

International Symposium

# The Impact of Ignatian Spirituality on Contemporary Theology and Church Reform

2025

23-24 May

0900-1830

Host:



香港中文大學  
天主教研究中心  
Centre for Catholic Studies



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香港中文大學  
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uah/ Instituto de Teología  
y Estudios Religiosos (ITER)  
Universidad Alberto Hurtado

RC REGIS COLLEGE  
THE JESUIT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY IN CANADA | UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# *International Symposium*

## *The Impact of Ignatian Spirituality on Contemporary Theology and Church Reform*

23 – 24 May 2025 (Friday – Saturday)

二零二五年五月二十三至二十四日(星期五至六)

|                  |           |  |
|------------------|-----------|--|
| 23 May<br>五月二十三日 | 0900-1830 | Lecture Theatre 1, Yasumoto International Academic Park, CUHK<br>香港中文大學 康本國際學術園一號演講廳 |
| 24 May<br>五月二十四日 | 0900-1830 | Lecture Theatre 1, Yasumoto International Academic Park, CUHK<br>香港中文大學 康本國際學術園一號演講廳 |

The Symposium will be conducted in English

會議將以英語進行

## *Day 1: 23 May 2025 (Friday)*

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 08:30 – 09:00                  | Registration  |
| <b><i>Opening Ceremony</i></b> |   |
| 09:00 – 09:30                  | Welcoming Speeches<br>Group Photo   |
| <b><i>Session 1</i></b>        |   |
| 09:30 – 10:00                  | Henry Shea SJ (Boston College/US)<br><i>The Spiritual Foundation of the Thought of Contemporary Jesuit Theologians</i>  |
| 10:00 – 10:30                  | Bertrand Dumas (University of Strasbourg/France)<br><i>Henri de Lubac's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality</i>  |
| 10:30 – 11:00                  | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: James Matthew Ashley</span>   |
| 11:00 – 11:30                  | Break   |
| 11:30 – 12:00                  | Travis LaCouter (KU Leuven/Belgium)<br><i>Towards an Ecclesial Discernment of Spirits: Balthasar on the Prospects of Church Reform</i>  |
| 12:00 – 12:30                  | Hernán Rojas SJ (Universidad Católica del Norte/Chile)<br><i>Karl Rahner's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality</i>   |
| 12:30 – 13:00                  | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: James Hanvey SJ</span>  |
| 13:00 – 14:30                  | Lunch   |
| <b><i>Session 2</i></b>        |   |
| 14:30 – 15:00                  | François Euvé SJ (Facultés Loyola Paris/France)<br><i>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality</i>   |
| 15:00 – 15:30                  | Gordon Rixon SJ (University of Toronto/Canada)<br><i>Bernard Lonergan's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality</i>  |
| 15:30 – 16:00                  | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: Gerard Whelan SJ</span>   |
| 16:00 – 16:30                  | Break   |
| 16:30 – 17:00                  | Gerard Whelan SJ (Pontifical Gregorian University/Italy)<br><i>The Church Reform from Vatican II to the Synod of Synodality:<br/>From the Point of View of Ignatian Spirituality and Theological Method</i> |
| 17:00 – 17:30                  | Roundtable Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: Gordon Rixon SJ</span>   |
| 17:45 – 18:30                  | Mass (*For in-person participation only)  |
| <b><i>End of Day 1</i></b>     |   |

