University of Tennessee, Knoxville
TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006 College Scholars

2003

The Development of the Jesuit Ministry and Its Role in Sixteenth-Century Catholic Renewal

Ashley Doiron

Follow this and additional works at: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_interstp3

Recommended Citation

Doiron, Ashley, "The Development of the Jesuit Ministry and Its Role in Sixteenth-Century Catholic Renewal" (2003). *Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006.*
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_interstp3/18

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the College Scholars at TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Thesis Projects, 2003-2006 by an authorized administrator of TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

FORM C
COLLEGE SCHOLARS PROJECT APPROVAL

Ashley Doiron — Scholar

Robert Bart — Mentor

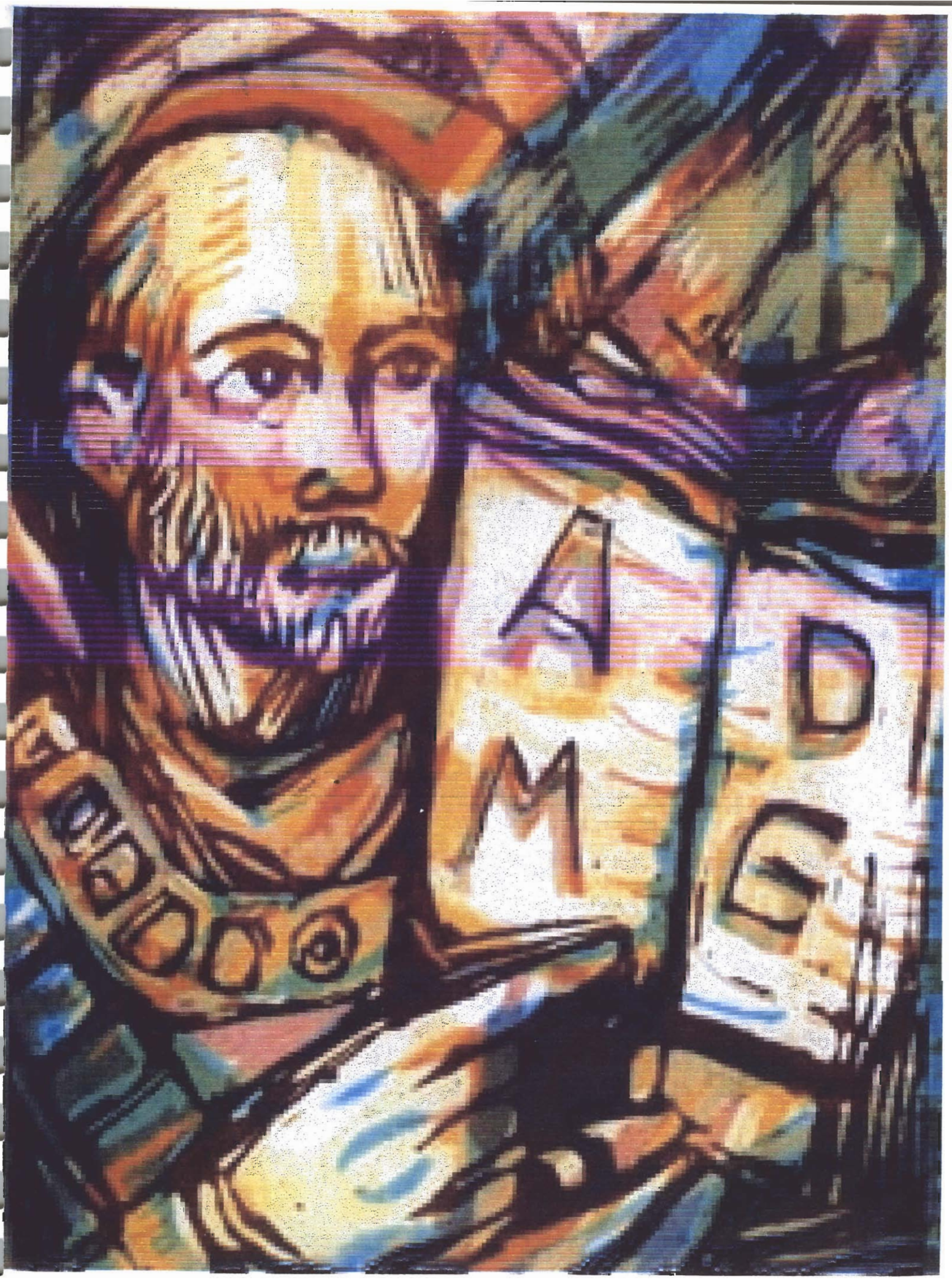
The Development of the Jesuit Ministry and its role in Sixteenth Century Catholic Renewal — Project Title

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
(Minimum 3 Required)

