

Ignatian Spirituality and the Contemporary World: From Ignatius of Loyola to Bernard Lonergan

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[Abstract] This article suggests that the link between Ignatian spirituality and the question of how to engage in the contemporary world is one that lies at the heart of the vision of St. Ignatius. However, it stresses that the question of just how to make this link is complex and that the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, themselves, do not provide the intellectual instruments for deciding on the details of how to make this link. It traces how Jesuits over the centuries have sometimes being more successful, sometimes less, in striking an appropriate balance. It then turns to the thought of the twentieth-century Canadian Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan, to suggest that his work, *Method in Theology*, provides appropriate tools for making this link, a link that is deeply in tune with the spirit of Vatican II.

Keywords: *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, discernment of spirits, nature, reason, transcendental method, conversion, emergent probability, functional specialties

The theme of this issue of *Journal of Catholic Studies* is “Ignatian Spirituality in the Contemporary World.” I explore this theme, first by studying how a concern for engagement with the contemporary world is intrinsic to the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Next, I conduct a brief study the history of the Jesuits, suggesting that while the engagement of the first Jesuits with their contemporary world met with spectacular success, this was not consistently the case through succeeding centuries. I then suggest that while the *Spiritual Exercises* provide broad principles for engagement with the contemporary world, they do not provide the means for working out exactly how to achieve this. I then turn to the thought of the twentieth-century Canadian Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan, suggesting that he offers intellectual tools that can assist the kind of regular re-evaluation needed to assure that the broad principles provided by the *Spiritual Exercises* can be translated into concrete pastoral proposals which can be updated as the contemporary world changes.

Part 1: The *Spiritual Exercises* and the Contemporary World

In 1540 Pope Paul III founded a new religious order, approving of ideas for such an entity that had been proposed to him by Ignatius of Loyola and a group of companions.¹ This proposal is still extant in a document, *The Formula of the Institute*.² This new order caused

¹ See John O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

² The Society of Jesus, *The Formula of the Institute*,” https://s3.amazonaws.com/bc-iajs-wordpress-uploads.bc.aws.avalonconsult.net/prod/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/29174018/1540_Formula.pdf

controversy at the time because its rule was radically new. Members of the “Society of Jesus” would not be required to live in a monastery or to recite the liturgy of the hours in common. Rather, they would be free to concentrate on active ministries such as preaching, administering the sacraments, and working with the poorest of the poor, sometimes requiring them to travel far from any base community of fellow Jesuits. Ignatius trusted that such Jesuits could be offered an intense spiritual formation in their early years, which would assure their faithfulness to the principles of their religious order in the active years of their maturity. Central to this formation was a retreat, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*.³

During a two-year period of initial formation, a Jesuit novice undergoes *The Spiritual Exercises* over a period of 30 days, where he maintains silence, prays for up to five hours each day, and meets daily with a spiritual director.⁴ The material for prayer each day consists almost entirely of passages from the Bible, with some imaginary exercises added that are composed by Ignatius, although these also are Bible-based. The booklet known as *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* is, in fact, intended as a manual to be employed by the director. The book opens with a series of instructions for the director. The first of these states that the metaphor of a journey should be employed to understand the spiritual life.⁵ This point is amplified in the second

³ O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, Chapter 1, “Foundations before the Founding,” 23-50, and Chapter 2, “Taking Shape for Ministry,” 51-90.

⁴ For the remainder of this section, I use the exclusively male pronoun “he” to describe both the one who is undergoing the *Spiritual Exercises* and the one who accompanies him. I do this for convenience and because there is an implied reference to the Jesuit novice as the retreatant and his Novice Master as director.

⁵ St. Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, SJ (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1957). “Introductory Observations,”

paragraph of instructions. Here Ignatius tells the director not to talk too much! He explains, “For it is not much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but the intimate understanding and relish of the truth.”⁶ Ignatius insists that “intimate understanding and relish” will arrive as a gift of the Holy Spirit, not as a result of clear explanation by a director. Ignatius instructs the director to understand himself as merely accompanying a process where the main action is occurring between God and the retreatant. In another instruction, he states:

In the Spiritual Exercises, it is more suitable and much better that the Creator and Lord in person communicate Himself to the devout soul in quest of the divine will, that He inflame it with His love and praise, and dispose it for the way in which it could better serve God in the future. Therefore, the director of the Exercises, as a balance at equilibrium, without leaning to one side or the other, should permit the Creator to deal directly with the creature, and the creature directly with his Creator and Lord.⁷

Ignatius is not naïve on this point. Already in his first instruction, he has mentioned the “inordinate attachments” that tend to characterize our lives. Next, he explains that in addition to God communicating himself to the retreatant, so also an “Evil One,” who is the “Enemy of Human Nature,” communicates with us. Ignatius provides 15 “Rules for

paragraph 1 (all following citations from the *Spiritual Exercises* will cite paragraph numbers.) See also, <http://spex.ignatianspirituality.com/SpiritualExercises/Puhl>

⁶ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 2.

⁷ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 15.

the Discernment of Spirits”⁸ to help the retreatant distinguish between the two. He explains to the director that it is one of the director’s major tasks to help the retreatant attend to his inner affective movements during prayer and to learn to distinguish “consolation,” which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, to a “desolation” that is the work of the evil spirit. The first Rule describes the way we can swing between consolation and desolation: “It is characteristic of God and His Angels, when they act upon the soul, to give true happiness and spiritual joy, and to banish all the sadness and disturbances that are caused by the enemy.”⁹ As such experiences recur during the 30 days, Ignatius invites the director to employ his good judgment to present other Rules, as that individual experiences one or other of the subtle manifestations of both consolation and desolation.

Ignatius is clear about one further point: discernment of spirits is an instrument for decision-making. He explains that when we are in a state of consolation, ideas will occur to us regarding how we might respond to the love of God. He explains that, if we are in genuine consolation, we can employ these stirrings of the heart to make decisions, for, “there can be no deception in it, since it can proceed from God our Lord only.”¹⁰ By contrast, “in time of desolation we should never make any change.” He explains, “for, just as in consolation the good spirit guides and counsels us, so in desolation the evil spirit guides and counsels us.”¹¹ Ignatius proposes that a habit of discernment of spirits, once formed, can serve as a guide for making decisions, large and small,

⁸ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 328-344.

