstanding), but also “necessary” for a balanced lifestyle and service in ministry. It cannot be denied that a vigorous program of spiritual formation, infused with Ignatian principles and tailored specifically toward the needs of today’s lay colleague, has the potential for forming men and women whose lives will be distinguished by “a faith that serves justice.” This formation can literally help them to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to gain a genuine Christian worldview that seeks to look upon the world with selfless love. Ignatian prayer, paired with a great desire for spiritual growth and a loving relationship with God and God’s people, may serve as a vital roadmap on the journey to the very heart of God. Without a doubt when one embraces Ignatian spirituality and allows it, with all of its richness, to guide and form their souls, they cannot resist the inclination to pray, with great fervor and zeal, the prayer of total surrender with which Ignatius concludes his *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Suscipe*:

> “Take, Lord, and receive all of my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All that I have and call my own. Whatever I have or hold, you have given to me. I freely return it all to you and surrender it wholly to be governed by your will. Give me only your love and your grace, these are enough for me. With them I am rich enough and ask for nothing more.” #234 *SpEx*

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45 Mario DiFiore. (“Ignis Training Program- project presentation”, Bronx, NY, June 1, 2012).
CHAPTER III

INTRODUCTION TO IGNATIUS LOYOLA, THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND JESUIT EDUCATION

John W. O’Malley, S.J., theologian and recognized expert on the history of the Society of Jesus, points out in his celebrated book, The First Jesuits, that “the history of the Society of Jesus is unintelligible when viewed apart from the life of Ignatius.”

Accordingly, for a better understanding of the Jesuit vision of mission for our contemporary Church and those educational apostolates sponsored by the Society of Jesus, one must, first of all, comprehensively explore the history of its founder, the development of his spirituality, and his influence on the Jesuit way of proceeding in ministry and service. For this reason, the following pages (in an abbreviated form) serve as a participant’s “reader,” that is, pre-reading material for those who will participate in Ignis. It also serves as a “primer,” providing structure, content, and an outline for the one who is to offer the training program. It is, therefore, designed to introduce one to the person of Ignatius of Loyola, the first Jesuit companions, the establishment of the Society of Jesus, and the development of Jesuit education as it is best understood today.

General Introduction

Who was Ignatius Loyola? Perhaps the simplest answer to this question is that he is the founder of the Society of Jesus, commonly called the Jesuits, the largest religious order of men in the Roman Catholic Church. To understand his spirituality and its influence on the Jesuit vision for higher education, one must begin by exploring the history of the man and the development of his particular brand of spirituality.

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St. Ignatius and all things Jesuit and “Ignatian” have their roots in the masterwork of Ignatius’ spirituality, *The Spiritual Exercises*. Stated simply, the “Exercises” are a collection of Ignatius’ spiritual lessons organized into four weeks, or segments, of meditations, contemplations and vocal prayers. It is helpful here to clarify the distinction between meditation and contemplation as Ignatius applies it in the Exercises. Meditation can best be described as an act of the intellect that involves thinking about and considering deeply a particular point of prayer, i.e., a scripture passage, a sacred writing, or a mystery in the life of Christ. Contemplation, on the other hand, is more of an exercise of the heart in that it engages one’s imagination, feelings and emotions in prayer. Both meditation and contemplation serve to draw one into a deeper relationship with God. Again, the fundamental purpose of the *Exercises* is to develop a deeper communion with God that leads to a closer imitation of Jesus Christ. The Jesuit author William Barry appropriately writes on this subject:

Ignatius presupposes that at every moment of our existence God is communicating to us who God is, is trying to draw us into an awareness, a consciousness of the reality of who we are in God’s sight. Whether we are aware of it or not, at every moment of our existence we are encountering God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is trying to catch our attention, trying to draw us into a reciprocal relationship.47

Hence, the *Spiritual Exercises* is not so much a book to be read, but rather a manual for guiding one, with the aid of a capable and prayerful spiritual director, through the *magnum opus* of Ignatian spirituality, the thirty-day silent retreat. This systematic program of intense prayer, based on the life of Christ in the Gospels, is rooted in Ignatius’ personal experience of mystical prayer in Manresa, a small town in northern Spain. In this place, shortly after his own spiritual conversion and a good number of years before

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he would eventually establish the Society of Jesus, Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*. Therefore, it is both paradoxical and noteworthy that the Jesuits’ greatest treasure, Ignatian spirituality, was shaped while Ignatius was neither a Jesuit nor a member of the clergy. Accordingly, lay women and men have been and continue to be decisively encouraged to embrace Ignatian spirituality in its many forms, including eight-day retreats, weekend retreats and most especially, the 19th Annotation retreat or “Retreat in Daily Life.” Ignatius initially designed this form of the thirty-day retreat for the laity, “those outside of a religious community, novitiate or seminary,” and predominantly those “involved in public affairs or worldly occupations.” (#19 *SpEx*). Unlike the full thirty-day retreat, the 19th Annotation is made on a daily basis over the course of an entire year, including weekly meetings with a trained spiritual director. Since Vatican II, there has been a renewed interest among the laity in these types of retreats. In fact, thousands of laypersons around the world are annually enrolled in 19th Annotation retreat programs. After attending the *Ignis* project one of the Student Life officers said to me, “I am now less afraid of committing to this 19th Annotation retreat; in fact, I am really excited to make it and to learn more from Ignatian spirituality… I need it, my soul needs it.” 48 For all of this, we owe our gratitude to one person, a man who generously cooperated with God’s grace--Ignatius Loyola.

**Iñigo, the Early Years**

Irrefutably, Saint Ignatius Loyola was a man who generously placed the interests and needs of God and God’s people, the Church, before his own. But this was not always the case. Born into an aristocratic family in 1491, Iñigo Oñaz y Lopez was

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48 Alana Nolan. (“*Ignis* Training Program- project presentation,” Bronx, NY, June 1, 2012).
reared in the tranquil village of Loyola in the Basque region of Azpetia in northern Spain. The youngest of thirteen children and raised among the nobility of his region, he lacked one thing from which the majority of his peers had benefited—a formal education. This unfortunate reality was due, in part, to the early death of both of his parents while he was still a young boy. Without the guidance of conscientious parents, he was left to the guardianship of his older siblings who, absorbed in their own pursuits, pushed him off to the care of the family’s hired servants, all of whom were unable to read and write. As a result, his formal education was desperately lacking. This lack of learning distressed him throughout his early years, and Ignatian experts agree that this preliminary inadequacy helped shape his vision for a vigorous and well-rounded Christian education—a vision that would become a distinctive focus of the Society of Jesus which he would later establish.

Mainly because of his family’s political connections, at the age of sixteen, despite his poor education, Iñigo was dispatched to serve as a page to Don Juan Velázquez de Cuéllar, the royal treasurer of the kingdom of Castile. While in service to Don Velázquez, Iñigo frequently accompanied him to the royal court, and through this exposure acquired a taste for many of the finer things that sixteenth-century Europe had to offer to a man of prominence. Lacking discipline and self-control, Iñigo promptly gained a reputation for being a notorious womanizer, an avid gambler and an expert with the sword. In his autobiography, A Pilgrim’s Testament (dictated in the third person to his trusted Jesuit associate Luis Gonçálvez de Cámara), Ignatius notes that, “up to the age of twenty-six, he was a man given to the follies of the world: and what he
enjoyed most was exercise with arms, having a great and foolish desire to win fame.”

And fame he would eventually win—not for himself but for God.

**Pamplona**

While Saint Ignatius is frequently known as a “soldier,” in reality, as a recognized man of the court, he was more a knight or an officer than an actual member of the cavalry. It was during one of many territorial conflicts with the French that the Spanish nobleman found himself leading some of the king’s troops who were charged with the defense of the royal citadel of Pamplona just outside of Loyola. Here, Iñigo was struck in the left leg by a cannon ball that left him permanently disfigured. It is noteworthy that, as he lay wounded on the battlefield, boldly refusing to surrender, his French adversaries were so taken with his bravery and courage that, instead of killing or capturing him, they carried him back to his family castle to be restored to health. At Loyola his family doctors worked on healing his shattered leg, and at his own request, they broke and repeatedly reset it in an effort to prevent his having to walk with a limp, which the vain and prideful Basque perceived as an unacceptable imperfection for a man of his elevated stature. Ignatius illustrates:

> As the bones of his leg having knit together, one bone below the knee was left riding on another, which made the leg shorter. The bone protruding so much that it was an ugly business. He could not bear such a thing because he intended to live a life at court and thought that this would deform him; he asked the surgeons if the bone could be cut away. They said that it could, but that the pain would be greater than all that he had suffered, as everything was healed, and it would take awhile to cut it. He determined, however, to undergo this torture.\(^{50}\)

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Regrettably, the surgery was not successful, and as a result he would walk with a slight limp for the remainder of his life. Iñigo’s recovery at Loyola took several months, and since he was unable to attend to the needs of the royal court, the bedridden courtier found himself with abundant free time in which to reflect, ponder and eventually pray.

**Loyola**

It is during Iñigo’s period of recovery at the family manor at Loyola that his spiritual conversion gained momentum. “In his healing ‘God seized him’ in one of the greatest conversion stories recorded in human history. Iñigo took copious notes in an exquisite hand, as he learned to see himself and his world differently—‘a different nobility, a different service, a different Lord.’”  

writes Joseph Tetlow, S.J. in his introduction to a translation of Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*.

At this point, we need to ask whether it was coincidence or God’s design that his pious and attentive sister-in-law would give Iñigo only two books to read during his recuperation. The first was a translation of Saxony’s *Life of Christ*, and the second, a compilation of the lives of the saints. The notes to Chapter One of Ignatius’ *Autobiography* confirm, “The books given to Ignatius seem to have belonged to his sister-in-law Magdalena, who was something of a mother to him. *The Life of Christ* was by the Carthusian Ludolf of Saxony- in four volumes; the other book was the *Flos Sanctorum* or *Golden Legend* by the Dominican Bishop Jacob de Varezze.” While reading, Iñigo became enthralled with the extraordinary person of Jesus Christ and captivated by the heroic lives of some of the great saints who had dedicated their lives to following Jesus and serving the Church. Through his writings we learn that he was

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inspired most by the simple lifestyle of Saint Francis of Assisi, the well-formed intellect of Saint Dominic, and the deep spirituality of Saint Benedict, the father of Western monasticism. Appropriately, Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit rule for communal living subtly incorporate elements from all three of these particular spiritualities.

It is not surprising that, at this point, Iñigo now considered zealously following Christ and imitating the saints whom he was growing to love and respect. And as he did so, “he found himself at peace and more satisfied.”  

He finally reached a significant turning point in his conversion, when a “beautiful and noble lady” appeared to him in a vision. Eventually, he would recognize this woman as the Blessed Virgin Mary. Fr. John Hardon S.J., a well-known theologian and spiritual author, writes:

It was during this period, while he was still bedridden, that our Lady appeared to him. There are thirty recorded Marian apparitions and revelations in the life of Ignatius, so much so that at one point before he actually founded the Society of Jesus, he had thought of calling it, The Society of Mary. But he had no doubt that our Lady was the one who directed him to found the Society of Jesus. After our Lady's first appearance to Ignatius, he got surprisingly healed, which confirmed him in his mission.

Attention and devotion to the Virgin Mary, therefore, was and remains prominent in Ignatian spirituality. Fittingly, for Ignatius, the most frequently mentioned mediators to God the Father are Jesus and his Blessed Mother. This is patently clear in the Triple Colloquy, a device employed frequently in the Spiritual Exercises. The Ignatian colloquy is a prayer made in the form of a petition that begins first with approaching Mary. Ignatius provides the instruction:

I begin asking Mary to gain for me the grace from her Son; then in the company of Mary, I ask the same petition of her Son, that Jesus may obtain these graces from the Father for me and finally I approach God the Father, having been

presented by both Jesus and Mary. Again, I make the same requests of God the Father who is the giver of all good gifts. (#63, *SpEx*)

Consequently, the privileged place of Mary is paramount in Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit circles, and for this reason numerous chapels, church buildings and retreat houses of the Society of Jesus are dedicated to the honor and patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**Montserrat**

Upon leaving his sickbed behind at Loyola, Iñigo immediately set out for the Holy Land so as to fulfill his newfound aspiration to walk the land that Jesus and Mary once walked. It is not by chance, therefore, that with this particular fidelity to Mary deeply embedded in his spirit, the renewed Iñigo should seek solitude and prayer at a Marian shrine. “The pilgrim,” as he now called himself, stopped at the renowned Benedictine Monastery of Our Lady of Montserrat and there, after a general confession to one of the monks, made an all-night prayer vigil before the altar of the Virgin Mary. Here the repentant Iñigo surrendered his sword and elegant garments and put on the clothing of a simple beggar resolving to no longer serve an earthly king, but to serve only Christ, the “heavenly King.” Ignatius describes this in his autobiography, “Thus he decided to keep a vigil of arms one whole night, without sitting or lying down, but standing a while, before the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat, where he resolved to lay aside his garments and put on the armor of Christ.”