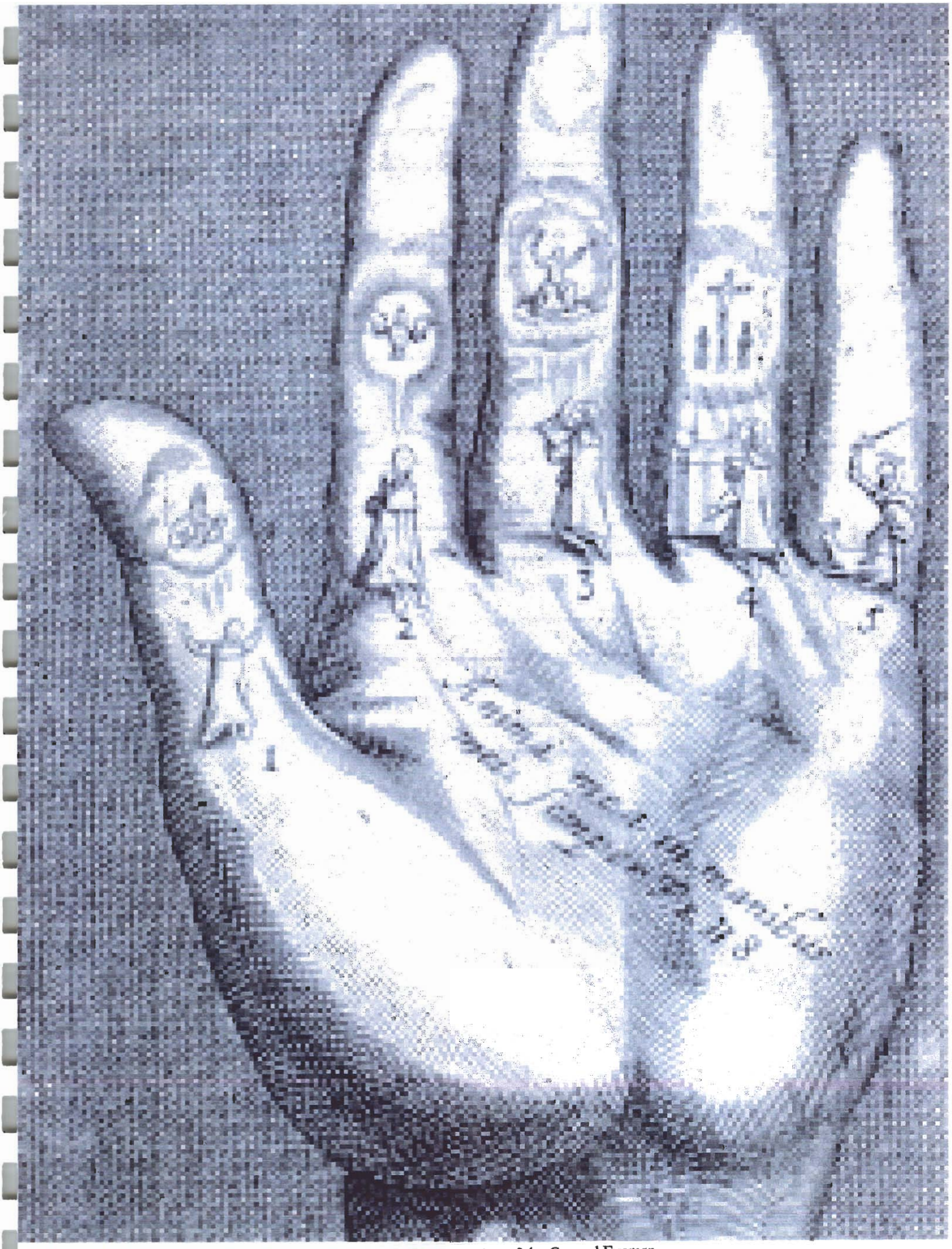
Name	Signature
Robert Bart	
Eric Saak	
Michael Kulikowski	

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE SENIOR PROJECT TO THIS SHEET AND RETURN BOTH TO THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR. THIS PAGE SHOULD BE DATED AND COMPLETED ON THE DATE THAT YOUR DEFENSE IS HELD.

DATE COMPLETED 7/28/03


A
D
M
G

Pope Paul III Giving His Blessing for Ignatius and his Companions' Pilgrimage to Jerusalem



Pictorial Interpretation of the General Examen

A Pictorial Representation of Jesuit Meditation

A Depiction of the Two Standards

The Development of the Jesuit Ministry and its Role in Sixteenth-Century Catholic Renewal

Ashley Marion Doiron

Table of Contents

Chapter I: Introduction—1-7

Chapter II: Spain—8-18

Chapter III: Religious Orders, Reform, And Mysticism In The Spirituality Of Spain—19-45

Chapter IV: Ignatius, His Spirituality, And The Jesuits—46-65

Chapter V: The Jesuits As The Ideal Instruments For Catholic Reform—66-91

Chapter VI: The Jesuits In The Activity Of Catholic Renewal—92-102

Chapter VII: Conclusion—103-105

Works Cited: 106-107

I. INTRODUCTION

On the level of the individual, it is fascinating to consider the impact of various influences upon that person's development. People mature in very similar and vastly dissimilar environments, yet there is no formula to predict the exact nature of the effect of a given influence upon an individual. The reality to which one is exposed, and one's interpretation and response thereto, is the process that distinguishes one person from another; this is the process whereby society is afforded those figures who will become prominent and shaping presences in the future. History studies this process from the level of the individual, to that of the worldwide population. The historian looks to the persuasions that have saturated the life of an individual, or community, in an effort to understand the actions and character of that entity, particularly when the entity has made a great imprint upon society. Ignatius Loyola is one such individual, whose immense importance to Catholicism propels one to study his life and times in order to comprehend why he was so significant. Ignatius was the founder of the Society of Jesus, an order of clerks regular. This order was the embodiment of Ignatius' spiritual ministry, which was a result of both his inner dynamics, and the contextual influences in which he developed. The Society of Jesus is commonly considered the most valuable and effective apparatus of the 'Catholic Reformation'. Yet, Ignatius', and therefore the Society's, spirituality and ministry evidence the influence of various sources upon the construction of the order. Thus, the question of how a religious order that manifests commonalities with other ideologies and organizations, and an order that clearly owes much to various influences, stood out in achievement and recognition amongst all others. The answer to this query

will be traced throughout this paper, beginning with the situation of need that provided the forum for the Jesuits to play a pivotal role in the remedy thereof.

During the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church was a massive societal institution in need of renewal. Although this requirement was related to the Protestant Reformation, it cannot be relegated to such a cause and effect definition. Rather, the same broad perceptions spurred both the Protestant Reformation and the 'Catholic Reformation': Luther's initial intentions were parallel to those of a plethora of Catholic reformers who did not split from the church; they were all concerned that the ecclesiastical system was failing to properly care for its faithful, and that it was a system which tolerated abuses. In short, the Protestant and Catholic 'reform' movements were spawned by a common awareness that society demanded an invigorated and reformed church, and that the continuation and propagation of the spirit of Catholicism required perceptible changes in its administration. Luther's effort evolved into a break from Catholicism, but adherents to Catholicism- from amongst the laity, religious orders, and the ecclesiastical hierarchy- continued in the vein of reform and adaptation to the needs of the faithful. What is left to be explained is the substance of the Jesuits' spirituality, organization, and ministry, for that is what distinguished them from other orders and suited them to the central role they took on in the 'Catholic Reformation'.