## **Day 2: 24 May 2025 (Saturday)**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 08:30 – 09:00            | Registration  |
| <b>Session 3</b>         |   |
| 09:00 – 09:30            | Michel Fédou SJ (Facultés Loyola Paris/France)<br><i>Ignatian Way of Doing Spirituality Theology (video conference)</i>   |
| 09:30 – 10:00            | Carlos Alvarez SJ (Universidad Alberto Hurtado/Chile)<br><i>The Art of Conversation as the Ignatian Trace of Michel de Certeau's Theological Thought. Challenges to be Faced by Church Reform</i> |
| 10:00 – 10:30            | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: Patrick C. Goujon SJ</span>   |
| 10:30 – 11:00            | Break   |
| 11:00 – 11:30            | Patrick C. Goujon SJ (University of Oxford/UK)<br><i>Ignatian Spirituality and Contemporary Theology of the Body</i>  |
| 11:30 – 12:00            | Antoine Ren SJ (The Chinese University of Hong Kong/Hong Kong)<br><i>Christoph Theobald's Stylistic Theology—A Theological System Based on Ignatian Spirituality that Aims at Church Reform</i>   |
| 12:00 – 12:30            | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: Carlos Alvarez SJ</span>  |
| 12:30 – 14:00            | Lunch   |
| <b>Session 4</b>         |   |
| 14:00 – 14:30            | Martin Maier SJ (Central American University/El Salvador; Adveniat/ Germany)<br><i>Contemplativus in actione iustitiae. The Ignatian Roots of Ignacio Ellacuría's Theology (video conference)</i> |
| 14:30 – 15:00            | James Matthew Ashley (Santa Clara University/US)<br><i>Pope Francis' Theology and Ignatian Spirituality</i>   |
| 15:00 – 15:30            | Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: James Hanvey SJ</span>  |
| 15:30 – 16:00            | Break   |
| 16:00 – 16:30            | James Hanvey SJ (University of Oxford/UK, Secretary for the Service of Faith for the Society of Jesus)<br><i>Ignatian Spirituality and Synodality</i>   |
| 16:30 – 17:00            | Roundtable Discussion <span style="float: right;">Moderator: Gerard Whelan SJ</span>  |
| 17:00 – 17:30            | Concluding Remarks and Closing Ceremony   |
| 17:45 – 18:30            | Mass (*For in-person participation only)  |
| <b>End of Conference</b> |   |

## Speakers Profile

*In order of appearance*

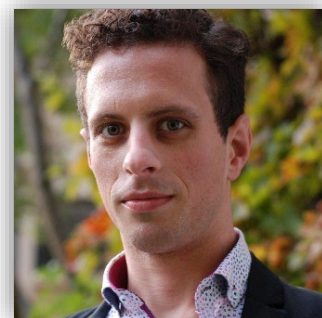
**H**enry Shea SJ, is an assistant professor of theology at Boston College and a Jesuit priest of the USA East Province. He received a DPhil in theology from the University of Oxford in 2021, and his revised dissertation was published as *An Analogy of Grace* by the University of Notre Dame Press in 2025. His research has been focused on developing a theology of grace in light of the contributions of Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Erich Przywara, and Henri de Lubac, among others. He will begin teaching theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome this fall.



**B**ertrand Dumas is HDR teacher-researcher in systematic theology at the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Strasbourg since 2017 and is the director of the Institut de Pédagogie Religieuse (IPR) at the same faculty. He is also a counsellor of marriage and family (*Cler Amour et Famille*). His experience is characterized by a personal interest in theology and professional involvement in the pastoral service in several dioceses in France. For several years, his fields of study include theology of Father Henri de Lubac, spirituality of conjugality and sacrament of marriage as well as questions related to pastoral theology.



**T**ravis LaCouter earned a doctorate from the University of Oxford in 2020. He is currently a postdoctoral researcher at KU Leuven (Belgium). A systematic theologian with special interests in political theology and spirituality, his work utilizes empirical methods (e.g. first-person interviews) and historical case-studies to better understand the normative and theological dimensions of dissent in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church. His first book, *Balthasar & Prayer*, was published by T&T Clark in 2021, and his second monograph, *Doctrine & Dissent* is currently under contract with Cambridge University Press.



**H**ernán Rojas SJ, is Assistant Professor at the Theological Department in Antofagasta of the Universidad Católica del Norte (Catholic University of Northern Chile). He holds a doctorate in theology from the University of Innsbruck, Austria. His doctoral



dissertation, *Wohin, Herr, willst du mich bringen? Eine Theologie der Berufung im Gespräch mit Karl Rahner* (*Where, Lord, Do You Want to Lead Me? A Theology of Vocation in Dialogue with Karl Rahner*), was awarded the Karl Rahner Prize in 2022. His other research interests include the relationship between theology and spirituality, Ignatian Spirituality, and the theology of religious life.