For this reason, in the second week of the Exercises, Ignatius has strategically placed an exercise aptly called the *Contemplation on the Call of the King*. Here Ignatius has one first imagine putting oneself at the service of a charismatic and inspiring earthly

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king who seeks to do good for his people. Then, in the same vein, just as one can pledge allegiance to a dynamic and attractive earthly king, he has one envision Christ Himself, in all His glory, calling courageous and just servants to join Him in the building of God’s kingdom on earth. Here one is “called by name” to serve the Eternal King, and the intention is to respond with great generosity, dedication and obedience. It is clear that this contemplation is a direct product of Ignatius’ former military service to the Spanish king. Therefore, the grace that he wants us to seek in this particular contemplation is to know “Jesus the Eternal King” who calls us to follow Him and to serve His kingdom in our day and time. Ignatius writes:

And as to the first Point, if we consider such a call of the earthly King to his subjects, how much more worthy of consideration is it to see Christ our Lord, King eternal, and before Him all the entire world, which and each one in particular He calls, and says: "It is My will to conquer all the world and all enemies and so to enter into the glory of My Father; therefore, whoever would like to come with Me is to labor with Me, that following Me in the pain, he may also follow Me in the glory. (#95 SpEx)

Throughout the Exercises much of Ignatius’ imagination reflects this militaristic and grandiose way of thinking about one’s service to God. Additionally, in the second week he also adds a meditation suitably called the Two Standards. Here one also prays for the grace to make a generous response to choose to serve selflessly under the standard (a military banner) of Christ “the good king” or of Satan, “the enemy.” Jesus himself is portrayed in Luke 11:23 as contrasting his way of proceeding to the world’s way of proceeding: “He who is not with me is against me.” Ignatius helps us apply this to our own lives in the Meditation on the Two Standards. Indeed, Ignatius learned well that Christians must freely choose, in this life, to either make a stand with Christ or not.
Finally, here too at Montserrat before Our Lady’s altar, in choosing to stand with Christ exclusively, he opted to change his traditional Basque name of Iñigo to the Latinized “Ignatius” in honor of one of the saints that he grew to love most, Saint Ignatius of Antioch. Iñigo admired this fourth-century martyr because of his ardent loyalty to the Church and his assiduous defense of the Christian faith.

**Manresa**

As “the pilgrim” continued on his journey toward the Holy Land, he stopped to pray and reflect at a house of prayer in Manresa, a tranquil Spanish town situated on the banks of the Cardoner River. His original intention was to stay there for only a few days. However, as God would have it, he remained for ten months. There he lived austerely in a small cave near the river, praying each day in silence, attending Mass, fasting, and contemplating the life of Christ as portrayed in the Scriptures. This method of solitary and quiet prayer would become a distinguishing feature of the Ignatian manner of making retreat that is still employed today. Accordingly, it was here in the cave at Manresa that he put down in writing the graces of his prayer periods, and the *Spiritual Exercises* emerged.

It is worth mentioning that here, by the Cardoner river, Ignatius had a significant mystical experience that would bear great influence on his spirituality and the Jesuit vision for seeing God in the world: “While he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened: not that he saw any vision, but he understood and learned many things, both spiritual matters and matters of faith and of scholarship and this with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him.”

Metaphorically, along the banks of the Cardoner, Ignatius began “to see with new

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eyes,” and he perceived that God was, is and will always be present and active in His created world. This was a defining experience that enabled him to “find God in all things,” still a fundamental characteristic of Ignatian spirituality.

**Finding God in All Things**

It is almost impossible not to recognize how a genuine knowledge of God and God’s nearness to us, His beloved daughters and sons, is at the center of Ignatius’ spirituality. Indeed, Ignatius labors to illustrate that the intimate love of God is both tangible and at hand, since God’s grace is continually at work in our hearts and in our souls. This process of earnestly seeking to recognize God’s presence and activity in the world is what Ignatius called “finding God in all things.” Ignatius, without a doubt, was an expert in this practice.

 Appropriately, the Ignatian *Exercises* begin with a meditation called *the Principle and Foundation*. The purpose of this meditation is to help one to come to know that we are created by God so as to live always in his love. Ignatius writes, “Human beings are created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord and by means of doing this to save their souls.” (#23 SpEx) David Fleming, S.J., provides a more contemporary translation of this meditation, which reads, “God loves us, creates us and wants to share life with us forever. Our love response takes shape in our praise and honor and service of the God of our life.” 57 Essentially this means that God can be found in all created things and that all of these things are designed to lead us to the end for which we have been created—love. The respected Jesuit author, Harvey Egan, corroborates this sentiment where he writes:

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His mystical graces led him to see the Trinity and Christ in the humble things of daily life. Hence, Ignatius urged his exercitants to contemplate God’s gifts to them in creation, (Ex, no 234), to contemplate how God is present in all creatures (Ex, no.235) and to contemplate ‘how God works and labors for me in all created things on the face of the earth.’ (Ex, No. 236)

The Holy Land

Eventually, after his departure from Manresa and after a long and arduous journey by sea from the port of Venice, Ignatius arrived in the Holy Land eager to learn more about the Christ whom he desired to imitate. However, after a few short weeks there, because of continual threats by Muslim insurgents, the Bishop of Jerusalem deemed the holy sites unsafe for Christian pilgrims and had them all expelled. Ignatius’ dream of walking in the footsteps of Christ was crushed! He soon returned to Spain with the intention of getting a well-rounded education so that he could seek ordination to the priesthood and fulfill his goal of wholly serving Christ and the Church. Knowing that in order to advance in education, he would first need to learn Latin, in a great act of humility he studied the classical language alongside young children. After having mastered Latin and improved his reading and writing skills, he eventually advanced in his studies of theology, philosophy and the humanities, first at the University of Alcalá then at the highly regarded University of Salamanca. Equipped with the education he had been lacking as a young man, he resolved to pursue further studies at one of the preeminent universities of his day, the University of Paris.

Paris

Since an elite Paris education required sufficient financial support, it was only after having begged for the necessary funds from wealthy family members, friends and benefactors that Ignatius arrived in France. Here he quickly became the leader of a small

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group of faithful Catholic male students (women, at that time, were excluded from university studies) who were equally committed to the intellectual life and to advancing in personal sanctity. Therefore, the question once again begs to be asked: Were these circumstances coincidence or God’s design? Ignatius found himself randomly assigned to living quarters with two younger but highly like-minded roommates: Francisco de Jassu y Xavier and Pierre Favre. Like Ignatius, the younger and equally dynamic Xavier was of Basque nobility. Along with Favre and five others, Xavier would become one of the “Founding Fathers” or “First Companions” of the Society of Jesus. Because of their shared Basque roots and similar upbringings, Xavier and Ignatius quickly became great friends in Paris. Ignatius, recognizing the tremendous charisma and abundance of talent that Xavier possessed, would eventually assign his trusted companion to the precarious foreign missions of Japan and India. Because of his outstanding ministry there, the canonized and much revered Saint Francis Xavier is still regarded as one of the greatest missionaries in the history of the Church.

The third roommate, Pierre Favre—or as he is called in English, Peter Faber—was a French diocesan priest who, like Ignatius, excelled in his studies and was highly regarded as a spiritual guide. In fact, in Jesuit circles, what Xavier is considered to the work of foreign missions, Faber is considered to the work of spiritual formation. Today the Church honors him with the title of “Blessed,” the second of three stages in the canonization process, and he is highly regarded as a “Master” of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius initially directed Xavier and Faber through the Spiritual Exercises, and they in turn directed others, first at Paris and then beyond. Their burgeoning desire to share this new and groundbreaking spirituality with others caused their popularity to increase rapidly,
and soon men and women of all states of life sought out their service and counsel. As this band of friends grew in their commitment to God, to the Church and to one another, they discerned that God was inviting them to form a new and innovative religious community of priests, one that would not be tied to a particular place but instead ready to travel to wherever the Church’s needs were greatest. Additionally, there would be no one single work that would define them except that of “helping souls.” Of this the Jesuit Constitutions state, “The aim and end of this Society is, by traveling through the various parts of the world at the order of the supreme vicar of Christ our Lord or of the superior of the Society itself, to preach, hear confessions, and use all the other means it can with the grace of God to help souls.” 59 Initially these “helpers of souls” called themselves “Friends in the Lord,” and they agreed that they would not wear a distinctive religious habit like the other religious orders; rather they would wear the garb of the local diocesan clergy. For this reason the rule in the Constitutions concerning the manner of dress for a Jesuit affirms: “The clothing too should have three characteristics: first, it should be proper; second, conformed to the usage of the country of residence; and third, not contradictory to the poverty we profess…”60 For this reason, in the United States today, a clerical collar and simple black suit is the customary garb for the Jesuit engaged in pastoral work.

The “First Companions” also discerned that their communal prayer should not be confined to a particular place and time of day, as with monks and friars, and, therefore, no scheduled recitation of the divine office (“the liturgy of the hours”) was expected. Ignatius maintained that such a practice would be an obstacle for his men who were supposed to be ready at any time to leave the confines of the religious house to serve the needs of the

60 Ibid., [577].
Church in any part of the world. Part VI, number 586 of the Jesuit Constitutions, stipulates, “Because the occupations which are undertaken for the aid of souls are of great importance, proper to our Institute, and very frequent; and because on the other hand, our residence in one place or another is so highly uncertain, our members will not regularly hold choir for the canonical hours or sing Masses and offices.” Again, this does not mean that the Jesuit is exempt from praying the office; rather it means simply that Jesuits are not bound to pray together in a fixed place, or at any fixed hour, as is the practice in monastic and semi-monastic communities. Even so, these measures were seen as a radical break from the other religious orders of the day, and while some in the Church were suspicious of these new Jesuits, others were thoroughly drawn to them and their innovative practices.

The up-and-coming Company eventually totaled eight members. One day Faber, the only priest among them, was celebrating Mass with them in a small chapel in the Montmartre section of Paris. When he elevated the consecrated body and blood of Christ, they professed the religious vows of chastity and poverty to the Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament. Since there was no religious superior to whom they could offer the vow at that time, they reserved the vow of obedience until a later date. To this day Jesuits still profess both their first vows and final vows directly to the Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament. However, unlike the “First Companions,” they now profess all three vows of religion—poverty, chastity and obedience, with obedience being pledged to the Jesuit superiors. Ignatius and the early companions, as they waited for papal approval to become a new order, continued with their academic work, spending their free time working in hospitals, soup kitchens, shelters and clinics in Paris’ poorest neighborhoods. During this time they continued to guide others through the *Spiritual Exercises*.

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61 Ibid., [586].
Eventually, after completing their studies, all of the companions were ordained to the priesthood. Moreover, in an effort “to help souls,” they put their superior scholastic training to use by supporting the Church’s efforts to strengthen the Catholic faithful in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. They did this in a positive manner by teaching catechism and zealously preaching in churches, chapels, oratories and public squares and plazas. Almost instantly, they gained a reputation for being astute and dynamic preachers of Sacred Scripture and faithful sons of the Church. As might be expected, numerous young men were attracted to the work and lifestyle of these radically different priests, and their numbers began to increase. Again, coincidence or God's design?