By the time of the Council of Trent, the elements to provide the Catholic reform movement with its spirit and translation to practicality existed in the Society of Jesus. Spain was an integral entity in Catholic reform and thus to the processes of change discussed at the Council. As in other European countries, the religious orders in Spain, particularly the Franciscans, were increasingly involved in attempts to live in greater

accordance with the tenets of their founders. Within the mendicant orders, the *vita apostolica*, or the religious life emphasizing poverty and preaching, was the object of rejuvenated enthusiasm. As the laity became more concerned with their own spirituality, such orders were greatly important in enabling such involvement. Devotional works permeated Christendom with increasing frequency in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. At the crux of such works was the progressing inclusion of pious laypersons in previously clerical matters, such as inner piety, prayer, and meditation on specific images and ideas without direct clerical arbitration. Although these facets of religious practice were not unique to Spain, they were manifestly different in development therein. Ferdinand and Isabella took an aggressively active role in the church within their realm. They did much to build Spain into a unified and national presence, and at the heart of this campaign rested Catholicism. Throughout their reign, and that of the subsequent monarchs Charles V and Philip II, the monarchy accumulated an unprecedented amount of autonomy from Rome in reforming the Spanish church. The spirituality that developed in Spain became the root of the spirituality of the Catholic Reformation; it was this spirituality that engendered the success of the Council of Trent and the ensuing renewal of the Catholic Church. The Society of Jesus was the greatest asset in the Catholic Reformation and Jesuit spirituality embodies the confluence of a plethora of religious currents in circulation from the medieval era to this initial phase of the early modern period.

History has shown that the Jesuit ministry was a dynamic force of Catholic revitalization in a time that surely needed such renewal. The Jesuits were strikingly prolific from their founding through the proceeding years and this is certainly not without

cause. This paper traces the elemental influences to the development of the Jesuits. The social and political background of Spain had ramifications not only for the Jesuits as the home of their founder, but for the entire Catholic reform movement. Spain's history was unique- largely in that it the Iberian Peninsula was home to Jews, Muslims, and Christians for hundreds of years. Ignatius lived partly during the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella, which was a formative time in Spain's national development. Important also were the spiritual and ideological influences from late medieval religious orders and lay spiritual thinkers and writers. These were present in Spain when Ignatius' was converted and their influence on him, his writings, his companions, and his order are manifestly evident in the Society of Jesus. As Ignatius' life is explored, the tenets of the order he eventually founded can be understood with fullness of context. The unique character of the Jesuits was responsible for their efficaciousness in reform; thus, such background elements are practical and relevant to a discussion of the order. The latter part of this paper discusses the specific organization of the Jesuits, their spirituality, their lifestyle, their particular aims, and the enactment of their ministries. The facets of the Society are juxtaposed with the problems plaguing the church, such as were discussed at the Council of Trent. The sum total of all that is discussed is an understanding of the essence of the order, within the era of its founding, along with how and why the Jesuits were so effective in the reinvigoration and spread of the Catholic faith in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Jesuit spirituality, according to the life and prescription of the founder, emphasized active ministry in combination with constant inner renewal. The term spirituality essentially describes the inner life of an individual. A given spirituality would be the way in which one views himself and his inner life in terms of others, the

world, and ultimately God. Thus, the spirituality ascribed to by an individual would guide his feelings and actions; it would dictate the means and aims of his religion and the life of his soul. The spirituality of the Jesuits was relevant to every aspect of the lives of members, the order's organization, and the ideas which were imparted to those touched by the ministry. The Society had a highly centralized organization with a specific ministry: to spread out amongst the people and to preach according to their needs. They guided people in the *Spiritual Exercises*, which had a unique emphasis on confession; in addition to weekly confession, individuals were encouraged to do periodic general confessions whereby they would reflect on the grievous sins they had committed with the purpose of turning from them. They taught individuals about vices and virtues, the catechism, and to examine their consciences daily. Eventually, the Jesuits adapted their ministry to fit the educational demands of the time. As their numbers flourished, so too did their involvement in education. They incorporated this ideal into the essence of their ministry and became the most significant force of systematic education in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Jesuit spirituality was very personal and the apparent success of their ministry depended largely upon their mobility and readiness to adapt to the particular needs of a time and place. Jesuit spirituality was active and adaptive, both internally and externally, two attributes that were much needed and embraced in the 'Catholic Reformation'.

Whether the activity was aimed at the conversion and edification of believers in Catholic Christianity, the training and education of members, the building of schools, the inner life of members or of the laity, the education of the laity, or any characteristic Jesuit pursuit, activity was an integral part of Jesuit life. The Catholic Reformation itself was

bound up in activity. The ecclesiastical hierarchy shared many of the goals of the Jesuits, and so welcomed them as instruments of the sought after renewal of Catholicism. The principal Jesuit works, such as the *Constitutions,* the *Spiritual Exercises*, and the *Formula of the Institute*, outlined the Jesuit life as one of constant activity- mental and physical. The *Exercises* in their entirety were developed to 'exercise' the mind and soul, and to begin a new life of activity in the individual undertaking them. Pictorial meditation was an aspect of mental and spiritual life; in the tradition of devotional works such as Thomas a' Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, one was to occupy his mind with images of Christ's life and the meaning of his sacrifice in the life of the individual. Under the guidance of Ignatius and his companions, one was to busy himself in charitable works while simultaneously keeping close tabs on his intentions and actions. Jesuit casuistry, or study of conscience, was yet another area of constant activity. They instructed those to whom they ministered to daily evaluate their consciences. Further, those Jesuits who were adequately trained were to hear confessions as often as possible and to administer the sacrament of communion. The ideal of Jesuit ministry was to go out among the laity and preach the word of God and spread their message of love. This love was active; to the average individual it meant that they were to deepen their love of God and of neighbor. Thus, the Jesuit emphasis on activity, in their own lives and in the lives of those they ministered to, included charitable acts. The Council of Trent and 'Catholic Reformation' upheld the necessity of works in the attainment of salvation. The Jesuits were aligned with this stress and exhorted the laity not only to enrich their own lives through deepening spirituality and more virtuous living, but also by loving and caring for their neighbors and those around them in need. To understand the nature of the Jesuits and

their significance to Catholicism, it is necessary to analyze their founding, the context- political, social, religious, ideological- from which they emerged, the environment in which they operated, their innovations and traditions, and the role that they played in the actual process of Catholic renewal.