**F**rançois Euvé SJ, has been the Editor-in-Chief of monthly journal *Etudes* (Paris) since 2013. He received his doctorate in theology at Centre Sèvres, Paris, in 2000 and was the Holder of the “Chair Teilhard de Chardin” in 2005, director of doctoral program 2009-2012 and visiting professor at Georgetown University (Washington) 2012-2013. His latest publications are *Quel avenir pour le christianisme?* (2023) and *La science, l'épreuve de Dieu ?* (avec la participation d'Etienne Klein) (2022). *Pour une spiritualité du cosmos*. His book *Découvrir Teilhard de Chardin* in 2015 is also available in Korean and Spanish.



**G**ordon Rixon SJ completed a Master of Divinity and Licentiate in Theology at Regis College, Toronto, and doctoral studies in theology at Boston College. Besides serving on the Regis Faculty since 1996, Gordon is a Research Scholar at the Lonergan Research Institute and a past member of the Institute's Board of Directors. He is a literary trustee for the



estate of the Canadian Jesuit philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan. He also served on the Board of Directors of Covenant House, Toronto, Bureau des Gouverneurs, Université St. Paul, Ottawa, and represented the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Churches' Council on Theological Education. He was the Dean of Regis College from 2005 to 2014 and became President of Regis College in 2022.

**Gerard Whelan SJ**, was conferred a PhD in systematic theology from St. Michael's College, the Toronto School of Theology in 1996 for his dissertation on Bernard Lonergan. In the period 1996-2006 Gerard worked in Kenya, during which he served as a member of the Commission on Ecumenism for the Kenyan Episcopal Conference and functioned as an advisor to the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya. In 2007 Gerard was assigned to teach in the Faculty of Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. He was appointed Director of the "Lonergan Project" at the Gregorian in 2010 and was nominated a Proffessore Straordinario in 2015. In 2023, he was appointed Moderator of the Licentiate in Comparative Christian Traditions and Ecumenical Studies.



**Michel Fédou SJ**, studied Classics, entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1976 and ordained priest in 1984. He taught at Centre Sèvres (Paris) from 1987 and served as President of Centre Sèvres from 2003 to 2009. He is currently Professor emeritus of Patristics and



Dogmatic Theology at Facultés Loyola Paris. He is a former consultant to the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and a former member of the International Lutheran-Catholic Theological Commission. He has written several books on the Church Fathers and in particular Origen; on Jesus Christ; and on dogmas. One of his latest titles is *Jésus Christ dans l'histoire humaine et le mystère de Dieu* (2024).

**Carlos Álvarez SJ**, is a Chilean Jesuit, who holds a doctorate in theology from the Centre Sèvres-Facultés Loyola in Paris and in history from the Instituto de Historia de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. His research focuses on the theological thought of Michel de Certeau and Henri de Lubac, as well as the intellectual history of the Jesuits in Chile, particularly in relation to the development of social Catholicism in the twentieth century. He currently teaches at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and conducts research at the Alberto Hurtado University's Institute of Theology and Religious Studies.



**P**atrick C. Goujon SJ, is Senior Research Fellow at Campion Hall-Oxford University and Professor of Theology and History of Spirituality at Facultés Loyola Paris. He is also Editor-in-Chief of *Recherches de Science Religieuse*. His research interests are in Jesuit spirituality and history, based on a literary approach, historical anthropology, and hermeneutics,



evolving from his original focus on the French Jesuits of the 17th century to the restoration of the Society of Jesus in the 19th century and the renewal of Jesuit studies in the 20th century. He is currently working on a project on the “desire for Jesus Christ” in the Western Christian tradition. One of his recent publications is *Precarious. A Survivor of Clerical Abuse Remembers* (2023, translated into seven languages).

**A**ntoine Ren SJ, holds a PhD in theology from Université catholique de Louvain. He is working at the Centre for Catholic Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong and will begin his teaching at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College of the same university this coming August. He is also teaching at the Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy in Hong Kong. His recent publications include *La théologie stylistique de la mission chez Christoph Theobald. Un nouveau paradigme pour penser et réaliser la mission chrétienne en postmodernité* (2024).