⁹ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 329.

¹⁰ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 336.

¹¹ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 318.

throughout a lifetime. However, for an individual undergoing the *Exercises*, he raises the possibility of discernment being employed to make a major life choice. He allows some discretion to the spiritual director to decide when a retreatant is ready to be presented with a series of exercises that include titles such as, “Introduction to Making a Choice of a Way of Life,” “Matters About Which a Choice Should Be Made,” “Three Times When a Correct and Good Choice of a Way of Life May be Made.”¹²

This orientation to decision-making makes it clear that engagement with the contemporary world is central to Ignatian spirituality. Ignatius further encourages the retreatant to reflect on how any vocational choice he might make places him within the larger context of the plan the Triune God has for the salvation of humanity and, in fact, for the whole universe. It is notable that many of the non-Biblical imagination exercises that Ignatius proposes to be included in the *Spiritual Exercises* appertain to this point. Before praying about the birth of Jesus, Ignatius proposes an imaginary prayer where one is located with the Trinity who look down on the Earth and see, “that all are going down to hell, They decree in Their eternity that the Second Person should become man to save the human race.”¹³ In another place, Ignatius, the former soldier and knight, proposes exercises where Christ is portrayed as a good King, and adds: “Consider how the Lord of all the world chooses so many persons, apostles, disciples, etc., and sends them throughout the world to spread His sacred doctrine among all men, no

¹² Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 169-189.

¹³ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 102.

matter what their state or condition.”¹⁴ The final exercise proposed by Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises* is called “Contemplation to Attain the Love of God.”¹⁵ He invites the retreatant “to recall to mind the blessings of creation and redemption, and the special favours I have received.” Similarly, he invites the retreatant to consider “how God works and labours for me in all the creatures upon the face of the earth.”¹⁶ Within this cosmic and historical context, he invites the retreatant, “as one would do who is moved by great feeling,” to offer the following, radical, prayer:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it...Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is sufficient for me.¹⁷

One final point is worth noting. The kind of decision upon which the *Spiritual Exercises* focus is primarily one of making a major life choice. However, at various moments, Ignatius makes points that are relevant for making other kinds of decisions. The final Rule for Discernment of Spirits talks about the relationship of being in a state of consolation and the use of our natural powers of reasoning and decision-making. He speaks of the importance of attending to “our own reasoning on the relations of our concepts and on the consequences of our judgments.” He adds that “they must be carefully examined before they are given full approval and put into execution.”¹⁸ Also of interest is an

¹⁴ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 145.

¹⁵ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 230-237.

¹⁶ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 236.

¹⁷ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 234.

¹⁸ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 336.

exercise "Three Times When a Correct and Good Choice of a Way of Life May Be Made." In discussing the first two, he acknowledges that sometimes we can feel so illuminated by a sense of closeness to God that what decision should make is instantly obvious to us. However, he describes the third time of making a decision as being in a "time of tranquillity" when "the soul has free and peaceful use of its natural powers."¹⁹ In this context, he suggests that the retreatant should think-through decisions "with the matter with care and fidelity."²⁰ The significance of this confidence in our natural powers of reason would become evident in the early years of the life of the Society of Jesus, as it would influence the choices of ministries that the first Jesuits would undertake.

*Jesuits as "Contemplatives in Action"*²¹

When first introduced, The Spiritual Exercises represented a novelty in the Catholic Church and met with rapid success.²² Ignatius remained as superior general of the new religious order for 16 years and

¹⁹ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 175.

²⁰ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 180. See also "Rules for Thinking with the Church," 352-370. Here Ignatius takes care to differentiate what he is saying from the theology of the Protestant reformers. He stresses that the work of grace should not be so emphasised "that works and free will suffer harm, or that they are considered of no value" (369).

²¹ At this point, my article may seem to be identifying Jesuit spirituality and history with Ignatian spirituality. This is not my intention. I am aware that, today, there is a wide community of those who are motivated by Ignatian spirituality, including women religious and various associations of lay people. However, Jesuits are central custodians of Ignatian spirituality and the question of how this spirituality guides engagement with the contemporary world is well explored by studying how Jesuits attempted this project over the centuries.

²² See, John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

during this time the number of Jesuits grew to 1,000. During this tenure, major decisions had had to be made regarding details of how this expanding institution would organise itself. One challenge included how to form young Jesuits into the culture of the new order, beyond simply undergoing the *Spiritual Exercises*. Much responsibility for this was delegated by Ignatius to his trusted assistant, Jerome Nadal. This Jesuit coined a term to describe the identity, or “charism,” of the Jesuits: “contemplatives in action.” He intended the term to be paradoxical, acknowledging that the main tradition of contemplation in the Church up to that point had been that of monasticism, where one withdrew from active engagement in the world in order to seek holiness. One commentator states that, by contrast, for Nadal, “the contemplative element—if it can still be called so—is subordinated and ordered to the active-apostolic life.”²³ However, Nadal still advocated the same goal as did earlier spiritual masters, “Be perfect, therefore, as your Heavenly Father in heaven is perfect” (Mt. 5:48.) However, he explained that, in the Ignatian tradition, “perfection is to be realised in the perfection of action guided and impregnated by love.”²⁴

Beyond questions of formation of young Jesuits, questions needed to be addressed regarding what ministries the Jesuits would undertake. The originating document of the Society of Jesus, *The Formula of the Institute*, had remained vague on this matter.²⁵ However, in addition to the usual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the Jesuits had opted

²³ Emerich Coreth, “Contemplative in Action,” in Robert W. Gleason, *Contemporary Spirituality: Current Problems in Religious Life* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 184-211.

²⁴ Coreth, 193.