**Ignatius the Mystic**

There appears to be universal agreement that Ignatius was a deeply devout and holy person graced with the gift of mystical visions that indisputably helped to shape his particular spirituality. The *Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* provides a helpful definition of “spiritual visions,” which in the case of Ignatius is categorized as corporeal visions:

**Corporeal Vision.** Corporeal vision is a supernatural manifestation of an object to the eyes of the body. It may take place in two ways: either a figure really present strikes the retina and there determines the physical phenomenon of the vision, or an agent superior to man directly modifies the visual organ and produces in the composite a sensation equivalent to that which an external object would produce. According to the authorities, the first is the usual manner; it corresponds to the invincible belief of the seer, e.g., Bernadette at Lourdes; it implies a minimum of miraculous intervention if the vision is prolonged or if it is common to several persons. But the presence of an external figure may be understood in two ways. Sometimes the very substance of the being or the person will be presented; sometimes it will be merely an appearance consisting in a certain arrangement of luminous rays. The first may be true of living persons and even, it would seem, of the now glorious bodies of Christ and the Blessed Virgin, which by the eminently probable supernatural phenomenon of multilocation may
become present to men without leaving the abode of glory. The second is realized in the corporeal apparition of the unresurrected dead or pure spirits.  

Based on this description then, it is clear that Ignatius is indeed a mystic, one who has direct, not mediated, communication with God. For Ignatius this happened mostly through the visions that occurred when he was deep in prayer and meditation, including those on the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, and the suffering Christ, who at La Storta invited Ignatius to join Him in carrying His cross. On this topic Harvey Eagan, S.J. notes, “Both the Autobiography and the Spiritual Diary reveal clearly that the divine communication Ignatius received frequently came in the form of visions. In fact, he received so many visions that he often noted them in his diary simply with shorthand symbols.”  

For this reason, Ignatius quickly became a master at deciphering his visions and because of either their positive or negative effects on his soul, was able to determine if they were from the Holy Spirit or from the evil spirit. Properly this influenced his numerous rules for the discernment of spirits. For Ignatius, if his visions confirmed his holy desires, he would hold them in high regard and act upon them accordingly. Interestingly enough, it was this same vision at La Storta that provided Ignatius with the confirmation of his desire to establish a new religious order. In addition to the enlightenment he gained from his visions of the raw humanity of Jesus, Ignatius’s abundant writings illustrate that through his visions he also became enlightened to the sacred presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and to the connectedness of the Holy Trinity, the immense love between a Father and His Son in the Spirit. Therefore, central to

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63 Egan, Ignatius Loyola the Mystic, 183.
Ignatian spirituality is one’s contemplation of the work of the Holy Trinity, active and present in our world, and gifting us with all “good gifts from above.”

The preceding statements emphasize the vital importance of the lessons Ignatius learned from his mystical visions, lessons of God’s infinite love for humanity and God's desire to be one with us. It is not uncommon too in the history of Christian spirituality that holy men and women should also have horrible visions of the devil that are often used for some greater good. Ignatius records only one significant vision of “the enemy” that influenced his spirituality. Of this account Fr. Egan writes:

In Manresa, Ignatius began to have a type of vision that would occur often in his life (Autobiography nos. 19, 31). In broad daylight, he saw in the air a serpent-like form that shone brightly with many eye-like things. This vision brought much consolation, yet because it lost color in the light of the cross before which Ignatius knelt, he concluded that it came from the devil. Although he drove it away with his pilgrim’s staff, the vision continued to appear to him. It is remarkable that among all the visions Ignatius had this is the only one that he discerned as demonic and rejected.  

As frightening as this vision was, it is clear too that it provided Ignatius with the important lesson of complete reliance and trust in God’s enduring mercy in the midst of temptation and tribulation.

The Society of Jesus

Trusting in God’s providence, Ignatius and some of the Companions left Paris and journeyed to Rome. There they hoped to gain an audience with the Pope at which time they would place themselves totally at his service and solicit his formal approval for their new religious order. As they approached Rome, the Companions stopped to pray in a humble roadside chapel in the village of La Storta. Here, as God would have it, Ignatius experienced the second of his significant mystical experiences. This experience

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64 Ibid., 183.
confirmed his desire to establish a religious order that would bear the name of the Holy
Savior. Here, before the altar at LaStorta, Ignatius clearly saw himself helping the
suffering Christ to carry his cross. He understood this vision to be a sign of affirmation
that God had placed him alongside Christ so as to share in His saving mission for the
world. Ignatius states in his *Autobiography*, “he experienced such a change in his soul
and saw so clearly that God the Father placed him with Christ the Son that he would not
dare doubt it, that God the Father had placed him with his Son.”

Not surprisingly, a significant part of Ignatius’ spirituality focuses on the mystery
of Christ’s saving passion and death on the cross. Ignatius himself had a strong desire to
be subjected to and to participate in the passion and death of Jesus, a common practice in
the religious thought of the sixteenth century. As mentioned above, Ignatius identified
ardently with the suffering and death of the Lord both at Manresa and again at La Storta,
because it reflected Christ’s absolute humanity. With regard to this, David Lonsdale, S.J.
writes, “In the second and third weeks of the *Spiritual Exercises* the image of Jesus which
Ignatius presents for daily contemplation is that of the man who is also the Son of God
and who pursues his evangelizing mission in poverty until it leads ultimately to his
suffering and death on the cross.” Likewise, Ignatius’ zealous identification with the
cross and passion of the Lord has its roots deep in the Sacred Scriptures of the Church.
We see that Jesus taught, “pick up your cross and follow me,” (Mk 8: 34) and Saint Paul
reaffirmed, “that I may know him, and may share in his sufferings, becoming like him in
his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” (1 Cor 1: 5-7)

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Notably, the single focus of the entire third week of the Ignatian Exercises is the Passion and Death of the Lord. During this week the retreatant is expected to spend numerous hours silently contemplating and meditating upon this saving event. Ignatius prescribes in the first exercise of the third week, “The fourth point, to consider that which Christ our Lord is suffering in His humanity, or wants to suffer, according to the passage which is being contemplated, and here to commence with much vehemence and to force myself to grieve, be sad and weep, and so to labor through the other points which follow.” (#195 SpEx) Here again Fr. Tetlow summarizes it well; “The principal objective of this exercise is “for one to come to an understanding of how God, out of great love for us, suffered in Jesus’ humanness, 'hiding' his divine power so that we can be with Him in his powerlessness as He is with us.” Tetlow concludes, “Much of the spiritual work of prayer on Jesus’ passion is just to be with him.” Ignatius, consistent with the teachings of the Church, acknowledges that it is because of our sin, this obstacle to our union with God, that Christ had to endure the agony and humiliation that was his passion and death on the cross. Still he places emphasis on the fact that it is precisely in our sinfulness that we are loved, forgiven and redeemed through the perfect sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

Shortly following this profound experience of affirmation at La Storta, God confirmed the foundation of this religious community on September 27, 1540, when Pope Paul III, who had become positively captivated with Ignatius and his companions, approved the establishment of this new religious order with the papal bull Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae (for the governance of the Church militant). After deep prayer and meditation, Ignatius formally dedicated this band of friends to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Thus, drawing on his past military history, he named their new community “La

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67 Tetlow, Ignatius Loyola, The Spiritual Exercises, 130.
Compañía de Jesús” in his native Spanish or Societatis Iesu in Latin (in English, the Society of Jesus, with its members being called the Jesuits.) Ignatius wanted to apply the term “company” to his “companions” since he knew personally that a band of soldiers, bound by a common mission, is called a company. This is what he hoped to put at the Lord’s disposal—a company of brothers, under the Lord’s patronage, united by a common mission to evangelize and to preach the good news of Jesus Christ. Again, so much of Ignatius’ writings are filled with royal and militaristic metaphors that capture this attitude. The introductory paragraph of the Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus, written by Ignatius and approved and confirmed by the Church asserts:

> Whoever desires to serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the cross in our society, which we desire to be designated by the name of Jesus, and to serve the Lord alone and the Church, his spouse, under the Roman pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth, should, after a solemn vow of perpetual chastity, poverty and obedience, keep what follows in mind. He is a member of a Society founded chiefly for this purpose: to strive especially for the defense and propagation of the Holy faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine. 

The purpose of this “Company” was and remains clear: “for the progress of helping souls in the Christian life and for the propagation and defense of the holy faith.” It comes as no surprise that Ignatius was unanimously elected the Company’s first Superior General or “Father General.” While he initially resisted this position, he eventually accepted it and dedicated the remainder of his life to building up the order.

The Society of Jesus, with God’s grace and steadfast aid, grew rapidly, and its works of teaching catechism, preaching the Gospel, serving the poor and administering the

Spiritual Exercises gained for them the respect and admiration of many. These included a number of wealthy benefactors who helped with the financial support of Father

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68 The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms, [1].
69 Ibid.,[1].
Ignatius’ ambitious efforts to “save souls.” Though he himself preferred preaching and giving the Exercises, Ignatius placed the needs of his new congregation first, and he spent the remainder of his life writing the Constitutions of the Society, which, to this day, continue to guide the order. In his lifetime the holy founder would live to see the Society grow from the original eight companions to over one thousand members. He would personally oversee the Society’s varied ministries throughout Europe and as far away as the unfamiliar Spanish and Portuguese colonies of South America and Asia. Despite the rapidly growing numbers, he sought to treat each and every Jesuit as a unique individual, considering each one's personal gifts, talents and limitations. This concept of personal care for the individual is referred to in the Jesuit lexicon as “cura personalis,” a specific quality that to this day helps to shape the Jesuit vision of education and service to others.

**Jesuit Education**

A question that has been raised repeatedly in treating the history of Ignatius Loyola and his Society of Jesus throughout this treatise has been; “Were these circumstances coincidence or God’s design?” Here this question can be rightfully asked, is it coincidence or God’s design that the Jesuits are best known today for the ministry of Christian education, a work which, at their foundation, was never intended to be chief among their focuses. Again, Ignatius primarily wanted this Company to be available to go wherever the Pope determined that the Church’s needs were greatest. Indeed, the First Companions of the sixteenth century, and the Jesuits of today continue to make themselves available to the Holy Father so that “he might make use of them
wherever he thought it would be more for the greater glory of God and the good of souls. ”

Jesuit education grew out of the order's efforts to provide the best possible education and religious formation for its newest members. To achieve this, Ignatius established Jesuit seminaries, or colleges, that, similar to his revered University of Paris, were intended to be academically rigorous and challenging. Ignatius therefore initially established close to ten of these “colleges” throughout Europe. One in particular piqued the interest of more than a few members of the Italian aristocracy in the city of Messina in Sicily. Captivated by the outstanding education that these Jesuit colleges were providing for their new recruits, many influential citizens of Messina urgently requested of the Jesuits a ‘college’ where their own sons could experience a similar education. They sent numerous requests to Father Ignatius in Rome exerting persistent pressure on him to open such a school. Cognizant of the fact that these prosperous families were in a position, as benefactors, to advance the Society’s foreign missions, the insightful Superior General finally succumbed to their demands and sent five Jesuits to establish a college for young men at Messina. Thus, this small school for the sons of aristocrats gave birth to the extensive network of Jesuit schools that is now found on six continents. Today, by God’s help, the Jesuit network remains the largest network of education in the world.

Indeed the domino effect was activated in Sicily, and, as Jesuit vocations increased, so too did demands from others outside of Messina for these new Jesuits to educate their sons. Despite his initial apprehension about the Society’s attachment to particular institutions such as schools, Ignatius eventually came to realize that education

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could prove a very effective tool for “helping souls” and positively influencing others.

Ignatius articulated this in the Jesuit Constitutions:

The more universal the good is, the more it is divine. Therefore preference ought to be given to those persons and places which, once benefited themselves, are a cause of extending the good to many others who are under their influence or take guidance from them.... For the same reason, too, preference ought to be shown to the aid which is given to ... universities, which are generally attended by numerous persons who, if aided themselves, can become laborers for the help of others.\textsuperscript{71}

With its humanist-centered program that included a disciplined study of theology, philosophy, fine arts, music, classical languages, poetry, rhetoric and morality, requests for these Jesuit schools poured in from all over the world.

Accordingly, schools were established in a range of places throughout Europe, Asia and the New World. Ignatius himself helped to establish twelve such colleges before his death in Rome on July 31, 1556. After his death the number of schools soon doubled. In response to this extraordinary increase in its educational activity, the Society would eventually standardize its curriculum into what became distinctly known as the \textit{Ratio Studiorum}, or “plan of studies.” It was expected that this course of study would be strictly upheld in each school sponsored by the Society. Accordingly, its full title is \textit{Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu} ("The Official Plan for Jesuit Education").