II. SPAIN

The nature of society in sixteenth-century Spain must be examined in order to trace the importance of the Jesuits to the Catholic endeavors at reinvigoration. Spain experienced the same Germanic invasions in the beginnings of the Middle Ages that had captured most of Europe. Only in Spain, however, did the Germanic-Visigoth rule give way to Muslim invasion and dominion in the eighth century A.D. The Muslims then gradually lost power and territory to Christian warriors in the latter years of the Middle Ages. Three distinct religious groups- Jews, Muslims and Christians- coexisted on the Iberian Peninsula as they had for hundreds of years. As Christian forces began to consolidate much of the land under the rule of Christian leaders in the process termed *reconquista*, the crusading ideal became the Spanish mentality. Religion and militarism were united, as regaining Iberia from the infidels became the loftiest goal for all. Just as in the Crusades, fighting was no longer simply a fight; it was imbued with a sense of holy vindication. By the time the Muslims were defeated, this value system had been transmuted into a national consciousness, a defining facet of cultural identity. Thus, the ideals of a militant faith were highly influential in the formation of a Spanish nationhood. Catholicism was the glue that bound the territories in Spain, particularly the important kingdoms of Aragon and Castile. As the need for reform became increasingly evident, both by the visible manifestations of corruption- such as spiritually uninterested, fiscally driven, and often absent bishops and uneducated clergy- and by the various noncommissioned reform initiatives- in religious orders and among lay people, Spain's continued rigid orthodoxy and the assumption of control over pivotal facets of the church, made it a critical force in sustaining and replenishing Catholicism.

Ignatius was born in the year 1491, which was during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella with their numerous political and religious changes.[1] Ferdinand and Isabella married on October 19, 1469 and united the crowns of Aragon and Castile, two important kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula.[2] Christian rulers in Spain had been engaged in battle to reassume control from Muslim dynasties with noteworthy success since the eleventh century. Ferdinand and Isabella completed this process, termed *reconquista*, in the 1492 triumph over Granada, the Muslim stronghold up to that point. These so-called Catholic Kings took on a campaign to unite the diverse regions of Spain into a powerful and unilateral entity.[3] The unique societal history of Spain dictated the shape that this movement assumed. Because Spain was comprised of separate political and cultural units that were often tied only by proximity, any effort at unification required less obvious means. Further, within each polity Jews, Muslims and Christians were likely constituents of the population. However, the *reconquista* saw a unity arise for the cause of religious consolidation under Christianity. Ferdinand and Isabella sought to harness the Catholic cause in their attempt to unify a 'Spanish nation' under their rule. To present their actions as motivated solely by political ambition is to unjustly simplify a complex process and intermingling of factors. Rather, the Catholic Kings acted to uphold the truth as they saw it and to realize the potential power that rested within the reaches of their authority. The 'truth' that they saw was very much aligned with all of Western Europe, which was a Catholic realm.

---

[1] Joseph DeGuibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, (Chicago: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964), 22.
[2] J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716*, (London: Edward Arnold Publishers LTD., 1963), 5-12.
[3] According to Helen Rawlings, "By pursuing a policy of religious unity with underlying political objectives, the monarchs capitalized on the spirit of the age, a militant, nationalist spirit born out of the *Reconquista*, that was intent on forging its own identity within Europe, freed from its two 'alien' civilizations, the Jewish and the Moslem." Helen Rawlings, *European Studies Series: Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain,* (London: Palgrave, 2002), 2.

Medieval politics and religion were tied in such a way that it is difficult to consider one independently from the other. For Spain, this relationship was further complicated by the religious and cultural backgrounds of its inhabitants. *Convivencia* is the word used to describe the policy of tolerance practiced throughout the history of Spain between the Jews, Muslims, and Christians. From the decline of Roman rule in the fifth century to the Visigoth invaders[4], to the Muslims, to the Christians, mutual forbearance had existed in Spanish society. This acceptance did not entail equality, but still enabled the groups to survive. Under the rule of the Muslim Emirate the three religions were able to remain intact and to participate in a common economy.[5] However, as Christians came to dominate during the years of the *reconquista* this guiding principle gradually gave way to greater intolerance. Spain had much larger populations of Jews and Muslims than did other Western European countries and so coexistence and cooperation had suited the territory well for centuries. Likewise, Iberia had been governed by Muslim dynasties from 711 A.D. until the Christians began to push them South with visible results in the eleventh century. As the Christians progressed from the strongholds they had retained throughout Muslim rule in a drive to control al-Andalus[6] they encountered the invasions of more militant Muslim dynasties. In the eleventh century the Almoravids attacked from

---

[4] The barbarian Visigoths took over Spain from 415 to 711. They comprised the ruling military class and were a presence of 200,000 to 300,000 out of the six to nine million Hispano-Romans. Their government was unstable and the era of their rule was characterized by violence and civil wars. They adopted orthodox Christianity and retained Roman ideals and practices to varying degrees. Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1975), 37-88.

[5] The Emirate was the first organized government apparatus in al-Andalusia. The emir was essentially a governor that was appointed either by the governor of North Africa or the Caliph himself. Seville was the first seat of this office before it was moved to Cordoba in 716. Cordoba came to be the most important city in this era as opposed to Toledo's imminence as the Visigothic capital. The emir was to be the administrator of al-Andalus in the caliph's name. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 95-97.

[6] al Andalus was the name given to the lands that the Muslims ruled from 711 to 1031 after defeating the Visgothic regime. The strongholds referred to here are those in the northwest Pyrenees Mountains. Individuals from Cantabria, Asturias, and Galicia lived in this remote region and began reconquest efforts. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 91-190.