²⁵ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 1-90.

to take a special vow of obedience to the Pope. The purpose of this was “for missions.” They understood that the responsibility of the Pope for the universal mission of the Church gave him a particular capacity to direct Jesuits to what might be for “the greater glory of God,” a term that would become their maxim. Popes of the time found that the Jesuits were uniquely suited to address some of the challenges facing the Church. They were from diverse nationalities, highly educated, mobile, and were spiritually “reformed” priests in an age of much decadence in priestly behaviour. At this stage, developments occurred that had not been anticipated in the *Formula of the Institute*. Jesuits became assigned to undertake tasks that might seem more secular than explicitly religious. It was discovered that Jesuits made excellent teachers and they were invited to teach the sons of the emerging Catholic bourgeoisie in many of the cities of Europe. They became, at least in part, an order of teachers of young boys. In fact, in document destined to become famous, a *Ratio Studiorum*, they developed ideas about creating schools with structured curricula that would contribute to the emergence of the notion of secondary education that prevails until today.²⁶

Other ministerial options required that Jesuit life develop in further unexpected directions. The Council of Trent was underway during these years and Jesuits participated in this as theological experts. One result was that they were given responsibilities in creating a new notion of “seminary” where young man entering the diocesan priesthood could be trained. In addition to such explicitly religious responsibilities,

²⁶ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 200-242. This describes the development of the *Ratio Studiorum* a plan for a structured curriculum to be followed in secondary schools—an innovation for the age.

the Pope continued to ask Jesuits to engage in the contemporary world in a way that might be considered secular. He sent Jesuits to work in universities, trusting them to articulate a new “renaissance humanism” compatible with what historians now call the “Catholic reform.” This would result in Jesuits becoming artists, musicians, dramatists, and scientists.²⁷ Finally, another unexpected development world concerned “missions.” During these years, the Pope was receiving requests from the Kings of Portugal and Spain to send priests as missionaries to those new territories of Latin America and Asia that had recently been conquered.²⁸ The Pope trusted Jesuits to perform these tasks and the model for generations of such Jesuits became the good friend of Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier. Jesuits are now regarded as being important agents of the process of early-modern globalisation.²⁹

Misjudgements Through the Centuries

In the first century and a half of Jesuit history, the link between Ignatian spirituality and the contemporary world was widely regarded to have been negotiated with success. Many new religious congregations grew up, of women as well as men, that imitated the Jesuit notion of contemplation in action. Similarly, a network of lay associations, “sodalities,” grew up where members underwent the *Spiritual Exercises* and combined their ordinary commitments to work and family life with the performing of good works. These associations were usually urban

²⁷ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 253-263.

²⁸ O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 243-329.

²⁹ See “The Jesuits and Globalisation Project,” at The Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University, USA, <https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/the-jesuits-and-globalization>.

and specific to one or other trade or profession (there were also sodalities for women.) In this way, the spiritual exercises penetrated a good deal of the life of Catholic Europe, and, through missionary work, other continents also.³⁰ However, as time passed, changes occurred in contemporary culture to which Jesuits did not always adapt with the same success.

Three examples suffice to illustrate how, as the contemporary world changed, Jesuit ministries did not always adapt successfully. The first example relates to the suppression of the Jesuits as a religious order by Pope Clement XIV in 1773, a suppression that continued until 1814.

The causes of the suppression of the Jesuits are complex.³¹ One dimension of the reality was that the fate of the Jesuits was now intimately interwoven with the affairs of the Catholic Church as a whole. Consequently, when the Church endured a time of crisis in the eighteenth century, Jesuits became a focus of this crisis. This century witnessed the scientific revolution and the philosophical Enlightenment which followed. The Church as a whole, and the Jesuits with it, struggled to adapt to the shift of intellectual and cultural climate that these developments represented. This became an age of decline in the political power of kings, the rise of parliamentary structures of governments, and an ever-increasing freedom of thought in an emerging bourgeoisie. Some historians have been slow to criticise the Jesuits, suggesting that the suppression of this religious order was a great mistake made by a

³⁰ O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 243-283.

³¹ See Jeffrey D. Burson and Jonathan Wright eds., *The Jesuit Suppression in Global Context: Causes Events and Consequences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1-12; 40-64.

wider Catholic Church, which had submitted itself to the will of leaders of radical European governments. One commentary follows the details of Church politics of the time and states of the Jesuits:

Success was their undoing. Other orders were jealous of their dominance: there was widespread envy of their riches; there was suspicion of their influence upon monarchs; and a distaste among Gallicans for their Ultramontane tendencies...the Jansenists were shrewd in expanding the basis of their own support by targeting a group who were universally unpopular.³²

Other historians are less approving, suggesting that Jesuits had given cause for their unpopularity. There is some support for this thesis from Jesuit archives. Prior to the suppression, a series of General Superiors had written letters to all Jesuits complaining that some tended to work too hard, to neglect the spiritual dimension of their lives, to become too “worldly,” and, at times, to be too involved in commerce and the politics of the age.³³ At any rate, the Jesuits seemed not to have adapted with flexibility to changing times, relying rather on outdated formulas for how their Ignatian spirituality should guide engagement with the contemporary world.

The second period of questionable ministerial decision-making by Jesuits concerns the time after the Society of Jesus was re-established in 1814. This occurred in the same year that Napoleon was defeated, and

³² See Frank Tallett and Nicholas Atkin, *Priests, Prelates and People, A History of European Catholicism since 1750* (London: UK: Bloomsbury, 2003), 34.