Though not observed today as it was in past centuries, educational institutions sponsored by the Society of Jesus remain committed to a common approach to education that exposes their students to a rigorous and comprehensive humanist-centered curriculum that is solidly faith-based and dedicated to forming leaders in the

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms}, [622].
world who will be exemplary in their generous service of others. Today there are guidelines and criteria that must be met by Jesuit-sponsored educational institutions if they are to continue to bear the name Jesuit.

Without a doubt Jesuit education continues to seek to produce well-rounded and truly educated persons of faith who seek to labor as servant leaders wherever they find themselves. Certainly, Jesuit education, in the course of its five-hundred-year history, has always been dedicated to the pursuit of truth and knowledge, excellence in learning, and the commitment to helping students to recognize and employ their God-given gifts and talents for the building up of a more just and loving world. The late and much beloved Superior General of the Jesuits, Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J., made reference to this notion in a highly referenced speech given to an international gathering of Jesuit alumni/ae in Valencia, Spain in 1973. Father Arrupe boldly declared:

Today our (Jesuits') prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ - for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce.72

Ignatius the Final Years

Though he generally enjoyed good health throughout most of his life, Ignatius had suffered from stomach disorders since his younger days, and these became increasingly problematic for him in Rome. In the summer of 1556, amid the stresses and burdens placed on him as the founding “General” of the emergent Company and while laboring to successfully manage new schools and foreign missions, his stomach problems worsened and

his health began to fail significantly. Consequently, Father Ignatius took a turn for the worse and just after midnight on July 31, he breathed his last. The visionary mystic and holy founder confidently surrendered his soul to God and died with those he loved most surrounding his deathbed, his “Friends in the Lord,” his “Companions in Christ,” his Jesuits. By the grace of God, Ignatius was beatified on July 27, 1609 and canonized on March 12, 1622, together with his closest friend and spiritual companion, Saint Francis Xavier. The universal Church celebrates Saint Ignatius’ feast day on July 31st, the day on which he passed from death into eternal life. For Jesuits and their colleagues, that day remains simply “Ignatius Day,” a day on which to remember, celebrate and take pride in the heavenly patron, the soldier turned saint, whose spirituality and vision of selfless service continues to transform the Church and the world in which we live.

With this, the question once again arises: Was it coincidence or God’s design that the once poorly educated Ignatius of Loyola would help to establish a new religious order in the Catholic Church, for which education would become one of its principal means of forming minds and hearts? Currently the website of the U.S. National Conference of the Society of Jesus provides the following statistics regarding Jesuit sponsored institutions of education. In our day an estimated “3,730 Jesuit-related institutions of learning throughout the world educate over 2.5 million students. Of these institutions 160 are Jesuit-sponsored universities.” Astoundingly, these centers of higher learning can be found on five continents educating people of every social status. They are found in places as diverse as South Korea, Poland, New Zealand, Chile, Nepal, Lebanon and Zimbabwe. In the United States alone there are 28 such universities. These schools consistently enjoy excellent

rankings and are recognized as some of the finest educational institutions in their respective locales. “To date, approximately 4,000 Jesuits and over 125,000 colleagues serve together in the ministries of education sponsored by the Society of Jesus. In the USA alone, Jesuit universities currently lay claim to over 1.7 million living graduates.”

Surely, Jesuit education has come a long way from its initial days in Sicily. Again, coincidence or God’s design? For the person of faith, there is no such thing as coincidence. There is only God's wonderful design!

**Conclusion**

Like so many women and men venerated throughout the Church’s history, Ignatius sought to share his great love for and devotion to the Church with his fellow Christians. Additionally, though not a monk or a friar, he valued silent contemplative prayer, but with a significant emphasis on the active engagement of others. In this regard, he was truly “balanced” in the religious life of his age. Most importantly, he taught that the nexus of the spiritual life is to live in God’s spirit at all times and in all places, and to labor to make this spirit known. Ignatius Loyola sought the greater glory of God and the building of God’s coming kingdom through active service in the world. He placed the following of Jesus Christ at the center of his ministries and spirituality, so as to be able to go, through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, to the Father, in the Holy Spirit. Ignatius, therefore, offers us a way to live in communion with the Holy Spirit that can truly transform us into the image of Christ Himself if we but cooperate with His grace. With Christ at the center, then, like Ignatius, we can live in service and commitment to others, as Christ Himself lived—loving, forgiving, welcoming and praising. Ignatius sought to communicate to us that all of Christ’s work was directed towards a restoration of the order of creation established by God, for

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74 Ibid.
God’s greater glory, and for our loving communion with God in this life and in the world to come.

Notably, Jesus gave his disciples an indication of how he expected us to carry on His mission. The ordained, religious, lay, male, female, young and aging are called to follow His generous example of loving service to one another. In Jesus’ words to his apostles, He says to the Church today, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (John 20:21)

Therefore, the Church's ministry to the world is to model Christ’s. He had been sent in love; so too He sends us in love. Again, this is our mission—to love. Truly many of those called to the ministry of Jesuit-sponsored education, in service to and in communion with their Jesuit colleagues, have heard the call to fulfill the Church’s mission. Therefore, we should be hopeful that with improved education and earnest cooperation with the Holy Spirit, who is always working in the Church, the continued renewal and progress that we seek will become a reality for all of God’s Church.
CHAPTER IV

THE PROJECT

A. Participants

The participants in Ignis were a mixed group of twelve faculty, staff and administrators from all three of Fordham University’s campuses. All of the participants were personally identified and invited based on their direct involvement and considerable sphere of influence with students. All freely accepted the invitation to participate in the daylong training program. To gather a diverse group, a deliberate balance of gender was sought, as well as a mixture of age, ethnicity and religious backgrounds. Most of the participants were Roman Catholics of varying degrees of observance; one woman was a Methodist, and two identified as “non-religious,” I faced little or no opposition from any regarding their commitment to a daylong (eight-hour) training program, and all were open to the idea of learning more about Ignatian spirituality and its impact on Jesuit-inspired education. One of the contributors to the group, a campus minister, noted in the evaluation, “The structure of the day went very well. I felt engaged and excited about what was presented.” Without a doubt, the entire group was very enthusiastic about the material presented and about the challenges it posed to their professional lives as colleagues in Jesuit higher education. Most, in fact, told me that they were eager to experience a program like Ignis and that they were hopeful that it would prove beneficial to both their professional and spiritual lives. An administrator in the group noted, “All Fordham employees should go through this training. I can’t believe that I have been at Fordham this long and only now learned all of this. I am grateful but disappointed that I
did not learn this sooner.” Notably all agreed with the nature and intent of the project, and one participant declared, “In fact, the program was quite motivating. I personally was moved enough to want to inspire my students more with these (Ignatian) values.” A good indicator of the group’s eagerness to participate in Ignis was that each and every one, without exception, had carefully read and prepared discussion questions pertaining to the pre-reading handouts on St. Ignatius Loyola, the brief history of the Society of Jesus and the development of Jesuit education.

Profile of Participants

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<td>60 +</td>
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<table>
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<td>Bachelor's</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (Jewish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>1 (nothing)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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B. Program Objectives

_Ignis_ has three principal objectives for those who choose to participate in the program:

1. To explore the spirituality and world vision of Saint Ignatius Loyola and its embodiment in the life and apostolic ministries of the Jesuits and their partners in mission.
2. To address the spiritual journey of those partners in mission who choose to further explore the spiritual life.
3. To facilitate a deeper understanding of the Jesuit way of proceeding in mission, while helping participants to realize the transforming power of Ignatian spirituality and the Catholic tradition.

C. The Project Design

The primary goal of the _Ignis Training Program: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality and Mission in the Jesuit Tradition_ is to transmit, in a constructive manner, the virtues of Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit tradition to those non-Jesuits who serve in its sponsored institutions of higher learning. It seeks to instill in the participants a greater understanding of the educational network that they serve and in which they enjoy membership as Jesuit colleagues and associates. In offering _Ignis_ as a potential resource for those charged with maintaining and promoting an institution’s Jesuit and Catholic identity, I hope to address the problem of finding a balanced, creative and vibrant approach for training professional staff in the time-honored charism and spirituality of Saint Ignatius Loyola as well as the vision of service and mission of the Society of Jesus.
which he founded. *Ignis* can be used flexibly for laypersons of varying levels of education, exposure and experience, so that all who are invited to participate in formation for Jesuit mission will better understand and appreciate the charism and particular spirituality which animates their respective center of learning. *Ignis* proposes a common, standardized and comprehensive approach for instruction in Ignatian spirituality that strives to be both current and practical. Accordingly, the following agenda and format is offered to meet said goals.

**D. Agenda**

9:30 am- Registration, coffee and pastries.
10:00 am- Opening prayer and introduction to *Ignis*. Group Ice Breaker.

**Session One**

10:30 am- **Video**: *The Spanish Olive* (An animated film depicting the life of St Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus)
10:45 am- **Presentation**: Overview of St Ignatius Loyola, the *Spiritual Exercises*, Spirituality, and Ignatian Spirituality.
11:15 am – **Break**
11:25 am- **Small-Group Discussion**- break-out rooms.
12:00 pm- **Large-Group Discussion over Lunch**.

**Session Two**

12:45 pm- **Presentation**: The Founding of the Society of Jesus, the establishment of Jesuit Education, the Jesuit way of proceeding today: “a faith that does justice.”
1:30 pm- **Small-Group Discussion**- break-out rooms
2:00 pm- **Break**
2:15 pm- **Large-Group Discussion**- break-out rooms
2:45 pm- **Break**
2:55 pm- **Guided Examen**-Chapel

**Session Three**

3:15 pm- **Presentation**: Jesuit vision for contemporary mission, looking back and moving ahead. The place of the *19th Annotation* retreat, and the role of the laity in Jesuit Higher Education.
3:45 pm- **Small-Group Discussion**- break-out rooms
4:15 pm- **Break**
4:30 pm- **Large-Group Discussion**- break-out rooms
5:00 pm- **Wrap-up and Evaluation**.
5:30 pm- **Departure**
CHAPTER V
IMPLEMENTATION

Session One

Mindful that the entire foundation of Jesuit education is rooted in helping all those involved in the institution—students, faculty and staff—to grow in their knowledge of God and those divine truths that guide our way of living, and cognizant of the fact that nothing worth doing is worth doing alone nor without God’s help, we opened the day’s program with the following prayer:

Opening Prayer

Today we gather, meeting together to reflect on where we stand and who we are in the ministry of Jesuit higher education. Let us bow our heads and pray.

Almighty and Eternal God, we have come here to pray and to learn, according to your divine purpose for each of us. We thank you for your presence with us and for the bonds of mission that draw us together. Be with us, Lord, in this place and at this time, as we affirm our part in “forming men and women for and with others.” Stir in us a new understanding of our role in Jesuit education, that we may commit ourselves to continuing the great work established for us by St. Ignatius Loyola and his companions in faith. Help us with your grace, Lord, to be transformed this day so that we may serve freely and passionately, and know that everything we do has a place in your plan. Inspire us always to labor tirelessly for the promotion of faith and the service of justice.