**M**artin Maier SJ, is the Chief Executive of Adveniat, an aid organization for Latin America since 2021. He joined the Jesuit order in 1979. After studying philosophy, theology and music in Munich, Paris, Innsbruck and San Salvador, he was ordained a priest in

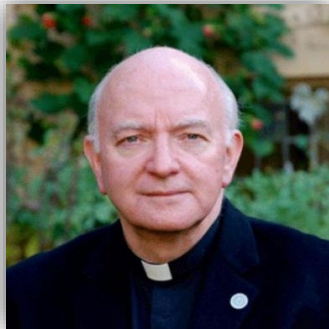


1988. From 1989 to 1991, he was parish priest of the rural community of Jayaque in El Salvador. He was awarded a doctorate in theology in 1993. From 1995 to 2009, Fr. Maier was editor and from 1988 editor-in-chief of the theological monthly magazine *Stimmen der Zeit*. From 2009 to 2014, he was Rector of the Berchmans College in Munich. From 2014 to 2020, he was Commissioner for European Affairs at the Jesuit European Social Center (JESC) in Brussels.

**J**ames Matthew Ashley is professor of Christian spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, in Berkeley, California. His research foci have been political theology, especially that of Johann Baptist Metz; Latin American liberation theology; the relationship between science and religion; and the intersections of Christian spirituality and academic theology, with a particular interest in how Christianity's mystical traditions have elicited and sustained action for integral liberation. His most recent book is *Renewing Theology: Ignatian Spirituality and Karl Rahner, Ignacio Ellacuría, and Pope Francis*.



**J**ames Hanvey SJ, D.Phil (Oxon) is currently the Secretary for the Service of Faith advising the General of the Society of Jesus. Until this appointment in 2019 he was Master of Campion Hall, and member of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Oxford. He taught systematic theology at Heythrop College, University of



London, where he was also Head of the Department of Christian Doctrine and Founding Director of the Heythrop Institute for Religion, Ethics and Public Life. He has also been a theological consultant to the Bishops of England and Wales and has held the Veale Chair in Ignatian Spirituality at Milltown Park, Dublin the Lo Schiavo Professor of Catholic Social Thought University of San Francisco. He was co-chair of the Spirituality Commission for the Synod on Synodality which recently concluded in Rome. He has published widely in the fields of systematic theology and Ignatian Spirituality. Recently contributing to the 2nd volume in the forthcoming *Oración Ignaciana in the Manresa* published by the University of Comillas (Mensajero-Sal Terrae) and is currently editing a book in this series on the Formula of the Institute (Society of Jesus).

# *Abstracts*

## *Day 1*

### **The Spiritual Foundation of the Thought of Contemporary Jesuit Theologians**

**Henry Shea, SJ**

Many of the most significant theologians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries were deeply steeped in the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. Focusing on Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac, Erich Przywara, and Ignacio Ellacuría, this paper explores how the driving movements of each of their theologies arise from distinct dynamics of the Exercises in which they were formed. It likewise proposes that these parallels can help us find in the Exercises a way beyond current impasses in the life of theology and the Church to rediscover the broader animus of our mission.

### **Henri de Lubac's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality**

**Bertrand Dumas**

The question of the influence of Jesuit spirituality on the theology of Father Henri de Lubac initially plunges the reader into a certain perplexity. In fact, the explicit material is rather limited, and it would be advisable to begin with a methodical study of this data, attempting an initial inventory of the (rare) quotations from Ignatius of Loyola in the writings of our author. We will then be able to highlight several points of agreement between Jesuit spirituality and Lubacan theology, especially the question of the supernatural as man's orientation towards God, the relationship between the Church and the Spirit, presence in the world and discernment of what is at stake in it. Finally, we will try to explain the paradox between the relative scarcity of texts and the fundamental—indeed quite obvious—impregnation of Lubacan theology by Jesuit spirituality, risking one or two hypotheses, especially with regard to the often indirect nature of Lubacan speech.