³³ See Martin Morales, “The Suppression, a Historiographic Challenge,” *Jesuit Yearbook*, 2014, 16-19.

at the beginning of a period of reactionary politics across Europe.³⁴ Describing developments in the Catholic Church at large, one commentary states “we can already see that the papacy was moving towards a comprehensive rejection of all things modern and a retreat into a theological bunker.”³⁵ This commentary explains that the dominance of reactionary politics in Europe would not remain for long, with revolutions in 1848 ushering in a new wave of radical change. It contends that the Church failed to perceive the long-term significance of the Enlightenment and the French revolution:

The Church...failed to perceive that several of the trends initiated or highlighted by 1789—popular participation in politics, the emergence of new ideologies such as liberalism, nationalism and socialism—were here to stay and that it was necessary to reach some understanding with them.³⁶

Historians agree that the Jesuits supported these options by the official Church and shared its oversights. Representatives of this broader lack of creativity was the performance of Jesuits in the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, known also as the “Roman College.” This university had been operated by Italian diocesan priests during the year of the suppression of the Jesuits. A historian explains that events such as the French revolution and the invasion of Rome by Napoleon’s troops had created a crisis and that, “there had been no time in Rome for

³⁴ See Robert Danieluk, “The Society: Continuity and Discontinuity,” *Jesuit Yearbook, 2014*, 44-47; Miguel Coll, “The Beginnings of the New Society,” *Jesuit Yearbook, 2014*, 65-68. See also Atkin and Tallet, Chapter 3, “Catholicism Restored: 1815-1850,” 85-128.

³⁵ Atkin and Tallett, 128.

³⁶ Atkin and Tallett, 128.

a theological recovery when the Jesuits took over the Roman College.” He adds that, for the Jesuits, “the only teachers available had been formed in the old schools. They could scarcely be expected to do more than perpetuate the dry philosophy of the late eighteenth century.” He concludes that these professors taught material that was “lifeless if not erroneous, reflecting a mentality long out of date.”³⁷ He adds that this state of affairs would not change substantially as the century progressed.

A third example of Jesuits experiencing problems related to how they engage with the contemporary world occurred in 1981. At this time, the General Superior of the Jesuits, Pedro Arrupe, fell ill and it was clear that he would have to be replaced. Next, Pope John Paul II intervened and suspended the ordinary functioning of the Jesuit constitutions. For a short time, he imposed his own delegate as the administrator of the Society, not trusting the Jesuits to appoint a new General Superior that he would consider acceptable.³⁸ This moment of crisis was resolved relatively quickly, and the Pope soon allowed the election of a new Superior General according to the normal procedures of the Jesuit Constitutions. However, the General Superior who was elected, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, would take care to heed the concerns of the Vatican in subsequent years.

The background to the tension with the pope includes the way the Jesuits had conducted the Thirty-Second General Congregation of the institute in 1975. An aim of this congregation had been to translate the

³⁷ Philip Scaraman, SJ, *University of the Nations: The Story of the Gregorian University of Rome from 1551 to Vatican II*, (NY: Paulist Press, 1981), 86.

³⁸ See “Religion: John Paul Takes On the Jesuits,” *Time Magazine*, 9 November 1981: <http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,922654,00.html>.

vision of the Second Vatican Council into a vision for how to express the Jesuit charism in contemporary times. The Congregation published a decree entitled, "Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice." This document revisits the dimension of being contemplatives in action in a world characterised by Cold War politics and an increased awareness of the sufferings of countries of the, so-called, "Third World."³⁹ The emphasis on social justice in the document would characterise many Jesuit ministries in the years that followed, and this would prove controversial with the Vatican, which considered such policies to be influenced by the theology of liberation that had emerged in Latin America after Vatican II. Pope John Paul II saw fit to challenge certain aspects of this theology, inviting Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, to produce a document entitled, "Instruction On Certain Aspects of 'the Theology of Liberation.'" ⁴⁰ This instruction praised aspects of this theology, including its notion of "preferential option for the poor," and a concern for social justice. However, it criticises a tendency towards the use of Marxist categories, and a tendency toward "utopian" thinking, over-identifying the Gospel notion of the Kingdom of God with a reductionistic, even an atheistic notion of social progress.

From the point of view of this article, it suffices to note that still in 1981 it seemed that the Jesuits were experiencing problems regarding

³⁹ Society of Jesus, *General Congregation 32* (1975), Decree 4, "Our Mission Today, the Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice," https://jesuitportal.bc.edu/research/documents/1975_decree4gc32/.

⁴⁰ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1984, "Instruction On Certain Aspects of 'the Theology of Liberation'," http://w2.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html.

just how to think through the way that Ignatian spirituality should guide engagement with the contemporary world, while at the same time “thinking with the Church.”⁴¹

Part II: Bernard Lonergan: Elevating Catholic Theology “To the Level of Its Times”

I turn now to outline the thought of Bernard Lonergan, which I believe is relevant to helping those formed in Ignatian spirituality to think through—on a regular basis—the complex question of how to engage with the contemporary world. My central point is as follows. The *Spiritual Exercises* provide general principles for how to engage in the contemporary world but they do not, in themselves, provide the means to achieve this. I have noted that, within the spectrum of spiritualities of the time, Ignatian spirituality placed much emphasis on the cultivation of our natural gifts of reason so as to better dedicate the whole person to the supernatural end of cooperating with God’s plan of salvation. However, Lonergan points out that the Jesuits were founded at the beginning of the modern era when understanding how to use our powers of reason was itself changing. It would take a long time for these developing notions of reason to mature and for the Catholic Church to trust these developments sufficiently to incorporate them into its way of doing theology. The Church would begin to do this when Pope John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council and called for an

⁴¹ See Ignatius, *Spiritual Exercises*, “Rules for Thinking with the Church,” 352-370.

aggiornamento (updating) in the Church characterized by a willingness to employ “modern methods of study”:

The Church...must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world, which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate...the whole world expects a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciousness in faithful and perfect conformity to the authentic doctrine, which, however, should be studied and expounded through *the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought*. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another.⁴²

In some respects, the 16 documents produced by Vatican II can be understood as a response to this call. Lonergan understood his own work to be in continuity with that of Vatican II and also to respond to what he called, “Pope John’s Intention.”⁴³ He liked to speak of his work on epistemology, metaphysics, religious conversion, and theological method as part of an effort to help the Church “strive to mount to the level of one’s time.”⁴⁴ He believed that the key characteristic of the modern “methods of research” is that they were conducted from within

⁴² Pope John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, Opening Discourse to Vatican II, 1 October 1962: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/it.html>.