Open our minds, touch our hearts and enflame our souls, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saint Ignatius Loyola, pray for us!
Philip Florio, SJ

After the opening prayer and before delving into the first session’s presentation, I offered an icebreaker activity intended to help the participants to learn more about each
other and the topic at hand. This activity was primarily designed to help the participants learn more about the expansive history of the Jesuits, while allowing people to work together and become more comfortable in one another’s presence. Icebreakers can often serve as effective ways of beginning a training day and may prove helpful to creating a sense of community among a group that is not as familiar with each other. Again, I offered what I thought would be an interactive and enjoyable activity that would be helpful in transmitting information about the topic to be addressed, while also laying a positive foundation for the purpose of the entire program. I was indeed mindful that an icebreaker activity, if it is thoughtfully designed, considers the diversity of the participants, and, if well implemented, could set the tone for a positive program. By familiarizing oneself with the group and the presenter, and also learning about the objectives of the program, participants may be better suited to engage in the program's activities and contribute more to the discussions and proceedings. To increase the comfort level of the participants, I had the large group of twelve break up into three smaller groups (randomly assigned) of four persons each. Group one was named Loyola, group two was named Xavier, and group three was named Faber. They were then given ten minutes to work together in answering the following questions designed to introduce them to some of the great Jesuits in the Society’s history. The group that answered the most questions correctly received Fordham key chains as a prize.
Icebreaker Exercise

Please break into groups, and match the name with the correct description of some famous Jesuits:

A. St. Andrew Bobola  K. John Carroll
B. Amando López  L. José de Anchieta
C. St. Alberto Hurtado  M. John M. Corridan
D. Avery Dulles  N. John Francis Regis
E. Alfred Delp  O. St. Edmund Campion
F. St. Aloysius Gonzaga  P. Karl Rahner
G. Eusebio Francisco Kino  Q. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
H. St. Francis Xavier  R. St. Peter Canisius
I. Gerard Manley Hopkins  S. Jacques Marquette
J. Gabriel Richard  T. Patrick Conroy

___ Labor activist and "waterfront priest," his story inspired the classic film *On the Waterfront*

___ English martyr, writer and famed scholar

___ American theologian, author and cardinal

___ Prolific missionary and cartographer of New Mexico, his statue is in Statuary Hall in the US Capital

___ A missionary to Asia who converted more people to Catholicism than anyone in history

___ Polish Missionary, killed by the Cossacks

___ German hanged for his opposition to Hitler

___ Italian who died at the age of 23 while serving plague victims, the Patron Saint of Youth

___ Chilean social reformer, scholar and “Father of the Poor”

___ One of the six martyrs of the UCA, El Salvador

___ Co-founder of University of Michigan, first congressional representative from Michigan

___ Renowned Irish poet

___ Currently the Chaplain to the US House of Representatives in Congress.

___ First bishop of the United States and founder of Georgetown University
After the opening prayer and the icebreaker exercise, but before the first session presentation, participants began the day’s training by writing a personal mission statement intended to reflect their level of knowledge and understanding of the Jesuit vision for mission in Higher Education.

**The Vision for Mission Template**

Use the following template to write a personal mission statement, as a “partner in mission” at a Jesuit-sponsored institution:

1) I *seek* to know, love and serve God in order to:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2) *I exist* for others in order to:
3) I serve/minister/teach in order to:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4) I seek to understand Ignatian Spirituality and the Jesuit vision for mission because:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

5) As a “partner in mission,” I hope to accomplish the following:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
The Spanish Olive Video

After completing the mission template, we began Session One by viewing the video, *The Spanish Olive*. This video, which is written, produced and edited by Jason Kapell in the Media Center at Fairfield University, is a brief animated film that depicts the life of St. Ignatius Loyola and the founding of the Society of Jesus in a humorous and entertaining manner. Since a stuffed Spanish olive tells the historical particulars of Ignatius’ life, it really is intended to be light, novel and engaging. The target audience of the video, therefore, is primarily students, but it has proven successful (as was the case at this Fordham presentation) with faculty and staff as well. The video was indeed well received and laid the foundation for positive and engaging discussions throughout the day.

Presentation

The first presentation I gave was an overview of the history and person of Ignatius Loyola, the *Spiritual Exercises* that he developed, and Ignatian spirituality.

I began with providing five fun facts about Ignatius created by Fr. Paul Campbell, S.J. (Director of Loyola Press):

- He was hauled up before the Spanish Inquisition on a number of occasions.
- He joined a class of young children, at age 33, so that he could learn Latin.
- He once allowed the donkey that he was riding on to determine whether he’d follow and murder someone he thought had insulted the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- He may be the only canonized saint to have a notarized police record—for nighttime brawling with intent to inflict serious harm.
- He sometimes cried with so much devotion at Mass that he couldn’t continue and feared that he would lose his eyesight. This is Ignatius Loyola!

I then provided the details of the great saint’s life by filling in information based on an abbreviated timeline that underscores the significant dates and events in Ignatius’ life. I
also used a PowerPoint presentation that matched up corresponding photos, images and depictions with each presented topic of Ignatius’ life. (See attached PowerPoint presentation.)

**Abbreviated Timeline St Ignatius of Loyola:**

1491 - Ignatius was born and baptized Iñigo Lopez Oñaz de Loyola, the youngest of 13 children and the 7th son of nobility. He was poorly educated, and a problematic young man.

1506-21 - Sent to serve as a page to Don Juan Velázquez, the regional treasurer to the King of Spain.

1521 - His leg is shattered by a cannonball during the French siege of Pamplona, and herein begins his conversion at Loyola- influenced by two books, had Marian visions, and experienced great desires to go to the Holy Land.

1522 - Undertook a pilgrimage to the Benedictine shrine of Montserrat and surrendered his sword before the Virgin, changed his name and his way of living.

1522 - Prayed at Manresa- received First Significant Mystical vision, wrote the *Exercises*, and developed the Ignatian method of retreat.

1523 - Made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; there he is sent back to Spain and finally answered the ordination call, studied Latin with school children.

1524 - Began liberal studies in Barcelona.

1526 - Examined by the Inquisition while studying at Alcala.

1527 - Arrested by the Spanish Inquisition while a student at Salamanca.

1528 - Left Spain, for the University of Paris- seeking a rigorous education, he balanced his studies with administering the Exercises and care of the poor, met Xavier and Faber,
formed the group-“friends in Lord,” radical ideas, worked with others administering the SpEx

1534 - Took first vows (NO Obedience) with companions in Montmartre

1537 - Ordained as a priest in Venice

1537 - Left for Rome, LA STORTA- Second Significant Mystical Vision- unmediated experience of God

1539 - Gathered his companions in Rome service to Pope Paul III – promoting the SpEx and the work of Catholic reformation

1540 - Founded the Society of Jesus

1541 - Elected as the Superior General of ’Society of Jesus’

1548 – The Spiritual Exercises are approved by Pope Paul III

1551 - Offered to resign as the Superior General- offer was refused

1556 – Ignatius died in Rome - saw growth from 9 to 1000 Jesuits all over the world.

Upon learning of his death, the future saint and friend to Ignatius, Philip Neri, proclaimed, “The saint is dead!”

Upon completing the life of Ignatius Loyola, I then gave a brief overview of his Spiritual Exercises and the major themes of Ignatian spirituality.

Overview of Ignatian Spirituality

As a launching point, I started with a cursory exploration of spirituality. I began by asking the participants to define spirituality, as they understand it. I then asked them to reconsider it within the framework of the following definition; “Spirituality pertains to the spirit- --the true self and the divine spirit within each person.” After soliciting
responses and various definitions from the large group, I provided the following information on spirituality:

- The essence of spirituality is the search to know our true selves, to discover the real nature of consciousness.

- This quest has been the foundation of all the great spiritual teachings, and the goal of all the great mystics throughout history.

- Most spiritual teachings also maintain that when one comes to know the true nature of consciousness, one also comes to know God.

- If God is the essence of the whole of creation, then God is the essence of every creature, and every person. This is why the search to discover the nature of one's own innermost essence is the search for God.

After establishing a sense of both the meaning and importance of spirituality in general, we then engaged in a brief treatment of Ignatian spirituality. We first considered that in the Church, each of the major religious orders--the Benedictines, Carmelites, Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and Jesuits (Ignatian)--has its own distinctive brand of spirituality that can assist one on the path to holiness. I proposed to the group that Ignatian spirituality may be one of the best-suited schools of spirituality for lay persons in the ministry of education, since Ignatian spirituality is a time-honored approach to Christian prayer which, over the course of five centuries, has proven to be extremely effective in strengthening the spiritual lives of so many men and women of faith and service. I used the following statements from several spiritual authors to illustrate my point:
• David Fleming, S.J. writes, “The goal of the spiritual life, as Ignatius conceived it, is to “choose what best leads to God’s deepening life in me.”

• Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano, spiritual authors, note: “Service is the embodiment and expression of spirituality. While action may be good, it is not ministry unless it is an expression and an overflow of one’s relationship with God.”

In an effort to demonstrate how Ignatian spirituality is well matched for lay colleagues in education, I made reference to the following points:

• Ignatian spirituality seeks God actively working in the world, and provides an approach for reflective and interactive prayer that can truly deepen the spiritual life of the layperson amid one’s busyness.

• Ignatian Spirituality is appealing partly because of its simplicity and scrupulous focus on the imitation of Christ, and also because it is readily available since there are close to 30 Jesuit retreat houses in the U.S. alone.

• Ignatius instructs us to reflect on what Jesus said and did in his relationship with God and with others. At the nucleus of Jesus’ life was prayer, and for Ignatius prayer was meant to resemble an “intimate conversation” between the “Creator” and “His creature.”

• Ignatian Spirituality affirms our capacity to be like Christ in the world despite our daily struggles against sin and evil, which ultimately lead us away from God.

To help us in the battle against sin in our lives, Ignatius of Loyola bequeathed to the Church two great spiritual gifts for engaging in this struggle--the Spiritual Exercises and the Examen. Both of these can serve as effective spiritual tools in the hands of the layperson committed to serving the apostolate of education in the Jesuit tradition. The Ignatian Exercises help one to tend to their spirit and relationship with God; they are “down to earth” since they were literally born in a cave. In all, there are more than two hundred specific exercises grouped into four sections, or “weeks,” so-named because the Exercises were originally given and made over a four-week period. The sections can be summarized as follows:
- **Week One:** A prayerful examination of who God is and how special the individual human being is in God’s eyes. The goal of this "week" is to come to know God more intimately and to appreciate God more fully. This phase includes reflection on how people throughout history, including ourselves, by committing sin have failed to respond to God’s love in a positive way. The object here is not only to understand but also to feel God’s love for us – in spite of the fact that we are sinners. **Week One theme:** I AM A LOVED SINNER.

- **Week Two:** Prayer and meditation on the life of Jesus Christ, from His infancy through His public life. The goal here is to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus as we come to know Him better, love Him more, and grow in our desire to serve Him and to follow Him more closely. **Week Two theme:** I AM CALLED TO BE WITH AND SERVE THE KING, JESUS.

- **Week Three:** Contemplation and prayer on Jesus’ suffering, crucifixion and death, for our sake. **Week Three theme:** I WISH TO ACCEPT SUFFERING and SACRIFICE, IN UNION WITH JESUS.

- **Week Four:** Prayer and reflection on Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and his appearance to people afterwards as he returns to console and encourage his followers. This final exercise is intended to bring us to a state of gratitude for all that Jesus and God the Father have done for us. **Week Four theme:** NEW LIFE AND A NEW WAY OF LOVING, AS GOD WOULD HAVE US LOVE.

We then examined some of the famed and highly respected rules for discernment that Ignatius provides at the end of the Exercises as guides for living well the spiritual life. I used the following outline:

**Rules for Discernment** - involves testing and gauging the SPIRITS--both good and bad. Our task is to look at our heart, as God does--not an easy task--in fact, an almost impossible feat.

- Ignatius would have us learn that these two, the heart and the head, are the tools that serve best for discerning the will of God in our lives.
- Of the heart Paschal says, "The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know. We feel it in a thousand things. It is the heart that experiences God, and not reason. This, then, is faith: God felt by the heart, not by reason."
- Ignatius teaches that BOTH the emotions and the intellect are needed for making good daily choices. Discernment for Ignatius, then, is “ultimately choosing with God.”
- Key to Ignatian discernment is affectivity, which can best be understood as the ability to feel emotions: that part of mental life and activity relating to the emotions. It’s our ability to be shaken, touched or affected by someone or
something. And, frankly, it stirs up passion. It is also easy to see and to recognize.

- To do this one has to be silent, to listen within.; too much noise or too many distractions keep us from hearing what God is saying to the heart. It's hard to hear someone if another is shouting over him or if the music is too loud.
- Discernment, listening to the deepest desires of our heart, then, can help us to achieve peace and life. Eph 5:10 says that “my inner being is pleased with what pleases the Lord.”
- Ignatius refers to those feelings that stir up faith, hope and love as consolation, while desolation is the opposite.
- Good choices bring about peace, joy, patience and the desire to do more.
- Bad choices bring despair, depression, anxiety and inordinate attachments.
- We are known by the fruits we produce, and, as Ignatius states, we ought always to choose what pleases the Divine Majesty.