North Africa and in the twelfth century the Almohads did the same.[7] This served only to intensify Christian militancy and by the middle of the thirteenth century Muslims controlled only the kingdom of Granada in Southern Spain. The first of many Orders of Knights was established after the Templar Knights aided in fighting off an Arab invasion in 1147.[8] From here, the moralities of military and Christianity experienced a fusion that resulted in a flourishing chivalric culture in Spain. Chivalric knighthood was an integral aspect of the *reconquista* and contributed to a Spanish self-awareness as holy protectors of the true faith. As the Christians successfully defeated Muslim forces, relegating them to the south, Muslim presence in the Northern parts of Iberia became unassuming and non-threatening. Where Muslims did live in Christian territories they mostly worked as laborers and did not constitute a prominent sector in terms of prosperity or numbers. Still, the ideals of Christian knighthood proliferated and constituted a vital facet of Spanish culture and development.

Jews in Spain presented an altogether different situation in the eyes of Christian Iberians and their fate is linked to the intricacies of Spanish society. Jews had their own separate culture and communities throughout Spain. They were not menial laborers as the Muslims generally were. Rather, Jews engaged in more mid level economic activity and were artisans, jewelers, tax administrators, physicians, scholars, and the like. The

---

[7] The Almoravids were summoned by the kings of al-Andalus to aid them against the Christians in the eleventh century. Yusuf ibn Tashufin advanced against the Christian forces under Alfonso VI and killed a great many Christians. The Almoravids were then displaced by the more fierce Almohads in the twelfth century. Both of these Muslim dynasties were extremely religious, which played a great role in their zealous battles against Christians. These dynasties, particularly the latter, were formidable and threatening enemies that threatened to defeat the reconquest forces. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 208-229.

[8] The Templar Order helped Alfonso I in his struggle against the Muslims in the frontier region in Aragon. He gave one third of his kingdom to the Temple of the Lord in his 1131 will. This order and later military orders of a similar kind combined religious and military concerns and helped fight the enemy- the Muslim. Angus MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages: From Frontier to Empire, 1000-1500,* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 30-34.

successes of the Jewish community bred hostility in Spain as well as all over Europe and attempts were increasingly made to repress the Jews and relegate them to a more marginal status. During the late fourteenth century, Jews became a target of violence in the aftermath of the Castilian civil wars that had wreaked havoc on society and the economy.[9] Both economic resentment and religious fanaticism engendered these riotous attacks. At this time, many Jews converted to Christianity to protect themselves and secure their continuation in society. Converted Jews were known as *conversos*, or New Christians, and this group of people was highly disconcerting to the Old Christians of Spain. At this time, *conversos* were allowed the same access to positions as Old Christians were. Jews still remained in their communities in Spanish lands and retained their religious practice and cultural identity. They were a nonexpendable group to the Spanish crown and government; they served as royal and aristocratic physicians, tax collectors, moneylenders, and similarly privileged positions. In addition to these services, the Jews also paid taxes directly to the crown. Despite the benefits the crown procured from its Jewish community, volatility over this group led to their forced expulsion or conversion in 1492. The Edict of Expulsion resulted in both a mass migration and a large body of *conversos*. While the earlier Jewish converts had assimilated and held powerful positions, the influx of so many New Christians fueled suspicion and resentment towards this group. Already by 1449 legislation existed to exclude *conversos* from municipal office in Toledo. There grew to be harsh strictures concerning one's ancestry as determinant of one's role in society as decrees of *limpieza de sangre*, or purity of blood, were sanctioned throughout Spain.

---

[9] Elliott, *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716.*

In the year 1478 Ferdinand and Isabella petitioned the Pope to establish a tribunal of the Inquisition in Castile. Once instated this branch of the Holy Office was directly under the control of the Catholic Kings. The *Consejo de la Suprema General Inquisicion* was the name given to the council appointed by Ferdinand and Isabella to orchestrate inquisitorial proceedings. Thus in 1483 the rulers of Spain had set up a body under their authority that existed to enforce orthodoxy. In their kingdoms, citizens had to answer to this tribunal rather than the one in Rome. Upon its inception, the Spanish Inquisition was concerned almost solely with ensuring allegiance from those Christians of Jewish descent. The Edict of Expulsion March 31, 1492 aimed at eradicating the presence of Jews so that *conversos* would no longer have access to the practice of their original faith. The role of the Spanish Inquisition in the decision to expel the Jews is evident in a letter from Ferdinand to the Count of Aranda:

> The Holy Office of the Inquisition, seeing how some Christians are endangered by contact and communication with the Jews, has provided that the Jews be expelled from all our realms and territories, and has persuaded us to give our support and agreement to this, which we now do, because of our debts and obligations to the said Holy Office: and we do so despite the great harm to ourselves, seeking and preferring the salvation of souls above our own profit and that of individuals.[10]

"Judaizing" was the term allotted to the heresy of involving oneself with the practice of Judaism after being baptized. Thus, the expulsion of Jews was ostensibly a protective maneuver to prevent Christian corruption. *Conversos* at this time were still legally

---

[10] Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: a historical revision*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 21.

immune from the strictures against Jewish occupations of influential political and religious positions. Based upon tax records for Castile, Aragon, Valencia, and Navarre, it is estimated that around eighty thousand Jews were living in Spain at this time and nearly half of them chose conversion over exile.[11] The result was a greater presence of New Christians to assimilate into Christian Spain. From here the aforementioned *limpieza de sangre* took root as societal tension and heightened anxiety over protecting orthodoxy incited enhanced Inquisitorial involvement in Spain.

Late fifteenth-century Europe was still very much a Catholic world. Despite periodic threats to Catholic orthodoxy that came from both internal and external sources, there appeared to be no monolithic challenge to the church institution and its position in society. Spanish or not, Roman Catholics throughout Europe looked upon the Spanish *reconquista* as a sign of victory over infidels and of the eminent truth of Catholicism. Just as in other places, many were discontented with apparent problems and corruptions in the Church, but the common sentiment was that reform within the church was the proper route to address this issue- as opposed to abandoning the church or imposing reform from outside. Most were aware of the need to address problems in the church, such as political interests, personal greed, lack of education, and absenteeism; the ecclesiastical hierarchy had acknowledged the existence of such inappropriate ecclesiastical realities on numerous occasions. The common issues were the exorbitant wealth of the Church, apparent corruption and politicization on all levels, poor education among clergy, pluralism, absenteeism, corruption in religious orders, and overall maladjusted priorities.