⁴³ Lonergan, “Pope John’s Intention,” *A Third Collection* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 224-238.

⁴⁴ Lonergan borrowed this phrase from the philosopher Ortega Y Gasset who wrote on the need to update university education. See “Original Preface of *Insight*,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 3/1(1985): 3-7, at 4.

a horizon of “historical consciousness.”⁴⁵ He contrasted this with what he called a horizon “classicism.” He considered the Neo-Scholastic theological manuals used in the Catholic Church prior to Vatican II to be preeminent examples of classicism. I suggest that what Lonergan came up with not only helps prolong the vision of Vatican II in theology in general but represents a deeply Ignatian approach to thinking through how to engage with the contemporary world.

Four aspects of Lonergan’s thought relate him directly to Ignatius of the *Spiritual Exercises*. The first two are philosophical, the second two theological.

Epistemology

Lonergan is known for two masterworks: *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding* (1956),⁴⁶ and *Method in Theology* (1972).⁴⁷ Chapter 1 of *Method in Theology* is entitled, “Method,” which summarizes and extends much of what the earlier work had to say about

⁴⁵ Lonergan is not alone in describing Vatican II as involving a shift to historical consciousness, although he offers his own, particular, analysis of what historical consciousness should mean. See John O’Malley, “Reform, Historical Consciousness, And Vatican II’s *Aggiornamento*”; Ormond Rush, *Still Interpreting Vatican II: Some Hermeneutic Principles* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2004), and contributing authors to the five-volume series, eds. Giuseppe Aberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak *History of Vatican II* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Press/Leuven: Peeters, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006).

⁴⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Volume 3, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1992).

⁴⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky, Volume 14, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017 [original edition 1972]).

cognitional theory and epistemology.⁴⁸ He introduces his theme with the statement: “A method is a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results.” He then describes how the ground of all particular academic methods lies in spontaneous operating of the human mind in terms of four levels of “intentional consciousness”:

There is the *empirical* level on which we sense, perceive, imagine, feel, speak, move. There is an *intellectual* level on which we inquire, come to understand, express what we have understood, work out the presuppositions and implications of our expression. There is the *rational* level on which we reflect, marshal the evidence, pass judgment on the truth or falsity, certainty or probability, of a statement. There is the *responsible* level on which we are concerned with ourselves, our own operations, our goals, and so deliberate about possible courses of action, evaluate them, decide, and carry out our decisions.⁴⁹

He explains that “the many levels of consciousness are just successive states in the unfolding of a single thrust, the eros of the human spirit.”⁵⁰

He explains what the foundations of this thrust are: “The prior transcendental notions that constitute the very dynamism of our conscious intending, promoting us from mere experiencing towards

⁴⁸ Principle biographical sources on Lonergan are Richard M. Liddy, *Transforming Light: Intellectual Conversion in the Early Lonergan* (Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press, 1993); Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan* (Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press, 1992); William Mathews, *Lonergan’s Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Michael Shute, *The Origins of Lonergan’s Notion of the Dialectic of History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993).

⁴⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 13.

⁵⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 16.

understanding, from mere understanding towards truth and reality, from factual knowledge to responsible action.”⁵¹ Because this method of human knowing and deciding—in authentic persons—is driven by transcendental notions, Lonergan calls it a “transcendental method.”⁵² He states that “in a sense everyone knows and observes transcendental method” because we are spontaneously drawn to employ this capacity. However, he adds, “in another sense it is quite difficult to be at home in transcendental method” because, “it is a matter of heightening one’s consciousness by objectifying it, and that is something that each one, ultimately, has to do in himself and for himself.”⁵³ At this point, Lonergan arrives at one of the most original aspects of his thought. He invites his readers to a moment of “intellectual conversion.” This involves, “applying the operations as intentional to the operations as conscious.” He explains that this requires:

Experiencing one’s experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding, 2. Understanding the unity and relations of one’s experienced experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding, 3. Affirming the reality of one’s experienced and understood experience experiencing, understanding judging, deciding and 4. Deciding to operate in accord with the norms immanent in the spontaneous relatedness of one’s experiencing and understood, affirmed, experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 15.

⁵² Lonergan compares his notion of transcendental method with that of both the Scholastics and Kant, *Method in Theology*, 17, note 11.

⁵³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 7.

⁵⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 7-8.

Lonergan explains that intellectual conversion involves arriving at step 3, as described here (I postpone discussion of step 4—moral conversion—until later.) In presenting an invitation to readers to perform this act of self-affirmation, we see similarities and differences from Ignatius of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Lonergan’s invitation to introspection bears a striking resemblance to the way Ignatius invites retreatants to discern the interior movements of their spirit. We recall, also, how Ignatius proposes that this self-attentiveness extend to attending to the natural working of our reasoning process “with care and fidelity.”⁵⁵ On the other hand, when Ignatius invites individuals to attend to the “concepts and judgments” involved in the reasoning process, he is invoking Scholastic epistemology. According to Lonergan, this approach is guilty of “oversight of insight” and tends to conceive of knowing as if it were just “taking a good look.” He points out that this leads one to believe one should arrive at timeless, universal, truths as the culmination of a knowing process. By contrast, Lonergan points out that intellectual conversion helps us recognize that knowing emerges gradually as the culmination of a process that passes from experience, through insight, to culminate in judgment.

Cosmology

Only the first half of *Insight* is devoted to cognitional theory and epistemology. The second half is devoted to metaphysics. As he had stated in his Introduction:

⁵⁵ Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 180.