## **Towards an Ecclesial Discernment of Spirits: Balthasar on the Prospects of Church Reform**

**Travis LaCouter**

Balthasar's influence upon contemporary Catholic theology is today widely recognised, even while the scope and value of his project remain sources of considerable debate. His ambivalent status to posterity attests to a wide-ranging set of interests as well as a generative theological method. On questions related to church reform, Balthasar displays many of the tendencies that make him difficult to categorise in traditional terms: He would write a decade before the Council of the urgent need for the Church to tear down the walls it had erected between itself and the world; but then three decades later would undertake a spirited defense of ecclesial power structures against then-fashionable calls for "anarchical" levelling in the Church. When viewed beyond their immediate polemical context(s), however, Balthasar's writings on church reform can be seen as an attempt to integrate concrete ecclesiological questions (e.g., the nature of papal authority, historical and ongoing scandals in the Church, and lay participation) into his overall "dramatic" framework. Of special importance here is Balthasar's depiction of the Church as a differentiated "net of tensions" represented in a "constellation" of scriptural archetypes or "offices" in the Church (e.g. Marian, Johannine, Petrine). Inherent in this dramatic/typological account is a notion of inner-ecclesial conflict which arguably cannot be overcome or resolved once and for all. Rather than a comprehensive program of reform, then, Balthasar's theology provides the resources for an Ignatian "discernment of spirits" applied to the Church as such. In this regard, his is an especially valuable perspective from which to view and judge the Francis pontificate in general and the ongoing synodal process in particular. This paper will present and appraise Balthasar's views while attempting to demonstrate their relevance to the contemporary Church.

## **Karl Rahner's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality**

**Hernán Rojas, SJ**

The discussion about the relevance of Ignatian spirituality in Karl Rahner's theology began during his lifetime. Rahner himself described it as the most significant influence on his theological work.

Rahner understands Ignatian spirituality as a mystagogy of the personal experience of God (*SpEx* 15). God is the ever-greater Mystery who relativises all created things. God communicates himself to his creature and also communicates his will. Ignatius and his first

companions sought above all to help souls. This mission has a universal character. For Rahner, following the poor and humble Jesus from a position of marginality within the Church and the world belongs to Jesuit spirituality, as does a critical fidelity to the concrete Church.

Ignatian spirituality can be recognised in Rahner's theology by the persistent presence of a central question in his work: how does the communication between God and the human being (*SpEx* 231) take place? This question appears in his early research in patristic and medieval spiritual theology, in his philosophical works, in his spiritual writings, and also in his explicitly theological texts. In addition, some "Ignatian attitudes" are recognisable in his theological approach: the pastoral and universal outlook of his theology, the radical distinction between the absoluteness of God and the relativity of all created things, and his faithful yet critical approach to the Church of his time.

## **Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's Theology and Ignatian Spirituality**

**Francois Euvé, SJ**

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's approach can be expressed through this Ignatian phrase: "seeing God in all things." Indeed, it proceeds from a way of "seeing." His approach is experiential within an evolving world. A universe in the process of becoming necessarily eludes "ready-made theories." The scientific attitude resonates with the approach of faith: God reveals Himself in events. This vision of the world leads to participation in God's creative action. Teilhard's spirituality is profoundly Christological. Christ is the meeting point between the divine and the human. Every creature reaches its full development only in Christ. We have no other access to God except through Christ's flesh, as Christianity is "by essence, the religion of the Incarnation." God unites Himself with the world to incorporate it into Him. Thus, emphasis is placed on union: Teilhard sees world history as a movement from multiplicity toward unity, a gathering that Christ accomplishes. Christ not only has a collective dimension within the Church but also a cosmic dimension, as expressed in the hymn of the Epistle to the Colossians. In this sense, the Eucharist, through which Christ gives Himself to us, has a cosmic extension, as illustrated in the Mass on the World. The "constructive" axis of Teilhardian spirituality must engage in dialectic with a "mystical" axis. The "divinization of activities," which conforms us to God's creative action, leads to the "divinization of passivities." Alongside a mysticism of action, there is a mysticism of abandonment: attachment and detachment are the two movements of the "breathing of the soul." Once again, the model is Christ Himself: the Cross accomplishes the work of the Son of God.