**Group Reflections and Questions**

After having engaged the group in a brief question--and--answer session about the presented material, in an effort to reinforce what had been offered, I then asked the group to break up into their smaller groups and to attend to the reflection questions listed below. They were instructed to reflect together for twenty-five to thirty minutes, and to appoint a “recorder” who would take notes and record any significant particulars of their conversations. Additionally, they were asked to elect a “presenter” who would present their particulars to the larger group when it later convened. Again, this methodology of employing small and large groups was designed to encourage people to reflect actively together on the presented material, and to discuss practical applications of the material for their professional lives. Stated simply, education does not take place in a vacuum, and the listening to how others may be appropriating the material can prove helpful to many. The group discussions and presentations, across the board, were well received and successful. Eight of the twelve participants indicated in their evaluations that the reflection questions and
group discussions were “most helpful,” while four indicated that they were “very helpful.” Aside from time constraints—many indicated that more time would have been helpful for discussions, the questions and discussion were very positive. One participant wrote, "I really enjoyed the small-group discussions. The intentionality behind the small groups—putting us with people from different parts of the university—was a really smart choice.” This person went on to say about the group discussions, “The last large-group discussion was really fantastic, and I am happy that we did that rather go into small groups at the end. I am impressed that we went from talking about ideas to really beginning to talk about action steps for further programs/discussions/implementation across the university.”

Questions for Reflection

1. What insights have you gained about Ignatius and his *Spiritual Exercises* that give new meaning to the Jesuit vision for higher education and your role in serving in this mission?

2. How might you “find God in all things” in your professional service at Fordham and in your own personal life?

3. How do you see yourself, as a partner in ministry, sharing the vision of Ignatius, the “first companions” and the contemporary Society of Jesus?

Session Two

Overview of Jesuits and Education

After an extended lunch break we began the Second Session with a keen treatment of the founding of the Society of Jesus, the establishment of Jesuit education and an in-depth exploration of the Jesuit way of proceeding in contemporary education. I began, as I did the first session, with a light and seemingly entertaining approach to introducing the Jesuits. We assessed titles, some familiar, some less familiar, that have
been applied to those members of the Society of Jesus throughout the course of its 472-
year history. I provided the list below, an accurate but not completely exhaustive list:


We then examined the standard Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition of the word Jesuit:
1: a member of the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1534 and devoted to missionary and educational work
2: one given to intrigue or equivocation

Needless to say the group had a wonderfully stimulating conversation around the latter definition and its various implications for members of the order.

We then delved into our consideration of Jesuit education. I began by stating that there is some truth to the above-mentioned titles and their subtle suggestions. Many participants agreed with this appraisal. Indeed, for 472 years, the priests, brothers and scholastics (seminarians) of the Society of Jesus, as both missionaries and educators, have been recognized for three major characteristics: the first, progressive intellectual ideas, the second, a profound commitment to social justice and the third, deeply held spiritual ideals. Truthfully, Jesuits are not much different today than they were 472 years ago. Certainly, while the garb is different and the customs have evolved, Jesuits are still living and serving in a troubled world much in need of faith and justice. For this reason, Jesuits remain “Jesuitical,” that is, crafty, shrewd and cunning, because often enough that is what it takes to be in the “business” of religious education. With confidence and faith, Jesuits are in the “business” of positively forming minds and hearts by pursuing truth, wisdom and knowledge through a liberal education. To do this, especially today, one has to live up to all of those above-mentioned titles. So the question was asked of the group,
who are these Jesuits, really, and what is their tradition of education all about?
Subsequently, a lively and engaging conversation ensued, as we sought to tackle these
questions. As the moderator and presenter, I established some ground rules to facilitate
the conversation, asking that participants, first, strive for honesty and respect in the
exchange of ideas, and secondly, maintain a spirit of open-mindedness and understanding
of one another’s’ opinions. I presented the following questions for discussion:
1) Why did you come to work at Fordham? Did you choose to serve here because it is a
   Jesuit /Catholic University?
2) What are some perceptions you have/had of Jesuits and Jesuit education?
3) As you understand it, what makes Jesuit education distinctive?

   I began the conversation by gently reminding the group that the Society of Jesus
was not founded primarily for the ministry of education but for the “promotion and
defense of the faith,” principally through the giving of the *Spiritual Exercises*, through
preaching and catechizing, and through the service of the poor and marginalized. While
today the Society is best recognized for its dedication to excellence in Christian
education-- its network of schools remains the largest in the world and is commonly
acknowledged as one of the finest, the Jesuits were *invited* to this work only after having
first established excellent seminaries for the training of their new recruits. By the grace of
God alone, the Jesuits and their colleagues in education have flourished in the ministry of
education ever since.

   In an effort to assess some of the distinctive features of Jesuit education, we
discussed and examined the following hallmarks:
• **academic excellence** - a Jesuit education seeks to form a student who is capable of disciplined and critical thinking through research, analysis, investigation, and assessment of a broad range of academic disciplines that serve to reinforce one’s moral, spiritual, intellectual and personal growth.

• **cura personalis** - Latin for “care of the person,” in Jesuit terms this translates into providing a rigorous and expansive curriculum with individual attention given to the “whole person.” This includes individualized and personal care for the student’s physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual well-being.

• **eloquencia perfecta** - Latin for “developing effective skills of self expression.” Included in this are sharpening a student’s capability for public speaking, discourse, and apologetics while developing proficiency in writing, prose and literature.

• **finding God in all things** - the primary goal of a Jesuit education is to form a student who is open to discovering God in the world. In Jesuit terms God is found in Jesus Christ who is the “human face” of God. A solid religious formation and exposure to the Gospel of Jesus Christ can facilitate one’s spiritual growth and one’s relationship with God in the Church.

• **magis/men and women for others** - Latin for “the more or greater,” this Ignatian term challenges us, in imitation of Christ, to live not only for ourselves but for others. *Magis* invites us to “strive for the more, the greater” by doing our very best in all aspects of our lives. This helps us to attain the goal of a contemporary Jesuit education which is to form “men and women for others,” that is, people in solidarity and engagement with one another and the world around them. This remains a major goal of a Jesuit education: forming a person of faith who is dedicated to working for justice.

As we discussed these points at length, most agreed that this is what our aim in Jesuit education is about in our present reality: helping others to encounter God directly and indirectly, while promoting faith in God that seeks to serve justice. It was stated, for example, that while a chemistry lecture may not explicitly talk of God, underneath it all God is there, and since we all need to discover this, we have committed ourselves to Jesuit and Catholic education.

**Group Reflection and Questions**

Accordingly, I provided the groups with the following questions for small- and large- group discussion.

1. How would you describe the particular charism and vision of the Society of Jesus in educational ministries?
2. What characteristics of the *Spiritual Exercises* resonate with you personally, and how are they relevant to your work?

3. Given the trend of diminishing Jesuit presence, in what ways can you help to preserve and strengthen the Jesuit charism at **Fordham** while helping yourself and others to understand and embrace Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for education?

The conversation that ensued was a lively and complex one and not without its difficulties and challenges.

To conclude the Second Session, we then proceeded to the House Chapel where I led a guided Ignatian Examen prayer and meditation using the following outline (which I had specifically developed for the *Ignis* program). For many in the group, the guided Examen proved to be very therapeutic, restorative and overall quite beneficial. One participant even asked if they could do the mediation again at the end of the day’s program. Precisely the point of making the Examen as part of the *Ignis* program! In fact, the aim of the guided prayer was to introduce people to this Ignatian tool, designed for one’s personal and spiritual assessment, so that they could eventually embrace the technique and make use of it in their daily lives of prayer.

**The Examen Prayer**

The Examen Prayer, or simply “the Examen,” is a time-honored Ignatian tool for daily discernment in the spiritual life. Practiced by numerous persons of various states of life, occupations, circumstances and religious traditions for over five centuries, the Examen Prayer of St. Ignatius is a method to help people to recognize God’s spirit at work in their lives ("Seeing God in all things") as well as those times that they fail both to see Him and subsequently follow Him with every ounce of their being. Mindful that
careful use of this spiritual tool has the capability of drawing us closer to God and away from the temptations of the “enemy,” St. Ignatius instructed that the one spiritual practice--aside from attending Mass --which we should never neglect is the daily *Examen Prayer*.

**The Five Steps of The Examen Prayer**

1. **Acknowledge God’s presence**: This first step has one begin the Examen prayer by rightfully recognizing what the Church holds and teaches as an eternal truth: that God is omnipresent and therefore especially active and present in His created world. Wherever you are, whatever time of day or circumstance, whatever your mood, take a moment to acknowledge that you are never far from God. God is always present-- loving, renewing, sustaining, and upholding us, His beloved. Look on the created world as the handiwork of God. See the world through the eyes of faith, and as Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J. wrote so well, “charged with the grandeur of God.” It is thus a place imbued with God’s splendor and brilliance, despite the darkness, suffering and pain that pervades the world. With gratitude and attentiveness acknowledge that you have been, are and will remain in the sacred presence of God.

2. **Solicit God’s help**: This second step invites you to recognize your own powerlessness over certain events and circumstances in this life and thus the need to rely solely on God. Realizing that we are all limited by our own abilities and human weaknesses then, humbly seek God’s assistance so as to be able to honestly, and with God’s aid, review your day, your actions, your thoughts and
words. Ask God to give you the grace to see your life as He sees your life. Ask God to give you the fortitude that is required to search your heart honestly so as to allow God’s radiant light to illuminate those places that have been darkened by your sins and transgressions. With humility and resolve, ask for God’s help, mindful that with God “all things are possible.”

3. **Review the day:** This third step can be considered the heart and soul of St. Ignatius’ Examen prayer. Contrasting the Church’s traditional “examination of conscience” which has as its solitary goal the recognition of one’s sins in preparation for celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Examen has two goals: the first, to take account of both one’s failings and one’s successes (lights and shadows, peaks and valleys) in the spiritual life, and the second, to recognize where one has been present to God, and not present to God (who, as the first step plainly established, is always present). For the popular and well-respected *Kairos* retreat program (an Ignatian-inspired retreat for high school and college age students in Jesuit-sponsored schools), retreatants are provided with a relatively simple technique to facilitate their execution of this third step. They are invited to imagine that they are using a DVD player with which to review a DVD/disc showing the events of their day. They are encouraged to “rewind” and “fast-forward” the disc in an effort to view those places where they were present to God and not present to God. Additionally, they are instructed to “pause” their imaginary discs and carefully view those places where they ought to offer gratitude for God’s grace and regret for the times that they have sinned. Key to this step, as St. Ignatius prescribes, is to pay attention to our “interior motives
“and feelings” as you prayerfully examine your thoughts, words and actions. The objective, then, is to see where you acted in the spirit of God (love) and where you failed (sin). Key to this step too is the precise naming of your graces and sins, in earnest imitation of Christ. To do this well requires honesty, openness and humility before God. When dealing with our failures in the Christian life, we must bear in mind that we humans, without exception, are sinners, yet as St. Ignatius teaches, “loved sinners” and “forgiven sinners.” In doing this step, we are better able to identify those patterns of sin (habits and vices) that plague our souls, and with God’s grace seek to eradicate them as best we can.

4. Seek forgiveness and give thanks: The fourth step is likely the most humbling and the most freeing, yet it remains for some the most complicated. It involves saying we're sorry for those sins committed and offering thanks for those graces received. Offering thanks for God’s gifts, blessings and graces at work in our hearts most likely comes quite easily to many. However, it is saying we're sorry and admitting failure that can prove most difficult. Mindful that no one is perfect and that even the greatest saints were sinners, admission of our failures and sins can be a humbling experience and has the potential to open us up to God’s redeeming grace. Sadly, fear, pride, arrogance and self-esteem issues can serve as obstacles to seeking reconciliation. Nevertheless, central to the Christian life is our need to be continually reconciled to God and to His people, the Church. Humbly acknowledging our sins and failures and offering regret for them can serve to heal past hurts and restore us to our rightful relationship with God and others. We all stand in need of forgiveness and we all should always stand ready
to offer thanks to God for all good gifts and graces bestowed on us as we seek to be like Jesus with each passing day.

5. **Resolve and move forward**: The fifth and final step builds well on the four previous in that, after properly acknowledging God’s presence, soliciting His aid, reviewing the day, and offering thanks to God and seeking His forgiveness, we ought reasonably to commend ourselves to renewing our efforts to live more like Christ. This fifth step, then, is truly the fruit of the four previous, since the entire Examen has as its end goal greater communion with God the Father, and a closer imitation of Jesus Christ, the Son. That is both the genius and the crux of the Ignatian Examen, and this prayer too, like the *Spiritual Exercises*, is the outcome of Ignatius’ own experience of mystical prayer in the cave at Manresa. Here, then, make the sincere resolution to avoid past offenses and occasions for sin, and to move forward, renewed and strengthened in the spiritual life. Again, to do this well, one must remain steadfast in asking for God’s continued help and assistance. For this reason Ignatius wisely has one conclude the entire Examen prayer by reciting, with heartfelt gratitude, the very prayer which Jesus taught us, the “Our Father.”