Thoroughly understand what it is to understand and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding.⁵⁶

Once he has led the reader through “the five finger exercise” of intellectual conversion, he points out that distinguishing the level of judgment from a level of insight allows one make a breakthrough to a “notion of being,” a “notion of objectivity” and, consequently, to a critically valid metaphysics. He explains, “at the root of cognitional process there is a cool, detached, disinterested desire to know, and its range is unrestricted. Being is the anything and everything that is the objective of that desire.”⁵⁷ According to some interpreters of Lonergan, this “is one of the great insights of Western philosophy.”⁵⁸

Lonergan next speaks of an “isomorphism” that exists between knowing and being and develops a “heuristic” account of the being of the universe in terms of a process of “emergent probability.” This process is complex to explain. However, it employs the flexible and creative process of human intelligence to explain the basic characteristics of being. The structure of being explained by this means include an evolutionary understanding of the universe where higher levels of being emerge from lower ones, just as “higher viewpoints” emerge in human understanding when one insight is attained which embraces a series of more limited insights. Lonergan describes

⁵⁶ Lonergan, *Insight*, 22.

⁵⁷ Lonergan, *Insight*, 376, see also 372.

⁵⁸ Mathews, 258.

“schemes of occurrence” where events occur in a circle of causation, and where “the actual functioning of earlier schemes in the series fulfils the conditions of the possibility of the functioning of later schemes.” He adds, “when it occurs, a probability of emergence is replaced by a probability of survival; and as long as the scheme survives, it is in its turn fulfilling conditions for the possibility of still later schemes in the series.”⁵⁹

Toward the end of *Insight* Lonergan applies this notion of an emergently probable universe to human history. He explains that human freedom brings unique characteristics to this level of being: it allows humans to be creators of new instances of being, for example in their culture and social structures. He adds that the phenomenon of human freedom can be either employed authentically to create “progress in history” or inauthentically to produce “decline in history.” Finally, he explains that a major fruit of intellectual conversion is that it helps identify the difference between progress and decline, with the hope that communities will choose to promote the former and reverse the latter:

For man can discover emergent probability; he can work out the manner in which prior insights and decisions determine the possibilities and probabilities of later insights and decisions; he can guide his present decisions in the light of their influence on future insights and decisions; finally, this control of the emergent probability of the future can be exercised not only by the individual in choosing his career and in forming his character, not only by adults in educating the younger

⁵⁹ Lonergan, *Insight*, 145.

generation, but also by mankind in its consciousness of its responsibility to the future of mankind. Just as technical, economic, and practical development gives man a dominion over nature, so also the advance of knowledge creates and demands a human contribution to the control of human history.⁶⁰

Religious Conversion and the Redemption of History

While *Insight* is an important work, it remains primarily philosophical, with the possibility of a supernatural intervention of God in history mentioned only in its final chapter. This lack is compensated for in *Method in Theology*, published 18 years later.

As already outlined above, Lonergan speaks of four levels of consciousness.⁶¹ Regarding the fourth level, he describes how facts judged as true at the third level provoke an affective response to value. He then traces how we “discern value in feelings” and that values reveal themselves to us in a scale, or hierarchy, of preference: “Not only do feelings respond to values. They do so in accord with some scale of preferences. So we may distinguish vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values in an ascending order.”⁶² He next explains that this process of discernment concludes when we decide that we have reflected enough and we make a “judgment of value,” concerning just what value

⁶⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 252-3.

⁶¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, Chapter 1, “Method,” 7-27. In fact, *Insight* speaks only of three levels of consciousness. Lonergan develops his notion of a fourth level as a result of extensive reading in existential and hermeneutical philosophy in the years subsequent to *Insight*.

⁶² Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 32.

is at stake in the concrete situation we are confronting. He then describes how this judgment prompts a decision to act.⁶³

Lonergan next invites his readers to recognize how religious conversion is an event that registers in the fourth level of consciousness. He explains, "to our apprehension of vital, social, cultural, and personal values, there is added an apprehension of ultimate value."⁶⁴ He describes how this apprehension remains more at a level of a feeling of awe than any detailed knowledge of what it is we are encountering. On the other hand, he acknowledges that what we are encountering "may be objectified as a clouded revelation of absolute intelligence and intelligibility, absolute truth and reality, absolute goodness and holiness."⁶⁵ Now, he explains that, following the structure of our fourth level of consciousness we proceed from merely apprehending this ultimate value to affirming that it is real. He adds, "with that objectification there recurs the question of God in a new form. For now it is primarily a question of decision: Will I love him in return, or will I refuse?"⁶⁶ He completes this analysis by describing what happens when we decide to accept the love that is offered by this source of ultimate value:

Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations...a dynamic state that is prior to and principle of subsequent

⁶³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 37-41.

⁶⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 112.

⁶⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 112.

⁶⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 112.

acts...for Christians it is God's Love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us.⁶⁷

Next, Lonergan explains that moral conversion flows relatively spontaneously from religious conversion.⁶⁸ He asserts, “the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing.”⁶⁹ Lonergan's tone of realism extends beyond stressing that moral conversion is unlikely without religious conversion. He states that even after moments of religious and moral conversion our progress in holiness and goodness is always “dialectical.” He states that “human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from inauthenticity.”⁷⁰ Consequently, he describes the life of graced individuals as continuing to be a three-cornered struggle between our natural ability for self-transcendence, sin, and graced recovery. Nevertheless, Lonergan never abandons a broadly Thomist approach to this question. He does not regard the experience of grace as substituting for our natural capacity for self-transcendence, but rather as re-empowering it.

At this point in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan imitates the structure of the argument of *Insight* and advances from an analysis of the dynamics of the subject to a discussion of social and historical affairs. Reminding us of the strength of decline, he describes how “a civilization in decline digs its own grave with a relentless consistency.”⁷¹ He

⁶⁷ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 226, citing St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:5.

⁶⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 104.

⁶⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 101, 102.

⁷⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 106.

⁷¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 53.

identifies the fundamental cause of decline as being the alienation of the human individual from his or her capacity for self-transcendence: "The basic form of alienation is man's disregard for the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible."⁷² He then adds: "A religion that promotes self-transcendence to the point, not merely of justice, but of self-sacrificing love, will have a redemptive role in human society."⁷³ Consequently, his account of religious and moral conversion becomes the basis for a comprehensive account of a third heuristic category, or "vector," of history: redemption. He describes this in terms of a metaphor, "development from above downwards," to be distinguished from "development from below upwards,"⁷⁴ which can produce both progress and decline. He explains that this development from above is characterized by a love that is capable of reversing decline and restoring progress: "Where hatred plods around in ever narrower vicious circles, love breaks the bonds of psychological and social determinisms with the conviction of faith and the power of hope."⁷⁵

Theological Method

As just mentioned, Lonergan's account of religious and moral conversion, as outlined in *Method in Theology*, enriches and completes the account of intellectual conversion offered in *Insight*. In his earlier

⁷² Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 54.