## **Bernard Lonergan and Ignatian Spirituality**

**Gordon Rixon, SJ**

Bernard Lonergan's early interpreters often engaged with his work through "Insight: A Study in Human Understanding," his first widely circulated publication. Like many other Catholic scholars, some aimed to present a credible account of their intellectual integrity and a genuine pursuit of truth independent of excessive church authority. This apologetic desire was particularly evident within the socially disadvantaged immigrant American Church. Catholic intellectuals sought to be viewed positively according to cultural standards and to secure their place in higher education. Lonergan's rigorous philosophical exploration of cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics in *Insight*, supported by references to mathematics and the empirical natural and social sciences, was embraced for reinforcing such a claim. Some may have even been tempted to interpret Lonergan as a contemporary modernist, prioritising rational, empirically based argumentation, but this would overlook his revelation-based doctrinal, theological, and methodological texts.

The recently completed publication of Lonergan's *Collected Works* provides the literary context necessary for understanding the significance of Lonergan's Jesuit heritage, particularly the influence of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. Three key insights emerge from recognising Lonergan, the theologian, as a Jesuit practitioner of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. First, Lonergan is deeply committed to the doctrinal core of the Roman Catholic Church, which encompasses the authoritative teachings regarding the revealed missions of Spirit and Word. Second, he regards the converted human subject as the foundation of theological reflection. Third, he highlights the practical discernment of spiritual movements in history over the still-essential pursuit of personal holiness.

According to Ignatian discernment, the outcomes of a historical movement serve as the most compelling evidence for evaluating its contributions. This paper explores how the three connections identified between Lonergan's theology and Ignatian practice contribute to church reform, the synodal process, and social reconciliation. We conclude by asserting that these theological and spiritual nexuses foster intellectual flexibility, affective freedom, and commitment to praise, reverence, and serve God, essential in supporting others in their pursuit of self-transcending religious meaning and service.

## **The Church Reform from Vatican II to the Synod of Synodality: From the Point of View of Ignatian Spirituality and Theological Method**

**Gerard Whelan, SJ**

This talk explores how the notion of the Church being “always in need of reform” has a long history in Christian thought and how this principle came into particular application between Vatican II (1962-1965) and the Synod on Synodality (2021-2024). It also explores the role that Jesuits and those who are motivated by Ignatian spirituality have played in this process. It suggests that there are two dimensions of reform. The first pertains to organisational structure and institutional behaviour. Here one notes that in his opening address to Vatican II Pope John XXIII spoke of this kind of reform when he appealed for a council that would be “pastoral and ecumenical.” Such reform had implications for matters of internal organisation of the Church; for its relationship with other Christian Churches; and for its identity as “The Church in the Modern World.” The second notion of reform is less obvious but it provides the basis of the institutional behaviour of the Church: the self-understanding of Christians. Pope John XXIII touched on this dimension of reform when he stated that authentic Christian doctrine “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.” It suggests that this dimension of reform pertains, above all, to questions of theological method. The talk next explores how these two dimensions of reform have been evident in the Catholic Church up to and including the Synod on Synodality. The talk next turns to the role that Jesuits and those influenced by Ignatian Spirituality have played in the process of implementing the reforms of Vatican II, both before the appointment of a Jesuit pope and after. It suggests that while theologies inspired by Ignatian spirituality have shown considerable diversity, they have also shown significant convergences. It supports the statement of the organisers of the current symposium that Jesuit-influenced theologies tend to stress “the emergence of the subject in a direct relationship with God, a relationship that opens a space of freedom for dialogue between theology and culture, as well as science.” The talk concludes with two observations and a proposal. First, that the method of “ecclesial discernment” that characterised the way of proceeding of the Synod on Synodality is directly related to the notion of discernment of spirits that is close to the heart of Pope Francis. Second, that the question of theological method begins to emerge in the Synod in a way that is more explicit than anything that occurred in Vatican II. Third, that the thought of the Canadian Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan, author of *Method in Theology* (1972), can be of value in helping guide the future of a synodal Church.

## Day 2

### **Ignatian Way of Doing Spirituality Theology**

**Michel Fédou, SJ**

The Ignatian way of doing theology implies, first and foremost, a pedagogy that integrates some practices of the Spiritual Exercises. Above all, it is inspired by several major orientations: a certain understanding of the relationship between man and God; the centrality of Christ; and concern for the Church.