[11] Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition,* 23.

At the Council of Constance, which met from 1414 to 1418 to resolve the Great Schism[12] and address the abuses in the Church, reform was a great concern and priority. It was here that the decree *reformatio ecclesiae in capite et membris* became the slogan for Catholic reform; a reformation, in head and members, of the Church of God. However, this idea faded into the background as the normative and everyday concerns of the Church and method of its practice remained immediate priorities. The need had not disappeared, but top-down bureaucratic solutions seemed ineffective. Local currents arose throughout Europe both within and outside 'religious'[13] organizations. By the sixteenth century, these local projects attained a level of popularity that demanded hierarchical action.

During the fifteenth-century the Castilian and Aragonese monarchs allied themselves with the papacy, thus enabling them to achieve a greater degree of autonomy within their realms. The Great Schism provided the context for the first Reformation era alliance between Spain and the papacy; such alliances were critical, as they gave Spanish rulers more autonomy over the church in Spain, contributed to Spain's self-definition and increasing world influence, and supported the papacy during times of immense threat, among other things. The notion of conciliarism was espoused and propagated at the Council of Constance, directly curbing the powers of the papacy. Conciliarism held that the church council should be superior to the pope so that one man is no longer the arbiter over all of Christendom. King John II of Castile and Alphonse V of Aragon were against initiating reforms discussed at Constance prior to the election of a new pope. The two popes that headed the two factions of the Great Schism were to abdicate their claims and

---

[12] In 1378 two popes were elected and the Catholic realm was divided into supporters of one or the other in the Great Schism. Phillip H. Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance 1414-1418* in *Studies in the History of Christian Thought Volume 53,* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), 3-20.

[13] 'Religious' meaning institutionalized branches of the Catholic Church; at this time 'religious' typically described those who had taken vows and belonged a recognized arm of the Church.

the council was to select a new pope. If the council decided upon reform measures before a new pope was elected, it would effectively assert that the council's decrees had higher authority than the pope, because they would not have required papal approval to mandate reforms. John II and Alphonse V's opposition to reform decisions without a new pope essentially supported the superiority of the papacy over the council, the converse of which was conciliarism. In this manner, they helped to undermine the conciliar agenda by preventing the council from usurping the papacy's role in initiating and approving reform. The support of these kings during the debates at the council was absolutely critical to papal efforts at maintaining ultimate authority. Both utilized the papal dependence on their support to obtain greater control within their kingdoms, as did successors. When Charles VII, king of France, issued the Pragmatic Sanction of 1438 which supported the reform decrees of the Council of Basle despite Eugenius IV's approval, the Spanish monarchy again remained loyal to the papacy's claim of pre-eminence. Hispano-papal alliances continued throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries under Ferdinand and Isabella and later Philip II, although Charles V went to war with the papacy over Italian territorial interests.[14] Ferdinand and Isabella dedicated themselves to making Spain a significant European power. They recognized the central role of the Spanish church within society and so sought to utilize its inherent clout for their purposes. To achieve this, they needed to wrest control over the right to make some appointments and to oversee reforms in religious orders from the papacy. In 1478 they called an ecclesiastical council in Seville where they articulated plans to attain jurisdiction over all Castilian benefices, thus allowing kings to choose inhabitants

[14] Christian Hermann, "Settlements: Spain's National Catholicism" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 506-509.

thereof. Although Sixtus IV did not allow this at the time, the monarchs were not dissuaded from their cause. In 1486, after instating a papally approved independent Inquisition in Castile, Ferdinand capitalized on the political need of pope Innocent VIII against the kingdom of Naples, which stood in opposition to the pope's attempt to crusade against the Turks. In exchange for helping the pope politically in Italy, the Catholic monarchs in Spain were given patronage over all benefices in the areas of Granada that they took from the Muslims. This *Patronato* gave them the right to appoint ecclesiastical occupants to benefices, which clearly accorded them much autonomy. In 1516, Charles V extended this patronage to include all benefices in Spain. Further, Ferdinand and Isabella gained financial privileges from the church in the form of the *tercias reales*- consisting of one third of the tithes in Castile that were paid to the church, and the *cruzada* whereby the monarchy of Castile could sell indulgences for royal funds initially to pay for the *reconquista*.[15] The effect of Spain's relationship with the papacy in this period and into the sixteenth-century was to facilitate the Spanish monarchy's ability to oversee all affairs within his realm. This was imperative to the Spanish role in the Reformation era.

By the time of the Protestant Reformation, Spain had a culture and institutional apparatuses that were critical to its role as a stronghold for Catholicism and a center of Catholic reform. The infusion of Catholicism with militancy that began in the *reconquista* set a determinant precedent for Spain. The crusading ideal that captured Europe in the later Middle Ages was embodied in Spain's culture. As Spain grew toward unity despite the territorial and cultural diversity of its kingdoms, Catholicism and chivalric knighthood were of the utmost importance. An enemy- perceived or actual- of

[15] Elliott, *Imperial Spain,* 65-120.