⁷³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 54.

⁷⁴ Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," *A Third Collection*, 100-108, at 106. In fact, the notion of two ways of development is a metaphor that Lonergan begins to use after the publication of *Method in Theology*.

⁷⁵ Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," 106.

work, he had clarified what historical consciousness means for him. It involves employing a cosmology of an emergently probable universe and understanding history to be constituted by a triple dialectic of tendencies: progress, decline, and redemption. What remains for him to achieve in *Method in Theology* is to outline, in detail, the method of a historically conscious approach to theology, one that can help a religious community be a catalyst of redemption in history.

At the beginning of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan offers a definition of the function of theology: “A Theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix.”⁷⁶ He then describes theology as a collaborative process where diverse specialists perform distinct tasks in two phases. The first phase retrieves a religious tradition; the second phase mediates this to a current cultural matrix. He develops a notion of eight functional specialties, four in each phase. He names the first four functional specialties: research, interpretation, history, and dialectic. The second four he calls: foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications. A reason he fixes on four specialties in each phase is that he recognizes that the end purpose of each specialty is analogous to one of the levels of consciousness.⁷⁷

Lonergan invokes the notion of “classic text” employed by hermeneutical philosophers and makes the obvious point that in Christianity the classic text is the Bible (he nuances this by adding that

⁷⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 3.

⁷⁷ See Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, Chapter 5, “Functional Specialties,” 121-138, at 128. Part 2 of the book devotes a chapter (or two) to each of the functional specialties.

non-Biblical aspects of religious tradition, e.g. liturgy, are also a source for theology.) He describes the first two functional specialties, research and interpretation, as primarily studying the meaning communicated by the Bible to its immediate intended audience. Next, he notes that, over the centuries, the Christian religion developed a sophisticated system of normative interpretations of this text—a doctrinal tradition—which is studied in the functional specialty history. He next explains that not all aspects of the Christian tradition have the protection of being considered doctrine, and indeed some aspects of this tradition contradict other aspects. He explains that the fourth functional specialty is dialectic, which points out the contradictions and inadequacies of certain aspects of the tradition.

Turning to the second phase of theological method, Lonergan notes that the creative process of both deconstruction of the past and reconstruction of a message for the present needs to be exercised by wise practitioners who sincerely participate in the Christian faith. Consequently, the fifth functional specialty, foundations, is closely linked to its predecessor, dialectic. Lonergan explains that, in the fifth functional specialty, explicit reference must be made in the conversions of the theologian: religious, moral, and intellectual.⁷⁸ He also states that the theologian should make clear what intellectual instruments he or she will be employing in the creative exercise of selecting from the options presented in the specialty of dialectic and seeking to mediate them to contemporary culture. He proposes that these instruments must exhibit

⁷⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, Chapter 11, “Foundations,” 250-274. See especially, “Foundational Reality,” 251-252.

historical consciousness and suggests that his theory of history in terms of progress, decline, and redemption should play a key role in this.⁷⁹

The sixth functional specialty, doctrines, represents the result of the process of selection and decision in the previous two specialties. It necessarily involves a respect for Church doctrines, which the theologian is not at liberty to dispute. However, it can also involve an assent to “theological doctrines” which the theologian believes to be true, even if the Church has not yet promoted such theological opinions to the level of a doctrine. The seventh functional specialty, systematics, represents an effort to explain the meaning of the doctrines that have been selected in the previous specialty. Such explanations will be more intelligible than the mere statement of doctrines, but they do not have the same claim to truth. This permits, for example, the emergence of pluralism in theological opinion, and the development of doctrines over time, if the church promotes a theological opinion to a doctrine.

Finally, it is in the eighth functional specialty, “communications,” that “theological reflection bears fruit.”⁸⁰ This involves communicating the insights of systematic theology to the whole Christian community, helping the set of meanings and values expressed in this specialty to become the constitutive meaning of that community. In this way, Lonergan speaks of communications helping the Church to become a “process of self-constitution.”⁸¹ Next, however, Lonergan reminds his

⁷⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, Chapter 11, “Foundations.” See especially, “General Theological Categories,” and “Special Theological Categories,” 267-272.

⁸⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 327.

⁸¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 334.

readers that the Church is also supposed to be an “out-going process,”⁸² attempting to communicate redemptive meanings and values to the broader culture.

Conclusion: Ignatius and Lonergan

The four key characteristics of Lonergan’s thought, just outlined, can be easily related to the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Regarding the epistemology of *Insight*, Robert Doran writes of “*Insight* as a set of *Spiritual Exercises*.” Here he points to the close parallel between Lonergan’s invitation to introspection and the invitation of Ignatius to discern the affective swings we experience in prayer.⁸³ Similarly, he notes how Lonergan speaks of a transcendent object of the pure desire to know, an insight he shares with Ignatius, who is confident that exploring our deepest desires will reveal that we desire to know God and to do His will. Doran states that, already in the Preface to *Insight*, “the reader is being told that by reading this book he or she will be plunged into a struggle that, while cognitive and intellectual and philosophic, is also profoundly existential and spiritual.”⁸⁴ Next, Doran speaks of an “Ignatian ethos” that pervades *Insight*.⁸⁵ He points to the Ignatian “tone” of Lonergan’s complex metaphysics and speaks of the consolation he felt while reading it for the first time. He explains:

⁸² Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 335.

⁸³ Robert Doran, “Essays in Systematic Theology 19: Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan: Revisiting a Topic That Deserves Further Reflection,” 10-12: <https://bit.ly/38CQ8aB>.

⁸⁴ Doran, “Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,” 10-11.