**Session Three**

**Overview of the Jesuit Vision for Contemporary Mission**

After having just engaged in the guided Examen /meditation, and having taken a small break, we began the third and final session by looking at the Jesuit vision for contemporary mission and service, with an eye toward the future. Mindful that some
could very well be fatigued from the day's activities, I began this session by engaging the

The group in a dynamic and poignant large-group discussion of the following question:

Why bother to take on Ignatian Spirituality and the Jesuit Vision for service and mission

for the laity, those non-ordained, non-consecrated women and men, serving in

institutions of higher education sponsored by the Society of Jesus? The participants' answers varied, but some common responses were as follows:

• because it's our duty as partners in Jesuit education,

• because fewer Jesuits means someone has to carry the torch, and

• because Ignatius provides a vision that is still making a difference in education,

and I choose to be a part of that.

I then attempted to answer the question with the group by stating that the Church of the twenty-first century truly is the “Church of the laity,” that is, a body of believers (Church) that is increasingly served, sustained and supported by the ministry and work of non-ordained, non-consecrated religious women and men. This reality shapes the Church in which we serve, worship, pray and live. All seemed to agree and support this conception. I then proceeded to illustrate that, currently in the American Church, and in the extensive Jesuit network of ministries, we have seen a substantial rise in the number of laypersons seeking to serve as lay ecclesial ministers, colleagues in educational ministry and associates in service--posts formerly held by priests and nuns.

Accordingly, I asked the group what they thought a lay ecclesial minster is, and most seemed to understand that it is a “lay person who is actively engaged in Church-
sponsored work.” In an effort to elucidate the explanation, I provided the group with the following description and information pertaining to a lay ecclesial minister:

- “Lay ecclesial ministers” are those men and women who serve in full-time church ministry and are recognized “officially” as representatives of the institutional Church and its religious orders: campus ministers, chaplains, teachers of theology and religious studies, catechists, pastoral associates, social workers and pastoral counselors—just to name a few.

- The US Conference of Catholic Bishops in recent years has used the title “lay ecclesial ministers” to designate those men and women who serve in full-time “church ministry” and are recognized “officially” as representatives of the institutional Church and its local Bishop as well as its religious orders.

- To date, the approximate number of “lay ecclesial ministers” in the United States is estimated at roughly 32,000, with no immediate sign of decline.

Given this meaning, I then attempted to make the distinction between ministry and good work done on behalf of another, using the following descriptor:

- The Dominican theologian Thomas O’Meara provides the best definition of ministry: “the public activity of any baptized follower of Jesus Christ, flowing from the Spirit’s charism and an individual personality on behalf of the Christian community to proclaim, serve and realize the kingdom of God.”

Consistent with Fr. O’Meara’s perspective, ministry could be understood as visible service to God’s people on behalf of the Church and explicitly religious in its nature, since it seeks to bring one closer to God and to the faith of the community. I then presented the following distinction, using this example: A full-time paid liturgical music director who is steeped in the musical tradition of the Church and knowledgeable about the sacred liturgy is a lay minister, while a vocalist from the local school of music who has been hired to sing for an occasional wedding celebration is not. Those capable men and women who lead spiritual retreats, or organize faith-sharing communities, or visit and pray with the sick on behalf of the faith community, or lead a service project to those
in need are engaged in Church ministry, while those paid gardeners who plant flowers around the church building are not. The intention to plant flowers around the campus is helpful and a beneficial service for the community, but it is not a direct, public ministry in the manner of serving as a theology teacher, or a peace and justice coordinator, or a spiritual director to students or an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist. Ministry, different from good works, relies on the use of one’s God-given talents and gifts for the definite building up of the Church.

Therefore:

• Ministry is visible service to God’s people on behalf of the Church and explicitly religious (transformative) in its nature; education with such intent is just that-- in its very nature, meant to transform.

• Ministry, different from good works, relies on the use of one’s God-given talents and gifts for the definite building up of the faith community

Here again, the question and dialogue around this topic were multifaceted and complex. Yet the majority of participants seemed to agree that lay ecclesial ministry is a privilege and is much needed, though some, in particular one student-life counselor, had a difficult time understanding that what she does can be considered a ministry, protesting, “I am certainly not worthy to be called a minister of the Church; I am not holy enough.” To which another responded, “Aren’t we all?” Exactly.

From there we naturally explored the common call to serve in the Catholic and Jesuit apostolate. I began by stating the obvious: God calls all people to serve both the Church and our larger society. Without a doubt, successful and effective ministry and mission require all of us working together in respectful partnership-- the laity, religious and clergy, equally sharing the responsibility for the care and service of God’s people. Here I quoted from a document promulgated by the most recent General Congregation of
the Society of Jesus (the worldwide convocation of leaders). In Decree 6: *Collaboration at the Heart of Mission*, paragraph 30, we read:

In his day, St Ignatius gave shelter to the homeless of Rome, cared for prostitutes, and established homes for orphans. He sought collaborators and with them established organizations and networks to continue these and many other forms of service. To respond today to the pressing needs of our complex and fragile world, many hands are surely needed. Collaboration in mission is the way we respond to this situation: it expresses our true identity as members of the Church, the complementarity of our diverse calls to holiness, our mutual responsibility for the mission of Christ, our desire to join people of good will in the service of the human family, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is a grace given to us in this moment, one consistent with our Jesuit way of proceeding.

Given this, laypersons have a duty, by virtue of their baptism and confirmation, to give witness to their faith and to serve the needs of the Church in varied ways. No one disputes this point. To strengthen the argument, I made use of the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*:

> These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.

In light of this, I proposed that laity and religious are partners, not competitors, with complementary roles, sharing in the common priesthood of Christ. Immediately, one of the participants reacted negatively to being called a “priest,” so I then clarified the distinction between the common priesthood of the people and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained. They seemed to understand that distinction better when I explained the three duties (munera) of the ministerial priesthood: first, to offer sacrifice (Eucharist); second, to teach (preaching and teaching) and third, to lead (guiding and administering). I pointed out how this translates for the common priesthood, which, similar to the ministerial priesthood, calls one to make personal sacrifices for growth in the spiritual
life, to lead others to Christ by one’s example and to teach by passing on the faith to others, especially the young and those in one’s care. Finally, to conclude the presentation, we explored ways that laity in Jesuit ministries could be served by a solid spiritual formation program that is both effective and readily accessible.

I began this segment of the presentation by pointing out that in 2005 the United States Bishops issued a document intended for the guidance of lay ministers called, “Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord.” In this document our bishops point out that, “Lay ministers, just like the ordained, need and deserve formation of high standards, effective methods and comprehensive goals, and that they require four segments of formation, similar to those provided for the clergy.” These segments are:

- human
- spiritual
- intellectual
- pastoral

I asserted that the spiritual formation segment is, arguably, what we can best begin to offer the laity at Jesuit-sponsored institutions. Interestingly enough, the Jesuit’s 32nd General Congregation seems to agree with this premise, since in Decree 13:12 it states: “Programs are to be provided to enable lay people to acquire a greater knowledge of the Ignatian tradition and spirituality and to grow in their personal vocations.”

**Applying the Examen**

Consequently, as a launching point for lay spiritual formation at Jesuit schools, I returned to the thought of beginning by instructing the laity in the practice of the Ignatian Examen. Of all the forms of Ignatian spirituality, the Examen is the most manageable. I noted that, performed daily, as we had done in the previous session, the Examen can literally help one to take stock of his or her soul by examining, in the light of the Holy
Spirit, those places where he or she has failed or succeeded in imitating Christ. This method is easily accessible to the laity too, as it requires little in terms of one’s instruction; one need not be highly trained in spirituality or theology to grasp it, and it requires mainly one’s time and attention for its practical application. I affirmed that the Examen, when done correctly and faithfully, might be one of the greatest weapons in our battle against evil, injustice and sin. Indeed, the Examen, coupled with daily prayer, can serve as an effective spiritual tool in the hands of the layperson committed to serving in the apostolate of education in the Jesuit tradition.

19th Annotation Retreat

I then promoted another helpful tool for lay spiritual formation in the Ignatian tradition—the 19th Annotation retreat of the Spiritual Exercises. Unlike the full thirty-day retreat, the 19th Annotation is made on a daily basis over the course of roughly an entire year and includes weekly meetings with a trained and competent spiritual director. As mentioned, lay men and women have been and continue to be decisively encouraged to embrace the 19th Annotation retreat or “Retreat in Daily Life.” Conversely, given Ignatius’ passionate sense of mission and service to the Church, it is reasonable to assume that he would maintain that his 19th Annotation was ultimately designed with the current lay colleague in mind, since he or she both lives in the world and serves in the Church. In fact, Ignatius initially designed this form of the thirty-day retreat specifically for the laity, “those outside of a religious community, novitiate or seminary,” and predominantly those “involved in public affairs or worldly occupations.”

I pointed out that, since Vatican II, there has been a renewed interest among the laity in these types of retreats and spiritual programs. Ignatian retreat programs, in
particular, which seek God actively working in the world, provide an approach for reflective and interactive prayer that can truly deepen the spiritual life of the layperson amid the busyness of the world. In fact, thousands of laypersons around the world are annually enrolled in 19th Annotation retreat programs.

This 19th Annotation retreat seemed to pique the interest of many in the group. I explained that at Fordham University each year, roughly fifteen to twenty members of the University community make the 19th Annotation retreat, in addition to those hundreds of students and staff who participate in our wide array of Ignatian-inspired retreats. I am happy to report that today, six of the twelve participants in the Ignis program are making the 19th Annotation retreat of Saint Ignatius, aptly called at Fordham, "SEEL"—The Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life.

**Christian Life Community (CLC)**

I then offered yet another means for supporting lay spiritual formation in the Ignatian tradition that may prove very helpful, namely, the Christian Life Community or CLC. This is an international association of men and women who desire to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with Him, in the Church, to build a world of faith, justice and peace. CLC is a lay-run institute with pontifical approval that works in close collaboration with the Society of Jesus and its superiors and is animated by the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola. In an effort to encourage interest in CLC among our group, I made reference to some of the statistics that are provided on the CLC national home page:
• World CLC today is comprised of some 60 national communities averaging 100-500 members. In CLC-USA there are more than 2,000 adult members that meet regularly in small groups to pray and share their faith.
• Fordham has 24 groups, one for faculty and staff exclusively.

Finally, after fielding questions about the above subjects, I concluded the day’s activities by again seeking to promote the participants' interest in Ignatian spirituality by offering the following handout and overview of some general resources:

Ignatian Spiritual Resources

1. Jesuit.org - for a listing of all things related to the Society of Jesus in the USA. Listed here is a link for a directory of roughly thirty Jesuit retreat houses and spirituality programs in the USA. You can access spiritual direction, Ignatian retreats and seminars in the spirituality of St. Ignatius. LINK: www.jesuits.org/ignatianspirituality/parishes-and-retreat-centers

2. IgnatianSpirituality.com - is a service of Loyola Press, a ministry of the Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus. It offers information on and experiences of Ignatian spirituality from Jesuit and Ignatian sources around the world. IgnatianSpirituality.com serves all audiences—the curious, the knowledgeable, and the expert. LINK: www.ignatianspirituality.com

3. The Institute of Jesuit Sources - specializes in making the spirituality and the history of the Society of Jesus better known. It publishes material by more than fifty authors on the Jesuits, their history, their traditions, their present activities, and their future opportunities. LINK: www.jesuitsources.com

4. The Word Among Us - offers daily meditations based on the daily Mass readings of the Catholic Church, inspirational essays and stories of the saints and other Christian heroes, and more. With this resource you can learn about some of the great Catholic Saints, read a bible study lesson or learn how to improve your marriage & Christian living. LINK: www.wau.org

5. Daily Liturgical Readings On-Line - the National Conference of American Bishops provides the daily readings for Mass, using a translation from the New American Bible. Here you will find in calendar format, all of the readings for the entire liturgical year. LINK: www.nccbuscc.org/nab

6. Ignatian Spirituality Center – is a lay association that collaborates with Jesuit ministries to provide spiritual direction, programs, and resources that assist persons of all faiths to serve Christ’s mission of compassion, healing, and justice. http://www.ignatiancenter.org
7. **Sacred Space** - is a prayer site, produced by the Irish Jesuits, which guides you through a ten-minute session of prayer. Sacred Space will guide you through a session of prayer, in six stages, including preparing your body and mind, and culminating in reflection on a scripture passage chosen specially for the Mass of the day. **LINK**: www.jesuit.ie/prayer

8. **Christian Life Community**- (CLC) is an international association of men and women who desire to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with Him to build a world of justice and peace. A lay-run institute with pontifical right, it works in close collaboration with the Society of Jesus and is animated by the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola. CLC bears witness to human and Gospel values within the Church and society, in the concreteness of the time and place where we live. **LINK**: www.clc-usa.org

9. **Pray-as-you-go** - is a prayer tool, designed for use with one’s iPod/podcast that is produced by the British Jesuits. A coordinator guides you through a brief session of prayer that includes spiritual music, a prayerful reading of a scripture passage, quiet time and a brief reflection on a scripture passage chosen specially from the Mass of the day. **LINK**: www.pray-as-you-go.org/

10. **The Jesuit Collaborative** – is a professional association of Jesuits, laypersons, clergy, and religious who share in common the spiritual tradition of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The Jesuit Collaborative promotes networking, reflection, scholarship, and learning while managing and coordinating the diverse ministries that derive from the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. www.jesuitcollaborative.org/weblinks

**Group Reflection and Questions**

To make this discussion more practical, I provided the groups with the following questions for small- and large- group discussion based on the third and final presentation.