Catholicism translated into an enemy of Spain. With Ferdinand and Isabella's reign came a Hispano-Papal alliance that, although politically motivated, had great implications for Spain's function in the sixteenth century era of religious reform. However, without a discussion of the spirituality in Spain throughout the high and later medieval era to the early modern years, the events of this period cannot be fully comprehended. Reform of the church was a pervasive issue everywhere in Europe. Spanish monarchs had made considerable advances in their control over the church within their jurisdiction largely through the papal concessions accrued by Spain's fairly static papal alliance. Through such concessions, including the instatement of an independent Spanish Inquisition and the monarchy's autonomy over religious reforms, Spain had become a powerful and highly orthodox expanding national presence. The intimate connections between Spain's own emerging 'national' identity and Catholicism further distinguished the religious situation in Spain from elsewhere in Europe. Thus, the circulating spiritual ideologies and reform currents that pervaded nearly all of Western Europe developed differently in Spain. The Catholic Church in Spain was not threatened or damaged by dissenting or simply divergent spiritual ideas, as no such strongholds were able to take root and build up. Rather, the religious and philosophical notions that permeated Spanish borders were either eradicated by the homegrown Inquisition, or incorporated into orthodoxy. The religious enthusiasm that characterized the late medieval and Reformation environs did not destabilize Catholicism in Spain. Instead, the efforts at spiritual and religious renewal that evaded repression were channeled to enhance Spain's purely Catholic presence.

III. RELIGIOUS ORDERS, REFORM, AND MYSTICISM IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF SPAIN

The centuries prior to the sixteenth were characterized by attempts at revitalizing Christendom and the Catholic Church, though not all were as conducive to the propagation thereof. The previously mentioned *alumbrados* were one such group, within Spain, whose spiritual beliefs were deemed threatening rather than productive. As has been historically true of the Catholic ecclesiology, religious orders were centers of reform initiatives, although they were not the sole participants. At the time of Ignatius' conversion in 1522, Spain contained many spiritual currents that created uncertainty in the minds of many, especially those who sought to eradicate heterodoxy. During the years before Luther's ninety-five theses, and the ensuing religious divisions, new religious ideas were cultivated throughout Europe, and specifically in Spain. Much of this was a spirituality that was devotional in nature. The *devotio moderna* of the Netherlands had been transmitted to Spain and adopted by spiritually active individuals. A myriad devotional and spiritual writings filtered through Spain during the later years of the fifteenth century, and in the sixteenth, particularly such as Thomas a Kempis' characteristic *devotio moderna* piece entitled *The Imitation of Christ*. This work, and numerous others like it, was directed at inducing individuals to meditate on aspects of Christ's life and to model their lives upon his. The Franciscans in Spain were among the first to seek a return to the spirituality and way of life of St. Francis. Apostolic poverty was a cornerstone of the middle and later medieval era. Sectors of major orders, such as the Franciscans, Cistercians, and Augustinians looked to the lives of their predecessors as examples of the better way; the Apostles and Jesus were regarded as the ultimate example

of the truly 'religious' life. Issuing from the various religious orders themselves, individuals coalesced around new spiritual practices and beliefs throughout Spain. Among the pervading spiritual notions was a mystical element; the goal of mysticism and the underlying purpose is to directly experience God. Most commonly, the aforementioned 'mystical elements' were manifest in the advocating of such practices as meditation and purging oneself of sinful and distracting thoughts, new forms of prayer, such as mental prayer, and a renewed emphasis upon more simplistic lifestyles. By definition, mysticism is a three-stage process of purgation, illumination, and union, wherein an individual seeks an internal and divinely revealed relationship with God. Mysticism flourished in Germany and Spain, and its particular influence in Spain can be found in less radical spiritual ideologies formulated in this era. The spirituality present in Spain is evident in that of Ignatius and the Jesuits; and so, the many spiritual and reform trends that were the background of their formation are most relevant to the study of the Society of Jesus.

The spiritual impulses were not simply attempts at reforming the apparent ecclesiastical abuses, but arose and spread from personal desires to employ the spirit and soul in a more individual and engaging religious practice. The new forms of spirituality were conscious efforts by the religiously concerned to renew their own piety and spirituality. Spirituality Reform had been a constant issue through the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, as exemplified in the monastic reform movements of Cluniac monasticism and the Cistercians. Yet it was not until the thirteenth century that widespread popular interest in spiritual reinvigoration commenced. The ecclesiastical hierarchy had become very institutionalized and so shared many of the same concerns as

any large body interested in maintaining its importance. Spiritual concerns had to be balanced with pragmatic and secular ones. The church was to be the spiritual minister to all people and to care for the suffering and needy. But in order to maintain its position as arbiter of such things, it had to utilize very secular venues such as wealth, political clout, and the rigid distinction of itself from the rest of society. These two pursuits created a tension in the ecclesiastical body, as the functional requirements tended to contribute to its weakening in spiritual authenticity and efficacy, its other pursuit. When spiritual fervor gained momentum in the thirteenth century, expressly with wandering ascetics and preachers such as Francis of Assisi, the church had to adapt to the changing social realities of the time. At this time mendicant orders were incorporated into the hierarchy as a new mode of Catholic ministry in society to manage a dedication to poverty, piety, and preaching that could otherwise have grown outside orthodoxy. Innocent III approved the first mendicants, but then agreed at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 that no new religious orders were to be established.[16] This decree had significant ramifications for the future of the church. As in the case of the mendicants, the foundation of a new order provided the church with the ability to address changing needs and to incorporate lay movements into ecclesiastically governed ones. There were, of course, some well-intentioned reasons for this, one of the greatest being the desire to end dissension, fighting, competition, and disorganization among and within the extant orders. The Franciscans and Dominicans became indispensable organs in papal ministerial policies and under pope Gregory IX they obtained responsibility over the papal Inquisition. The nature of the original mendicants was compromised by the role they were allotted in the

[16] Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c. 1250-c. 1450,* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1967), 1-47.

hierarchy. In order to carry out the assigned tasks they realistically had to modify their ideal stance on poverty and their lifestyle as wandering preachers; *vita apostolica* was the ideal, which aimed at the imitation of Christ and his apostles in mobile and poor life of preaching. From the earliest years of their existence, the mendicants, particularly the Franciscans, were torn between more pragmatic and more austere enactments of their original rules.[17] The spiritual environs of later centuries required action on the part of the ecclesiastical organization. Where the cultivation of lay spirituality outstripped the church's ability to successfully adapt heresy had the potential to develop. The church turned to repression as lay initiatives burgeoned, but this policy was highly reactionary and did not guarantee a return to its unfettered spiritual authority. And so, the church was eventually forced to renegotiate its tactics in the years that followed.