⁸⁵ Doran, “Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,” 3.

This consolation is related to an illumination that *Insight* can effect: in fact this world *is* intelligible, things *do* hold together, we *can* make sense of the universe and of our lives, we *can* overcome the fragmentation of knowledge, we *can* make true judgments, we *can* make good decisions, we *can* transcend ourselves to what is and to what is good.⁸⁶

Doran adds, “This commitment to long-range effects, ultimate issues, even though [these are] theoretical questions, has always been a hallmark of the Society of Jesus, where the Society has remained faithful to its own origins and vocation.”⁸⁷

When one turns to Lonergan’s account of religious conversion, the links to the *Spiritual Exercises* become more than ever evident. However, here one notes an irony: these links were not always evident to Lonergan himself. The reason for this is that when Lonergan had been a novice, the *Spiritual Exercises* were poorly understood and poorly presented. Jesuits were so influenced by their Neo-Scholastic philosophical horizon that they were unable to recognize where this conflicted with the dynamic of the *Spiritual Exercises*. One commentator describes how, over the years, Lonergan had needed to “unburden the experimental life of grace presumed by the authentic practice of the *Spiritual Exercises* from voluntarist and conceptualist presuppositions in order to explore the transformative union of the human person with God.”⁸⁸ The ironic fact is that, for many years, Lonergan developed his thinking in

⁸⁶ Doran, “Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,” 6.

⁸⁷ Doran, “Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,” 4-5 (parenthesis added).

⁸⁸ Gordon Rixon, “Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism,” *Theological Studies*, 62(2001): 479 to 497, at 484.

philosophy and theology without recognizing how Ignatian his thoughts were. It was only toward the end of his life, when listening to a lecture on the renewal of understanding of the *Spiritual Exercises* after Vatican II, that Lonergan grasped how close was his account of religious conversion to that of consolation without cause in the *Spiritual Exercises*. He declared:

I had been hearing those words since 1922 at the annual retreats made by Jesuits preparing for the priesthood. They occur in St. Ignatius's “Rules for the Discernment of Spirits” in the Second Week of the *Exercises*. But now, after fifty-three years, I began for the first time to grasp what they meant.⁸⁹

Finally, Lonergan’s account of functional specialisation leaves one in no doubt that he seeks to put the deepest of intellectual reflection to the kind of pastoral application of which Ignatius would be proud. Describing the task of the final functional specialty, communications, he states:

The Christian message is to be communicated to all nations. Such communication presupposes that preachers and teachers enlarge their horizons to include an accurate and intimate understanding of the culture and the language of the people they address. They must grasp the virtual resources of that culture and that language, and they must use those virtual resources creatively so that the Christian message becomes, not

⁸⁹ Lonergan wrote this in a letter of recommendation for academic promotion for Harvey Egan SJ, reproduced as “Bernard Lonergan to Thomas O’Malley,” in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Volume 20, Number 1, 2002: 81-2.

disruptive of the culture, not an alien patch superimposed upon it, but a line of development within the culture.⁹⁰

Robert Doran offers an analysis of the problems the Society of Jesus experienced with Pope John Paul II in 1981. He suggests that a better employment of the “intellectual apostolate,” such as advocated by Bernard Lonergan could have helped avoid such problems. He states:

Wherever this commitment has been lost or abandoned in the history of the Society, the Society itself has lost its way and has had to be called back to something very important in its service to the Church, just as Fr Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, with mixed results so far, is trying to call the Society back today to the centrality of the intellectual apostolate, precisely for the sake of ‘the service of faith and the promotion of justice’ that we have recognized as partly constitutive of our vocation.”⁹¹

I believe there is much truth in this severe comment, but I would like to nuance it in two ways. First, in centuries prior to the twentieth the only tools available to the intellectual apostolate were classicist ones. Consequently, even the best of intellectual reflection was unlikely to have been adequate to guide the Society of Jesus through the challenging times of the suppression and restoration of the Society. Secondly, in 2018 the current General Superior of the Jesuits, Fr. Arturo Sosa, produced a new formulation of four “Universal Apostolic Preferences.”⁹² These stand in continuity with the mission statement of

⁹⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 334.

⁹¹ Doran, “Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,” 5.

⁹² The Society of Jesus, “The Universal Apostolic Preferences,” <https://www.jesuits.global/uap/#>.

1975 while also demonstrating a maturing of reflection that is related to having listened to the critique of the Vatican. The first of these preferences can be understood as echoing the call of the General Congregation of 1975 for the service of faith. The second is a rearticulation of the call to promote social justice, which it now describes in terms of “social reconciliation.” A third preference regards the promotion of ecology; and the fourth regards the importance of working with young people. I suggest that there is every possibility of illuminating these preferences with the thought of Lonergan. What is important now is that an opportune time—a *Kairos*—has arrived when the tools are available to allow the links between Ignatian spirituality and the contemporary to be well worked out. It would take another article to explore ways in which the pontificate of Pope Francis might deepen the reality of such an opportune time.⁹³

⁹³ The notion that the pontificate of Francis might represent a *kairos* moment for the reception of Lonergan is the purpose of the book, Gerard Whelan, *A Discerning Church Pope Francis, Lonergan and a Theological Method for the Future* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2019).

〔摘要〕本文認為，依納爵靈修在如何融入當代世界的問題上，兩者之間的連繫是聖依納爵（St. Ignatius）的願景的核心所在。然而，它強調如何構成這種連繫的問題本身是複雜的，而聖依納爵神操本身並沒有提供知識的工具來決定如何進行此連繫的細節。本文追溯了幾個世紀以來耶穌會士如何在取得適當的平衡方面，有時取得更大的成功，有時則很少。然後它轉向 20 世紀加拿大耶穌會士伯納德·朗尼根（Bernard Lonergan）的思想，提出他的著作《神學方法》（*Method in Theology*）提供了適當的工具來建立這種連繫，而這一連繫與梵二精神十分調和。

關鍵詞：聖依納爵神操、分辨神類、本性、理性、先驗方法、皈依、出現的概率、功能專業