1. Does Fordham work to maintain its commitment to its Jesuit charism and Ignatian tradition? What aspect of the Jesuit vision for mission requires greater attention and consideration at Fordham?

2. As you see it, will Fordham continue be a Jesuit/Ignatian center of higher learning in 10 years? In 20 years? If so, why? If not, why not?

3. According to GC 35 Decree 6 on shared ministry, what can you do to assume more responsibility for the Jesuit mission of service to the human family?
CHAPTER VI
EVALUATION AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Cognizant that a program cannot be truly effective unless it is properly evaluated and assessed, immediately following the final large group discussion that successfully tackled questions regarding one’s authentic embrace of Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for contemporary mission, I offered each participant a program evaluation. The evaluation is designed to be completed individually and later returned only after the participant has taken some days of prayer and reflection with which to adequately evaluate the presented program.

Evaluation/Questionnaire

_Ignis Program Evaluation_
Thank you for your time and for your commitment to learning more about Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for mission in higher education. Your comments, insights and opinions about this training program will be helpful for assessing this program and for improving it in the future. Your comments will remain confidential, and you are encouraged to assess this program as honestly as you are able.

Please feel free to insert comments as you check the boxes below, and to use the back of this sheet for additional comments. Thank you.

1. How would you rate the _Ignis_ training program?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not helpful

2. How would you rate the presentations?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
3. How would you rate the small-group discussions?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not helpful

4. How would you rate the large-group discussions?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not helpful

5. How would you rate the discussion questions?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not helpful

6. How would you rate the length of the seminar?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not Helpful

7. How would you rate the Spanish Olive video?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not Helpful

8. How would you rate the pre-seminar readings?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not Helpful

9. How helpful was the guided Examen?
   - Most helpful
   - Very helpful
   - Helpful
   - Not Helpful
10. Do you now have a new perspective on Ignatius Loyola, the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Jesuits and the vision of Jesuit education?
   - [ ] Highly agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Do not agree

11. Are you more determined now to engage Ignatian spirituality and utilize Ignatian elements in your current work?
   - [ ] Highly agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Do not agree

12. After having participated in *Ignis*, are you now more inclined to make the 19th Annotation retreat or meet regularly with a spiritual director?
   - [ ] Highly agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Do not agree

Name (Optional) ________________________________

**Evaluation Results**

Of the twelve participants who engaged in the *Ignis* program, eleven opted to complete the final evaluation, which consisted of the twelve select questions above, and an area for additional written commentary. The one person who did not complete the evaluation simply did not make the effort to return it by the prescribed deadline. The participants had the alternative to identify themselves, or remain anonymous. The questions were designed to assess the participants’ general level of interest in the project and to garner their suggestions, comments and ideas for possible project-related improvements that could affect future use.

The first question asked, “How would you rate the *Ignis* training program?” Three of the participants answered “very helpful” (the second highest of four on the rating
scale), while eight said “most helpful” (the highest rating). One participant noted, “This program was motivating. I personally was moved enough to want to inspire my students more with these Ignatian values.” Another offered this practical advice: “Ignis should be offered by the University prior to one’s making the 19th Annotation retreat.”

The second question asked, “How would you rate the presentations?” Four of the participants responded “very helpful” and seven responded “most helpful.” One person commented, “The sessions tried to cover a lot of information in a limited time, but I think it flowed well.” Another said, “The presentations were interactive, informative, clear and engaging. Well done!” Still another wrote, “I recommend that the three presentations be condensed; it is a great deal of information to cover. In this case less is more.”

Question three then asked, “How would you rate the small-group discussions?” Nine persons responded “most helpful” while two said “very helpful.” One individual pointed out, “The small groups were helpful, but I think the conversation would be more successful if the group consisted of people exclusively from my own department.” However, another noted, “The intentional mixing of persons from different departments led to fruitful discussions, and I learned a lot about my colleagues from other areas of the University and their roles in Jesuit education.”

The next question asked about the effectiveness of the large group discussions, which had similar ratings, seven saying “most helpful” while four said “very helpful.” Most participants agreed, in the fifth question, that the discussion questions were “very helpful,” with a few saying that they were “most helpful.” One person observed that the questions were “helpful” (the third rating), noting, “The questions could have been more specific, less broad…. My group got off track with the questions and did not answer some of them.”
Question seven pertained to the use of the video, *The Spanish Olive*. It appears that this video was well received, as seven persons rated it “most helpful,” two rated it “very helpful,” and two rated it “helpful.” One participant said of the video, “It was quite effective, short and to the point,” while another stated, “The video was very funny and could easily be used with several age groups.” The eighth question concerned the pre-seminar readings, which received similar ratings to that of the video. One person stated, “The presentations incorporated much from the readings that was helpful.”

The ninth question asked, “How helpful was the guided Examen?” Interestingly, ten of the eleven answered “most helpful,” while only one responded “not helpful.” This participant added, “As the only non-religious person in the room, I was not able to relate this to my perspective on life.” Still another person said, “The Examen was very helpful; I will use the five steps with my students.”

The tenth question, “Do you now have a new perspective on Ignatius Loyola, the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Jesuits and the vision of Jesuit education?” drew a variety of responses. Ten contributors replied with the highest rating of “highly agree,” while one said, “agree” (the second of three ratings). This same individual added, “I learned a lot, but I honestly knew a good deal before the training program.” Another responded, “I learned much about the Jesuit vision and much information on why Fordham is set up the way it is, and why it should remain so!”

The response to number eleven, “Are you more determined now to engage Ignatian spirituality and utilize Ignatian elements in your current work?” was outstanding. All eleven respondents answered with the top rating of “highly agree.” This confirmed that the principal objective of the *Ignis* project, namely, to raise the participants’
awareness and attentiveness to the fundamental role of Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for mission in the service of Catholic and Jesuit higher education, had been achieved.

This confirmation was also substantiated in several of the comments of those participating in the project: “This is what I have been waiting for since I came here (Fordham). I enjoyed hearing about St. Ignatius, but now I really appreciate the common foundation we all have.” Another noted, “…a great job of giving us more of a feel for Ignatian values, what they really mean, how they can be practically applied and how our spirituality may be aligned with the Spiritual Exercises.”

Finally, question number twelve appropriately asked of the respondents, “After having participated in Ignis, are you now more inclined to make the 19th Annotation retreat or meet regularly with a spiritual director?” In this case, seven people answered “highly agree,” while four responded with “agree.” To date, four of those who answered “highly agree” are involved in the 19th Annotation retreat program at Fordham, while yet another is engaged in on-going spiritual direction.

The evaluation, therefore, proved very helpful in assessing the interest level of those who engaged in the daylong training project and also provided some solid suggestions for the improvement and development of Ignis. Some of these comments are noteworthy: “This program should be made available to all new employees,” and “For the first time in a while, I leave feeling really empowered to be a part of the Church and its mission in a renewed way.” Some specific recommendations were, “I would have liked to hear how some other departments incorporate the Jesuit mission,” and “I would have preferred two half-days over one full day, in order to keep the level of interest high,”
while still another noted, “I would like to see a condensed version of Ignis for our students.” One striking comment was, “What I appreciated most about this presentation was the honesty about Jesuit history and the future for clergy. It puts in perspective how important lay faculty and staff will be in the future of Jesuit education.”

Consequently, the results of the evaluation will be seriously considered and applied, as fitting, so as to insure that the program outcomes are successfully realized, and that the Ignis program remains both beneficial and effective for those who participate in this apparently much needed resource for Catholic and Jesuit higher education.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The Project Proposal

Title: Development of the “Ignis” Training Program: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality and Mission in The Jesuit Tradition for Educators and Staff In Jesuit Institutions of Higher Education

Candidate: Philip A. Florio, SJ
Director: Raymond Studzinski, OSB, Ph.D.

Identification of a problem in ministry:
A current predicament facing the Society of Jesus in the United States is how to successfully preserve and impart its particular charism, vision for mission, and spirituality at its twenty-eight sponsored institutions of higher education. The problem, in other words, is how to transmit Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit tradition productively to those non-Jesuits who serve in its universities. This is a particular need for the younger generation of professionals who are increasingly “un-churched” and detached from any sense of a religious tradition. Given this situation, what is it that the American Society of Jesus can offer to its colleagues that would help them to engage Ignatian spirituality more deeply and facilitate their learning about the Jesuit mission? Is there some way to make Ignatian spirituality more deeply and thus facilitate their learning about the Jesuit mission more accessible and relevant to lay faculty and staff in these institutions, and also show them the particular strengths and merits of this spirituality as a way to form their own professional service? The answer is apparent: greater knowledge and appreciation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and of the way they provide a particular vision for service.

The purpose of the project in ministry:
The purpose of Ignis (the Latin word for fire) is to offer a common, standardized and comprehensive training program in Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for mission. This program is current and practical, and is geared to educators and personnel at Jesuit-sponsored universities.

Supporting research:
Ecclesial:

Pastoral:
Design and implementation:

*Ignis* is an eight-hour introductory training seminar for an invited group of campus ministers, faculty members, student-life administrators, trustees, and leaders of Jesuit higher educational apostolates. Prior to the seminar, participants will have read *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* by James Martin, SJ, and will have responded in writing to selected questions on the reading for later discussion. The seminar itself will begin with an ice-breaker activity and the viewing of a brief video called *The Spanish Olive*, produced by Fairfield University. There will also be structured periods of lecture, discussion and dialogue, and time for private reflection. During these periods the following topics will be addressed:

- Exploration of the participants’ understanding of God and spirituality by comparing and contrasting elements of several religious traditions, with a particular focus on Catholic spirituality and the *Ignatian Exercises*.
- Examination of selected readings concerning the theology of the *Ignatian Exercises* and the history of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus.
- Appropriation of the Ignatian methods of election, meditation, discernment of spirits, the Examen prayer, and contemplation, as applicable to the life of educators.
- Consideration of the historical context of the major themes of Ignatian spirituality and its relevance to contemporary spiritual needs, especially with regard to its potential for forming educators whose lives are to be distinguished by a deep-rooted love for God and others, and by the promotion of justice in the world.

Evaluation:

Upon completion of the seminar, participants will be asked to complete a thorough written evaluation of the program.

Contribution to ministry:

Presently, no Jesuit institution in the U.S. has a program of this nature or caliber. This type of formation/orientation program could play a vital role in enabling non-Jesuit colleagues to receive the gifts of Ignatian spirituality, thereby allowing them to help the Jesuit legacy to thrive and flourish in American Jesuit colleges and universities.
Appendix 2. Program Outcomes

After successful completion of this program, participants should be able to:

- Examine the role of their relationship with God as a foundation for their personal and professional lives.
- Use the *Ignatian Examen* in their daily prayer.
- Consider active participation in CLC faith-sharing groups and making the 19th Annotation retreat, and engaging in consistent spiritual direction.
- Articulate and transmit knowledge of Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit vision for contemporary mission and education.


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