### **The Art of Conversation as the Ignatian Trace of Michel de Certeau's Theological Thought. Challenges to be Faced by Church Reform**

**Carlos Alvarez, SJ**

This contribution explores the Ignatian traces in Michel de Certeau's theological thought. Although the French Jesuit does not produce a formal theology, we cannot deny that throughout his work, he does not cease to investigate the emergence of the absolute and its difference in everyday language within the social and political events of his time. The traces of the Ignatian can be seen in his way of seeking to reweave and re-establish a broken "communication" between contemporary culture and Christian languages, between the centre and the difference, between Europe and Latin America, between theology and the human sciences. Everything indicates that at the base of his intellectual project lies the echo of what is most characteristic of the Jesuit apostolate: the art of conversation. This conversation emerges from the absolute will (*voló*) of the subject and the desire of the other. His work on the crisis of Christianity and the "ideological institutions" in the West led him to formulate an archaeology of language erosion, which implies a progressive awareness of the epistemological consequences of the nominalist rupture in the 14th century. The corollary of this rupture was the advent of spiritual experience as the only place of certitude in the knowledge of God's will. In the 16th century, modern mysticism and spiritual exercises will be a pristine expression of this epistemological transformation. Their acute analyses of the situation of an "éclaté Christianity" (*Le christianisme éclaté*) and of how to make this Christianity thinkable in the context of an epistemology marked by fragmentation and the absence of the real pose fundamental challenges to be considered in the face of the necessary reforms of the Church.

## **Ignatian Spirituality and Contemporary Theology of the Body**

**Patrick C. Goujon, SJ**

Christian theology and Western philosophy have shaped the Spiritual Exercises through their dualism. It marks the vocabulary of the Exercises at first glance. There is a great risk of trying to bypass the difficulty or of adding practices from the outside that distort the spiritual experience Ignatius can still offer us. For today, we expect Ignatian spirituality to include the body, both because of contemporary post-Christian aspirations and also, as we shall see, for profound theological reasons. However, a closer attention to the text and its effective aims, as well as to the culture of the Renaissance, can allow us to enter into a better understanding of the relationships we weave through prayer and action. This involves focusing our attention on the movements, not only those of our inner life, but also those that pass between us, in our relationships, as well as between the characters of Scripture. Instead of concentrating on the “individual,” Ignatius Loyola appears more concerned with the interplay between the person, their “environment,” and institutional entities, as reflected in the Constitutions. Ignatian spirituality links the movements of the Holy Spirit, deciphered by contemplating the life of Jesus Christ and its resonances in my life, with my desire to become more of a follower of Jesus Christ. We live and act in a world in which our action can’t be limited to that of individuals, but to that of partnerships, networks, institutions, which can only happen through their bodily and secular dimensions. In this way we can find a place in our world torn by violence against human beings and creation, nourishing our action from our hope in God, who raised his Son from the dead, and from our collaborative projects to contribute to a greater good.

## **Christoph Theobald’s Stylistic Theology—A Theological System Based on Ignatian Spirituality that Aims at Church Reform**

**Antonie Ren, SJ**

Christoph Theobald has developed an innovative theological system centred on the concept of style, aiming at Church reform in postmodern society. Based on the gratuitousness of God and the style of the “hospitable holiness” of Jesus, Theobald’s theological effort consists in relocating the Church in a decentralised position vis-à-vis the values of autonomy, freedom, otherness, responsibility, etc., a position or a mission in the service of these values, which can be expressed by the concept of “elementary faith.” This is a Christocentric, contextualised, and mission-oriented theological system. The influence of Ignatian spirituality, which has formed Theobald as a Jesuit, is evident in his theological work.

This paper posits that Ignatian spirituality has guided Theobald's way of doing theology in four aspects. Firstly, the core of his theology comes from the focus of the contemplations in the Spiritual Exercises on the lifestyle of Jesus. This forms the foundation for the other three aspects. Secondly, thanks to the "incarnational perspective" of Ignatian spirituality, Theobald has a positive view of "others" (non-Christians) and of postmodern society. Thirdly, the development of Theobald's concept of "Christian faith as style" has been inspired by the unity between life and doctrine, the subjectivity and objectivity of faith implied in Ignatian spirituality, a unity that characterises the lifestyle of Jesus. Fourthly, Theobald compares the role of theologian with that of spiritual director formed by Ignatian spirituality: facilitating encounters with Christ in a decentralised way.

This theological approach is particularly conducive to renewing the church in the synodal perspective, because Theobald considers the lifestyle of "holy hospitality" exemplified by Jesus as the ultimate reference point for all church renewal. The essential characteristic of Jesus' "holy hospitality" is defined by the act of going out to encounter others and walking with them in a spirit of absolute gratuitousness.

### ***Contemplativus in actione iustitiae.***

## **The Ignatian Roots of Ignacio Ellacuría's Theology**

**Martin Maier, SJ**

Both in his theology and in his spirituality, Ignacio Ellacuría insists a lot on history and historicisation. Spirituality means, for Ellacuría, the adequate historicisation of what is most true and vital in the Gospel. The encounter with God has to pass through history. Consequently, he offers a creative development of the Ignatian principle "contemplativus in actione" into "contemplativus in actione iustitiae." From this historicisation of spirituality, it follows that what on the personal level is the discernment of the spirits, which is the discernment of the signs of the times on the historical level. Ellacuría's spirituality is a spirituality of unity that overcomes the exclusionary dualisms between nature and grace, the divine and the human, the history of the world and the history of salvation, the love of God and the love of neighbour, the Kingdom of God and the temporal order. The Christological unity of human nature and divine nature is the ultimate key to conceiving these correlations.

## **Pope Francis' Theology and Ignatian Spirituality**

**James Matthew Ashley**

When asked in August of 2013 which element of Ignatian spirituality most helped him live his ministry as pope, Pope Francis replied “discernment.” He went on to connect discernment, as he understands it, with church reform, concluding that “the wisdom of discernment redeems the necessary ambiguity of life and helps us find the most appropriate means, which do not always coincide with what looks great and strong.” This presentation will explore the pope’s understanding of discernment in connection with his exercise of the Petrine ministry, particularly when it comes to church reform. The thesis of the paper is that his understanding of discernment can help us understand, in particular, his theology and practice of synodality. The first stage is to unearth some clues on how he understands and practices discernment. For this, we have a recent series of fourteen catechisms on discernment, which he gave from August of 2022 to January of 2023. This understanding will be deepened by considering a figure whom Pope Francis has named as one of the most important influences on his thinking: Gaston Fessard. Pope Francis was exposed to this French Jesuit’s work beginning in the early sixties, when he was studying in Buenos Aires. He stated that he often consulted Fessard’s commentary on the Exercises, the *Dialectic of the Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Analysing some key elements of Fessard’s philosophy and theology of discernment will provide some of the depth structure of the pope’s understanding of discernment, which will then be applied to the Pope’s understanding of synodality and the structures and actions by which he has worked to implement it.

## **Ignatian Spirituality and Synodality**

**James Hanvey, SJ**

Pope Francis has highlighted that synodality “is a constitutive element of the Church.” Throughout his papacy he has sought to make synodality part of the ordinary praxis of ecclesial life as well as a theological principle. In many ways he has expanded and developed both aspects, especially through the experience of the synod devoted to synodality (2022-23). This synod emphasised the essential unity of communion and participation for the purpose of mission which is itself the essence of the Church’s existence as understood by Vatican II, developed and articulated in the subsequent magisterial teaching of Paul VI, St John Paul II and is the guiding thesis of Pope Francis’ first encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*. This presentation will consider the theme of mission, itself a central aspect of Jesuit spirituality. It will consider the questions for synodality-mission and the resource that Ignatian spirituality and practice can offer to the Church theologically and in practice. The presentation will focus on the need for a

fuller theological-spiritual understanding of the *sensus fidelium*, the relational character of ecclesial charisms, especially that of the hierarchy and laity, and what light Ignatian spirituality might bring to the practice of ecclesial discernment. Mission cannot be properly grasped unless its eschatological character is fully appreciated and how this locates the Church in history as event, agent and pilgrim. In this context, special consideration will be given to the Two Standards in the Spiritual Exercises and their significance for a discerning community in mission.