The Franciscan Order is an appropriate place to begin in discussing the climate of reform and spirituality in Reformation era Spain, as they were primary organs thereof. Pope Innocent III approved the Franciscan friars minor in an unwritten approbation in 1209 when St. Francis outlined the rudiments of his movement. In 1223 Honorius III confirmed the official rule of the order in the bull *Solet Annuere.* Just like the other mendicant orders that emerged in the thirteenth century, the Franciscans served to address popular discontent that centered upon perceived shortcomings in pastoral care and also a genuine spiritual desire. The Franciscans began as a lay movement that the ecclesiastical hierarchy chose to incorporate within its organization. The friars minor operated under a different chain of authority and with different guidelines than did preexistent orders. They were mobile and not bound to the monastic way of cloistered life. Rather, they settled all over, particularly in cities, to provide pastoral care therein.

[17] Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages,* 51-166.

Cities had become greater population centers by the thirteenth century, as Christendom had become a more stable and centralized area. The growing populations in cities exceeded the extant ecclesiastical structure's ability to adequately care for its parishioners. And so, the mendicants became important spiritual guides and preachers for urban populations. Under the leadership of St. Francis, the Franciscans viewed and practiced the religious vow of poverty in a different way than other orders of their time did. They interpreted the vow of poverty in its strictest sense and held that they must not own anything nor handle money. Their notion of poverty came from a desire to model themselves after the Apostles, whom they believed to have owned absolutely no property. The Franciscan Order was aimed at a return to the apostolic life, which they saw as lived without property and with the purpose of teaching individuals as they traveled and preached. In the rule contained in *Solet Annuere* Francis' words portray the Franciscan ideal:

> The brothers shall appropriate nothing to themselves, neither a house nor a place nor anything. And as pilgrims and strangers in this world…let them go confidently in quest of alms…This, my dearest brothers, is the height of the most sublime poverty, which has made you heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven: poor in goods but exalted in virtue.[18]

This explication of the centrality of poverty is followed by words on the call to care for the laity, "for if a mother nourishes and loves her carnal son, how much more earnestly ought one to love and nourish his spiritual brother!"[19] The Franciscan Order as outlined, and its development into the sixteenth century, played a significant role in shaping

[18] *Solet Annuere* Franciscan rule (c. vi)
[19] *Solet Annuere* Franciscan rule (c. vi)

Catholic Reform, particularly in their spirituality, lay involvement, and attempts at reform within the order.

The conflict that had existed between Franciscan Observants and Conventuals saw the former triumph in Spain; the latter did not agree with the former attempt to return to the rigid observance of Francis' initial rule.[20] Around 1390 part of the Franciscan Order began to focus on reform within the order and the "Observant" faction of the order grew to take precedence over the "Conventual". The tenets of this reform movement spread to other orders and to an audience beyond the strictly 'religious'. The method of following Francis' rule of absolute poverty was at the crux of this division. Extreme forms of absolute poverty were controversial in the church, as many popes saw too strict an adherence as a threat to perceptions of the church's rectitude in policy and actuality. The founding of the mendicants seemed the answer to undermining heterodoxy and heresy; the new orders appeared fit to channel popular piety into orthodoxy and to subdue extremes. However, as the papacy endeavored to shape the order according to its agenda, some of Francis' emphases were generalized, marginalized, and or appended. Pope Gregory IX's bull *Quo elongati* exemplifies the process whereby the papacy enabled the Franciscans to maintain their poverty in name, while in actuality they were able to carry on without the strictest abnegation. Here the pope mandated that all property given to the friars still be considered the donor's property. Innocent IV's *Ordinem Vestrum* said property given the order belonged to the Holy See and not to the friars. Although such papal mandates were later subject to criticism and renunciation by later popes, the

[20] J.N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms 1250-1516: Volume II 1410- 1516 Castilian Hegemony*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 93-125.

message was evident: these popes were against an absolute Franciscan poverty.[21] To ensure that the order remained a controllable and useful tool, the pope facilitated the Franciscan's nominal poverty. The popes and others that advocated a more liberal interpretation of apostolic poverty did so to add a greater institutional component to the order. This would enable a tighter regulation of the teachings and activities of the order, and overall make Franciscans more useful to the church institution. Many who had known Francis themselves, along with others opposed the growth and abundant resources available to the order in pursuit of serving their concept of Francis' pure apostolic mission. Under Ferdinand and Isabella this faction of the Franciscans took over most of the order in Spain and flourished as a source of Catholic reinvigoration; Ferdinand and Isabella had assumed control enough of the church within their territories through their relationship with the papacy to effectively strengthen the reform portion of the order at the expense of the conventuals. Isabella placed Jimenez in charge of the reform of orders, as he had evidenced his concern and vigor for religious reform among his fellow Franciscans. In 1496 Pope Alexander VI briefly halted the Spanish monarchy's further involvement in these reforms. However, Isabella arranged appeals to the court of Rome and eventually freed the monarchy from inhibitions to their reform activities. The monarchy gave Jimenez liberal powers to enact his reforms without Roman strictures. With the commissioning of Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as an apostolic nuncio, Jimenez worked to reform the religious houses in Spanish to follow the observant way of

[21] Jill R. Webster, *Els Menorets: The Franciscans in the Realms of Aragon From St. Francis to the Black Death*, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993), 149-74.

life.[22] The spirit of this movement spread to clergy and laity alike who believed in the need to reassess and reorganize religious observance.

Not only were the Franciscans an example to other orders in their drive to serve humanity as St. Francis had envisioned, but they were also a source of spirituality that spread throughout Spain in the late medieval and early modern period. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, signs of the observant reform movement were apparent in Spain. In the province of Santiago, there were seven communities of Franciscans living in accordance with the interpretation of the proper life of a Friar Minor as one of greater humility and poverty than had been typically observed.[23] Upon the founding of a house at Oviedo in 1409, the term 'regular observance' began to be applied to these communities. The same pattern occurred in Aragon, where a house was founded in which friars were to live in deeply in poverty and regular observance of the Rule.[24] In 1525 pope Martin V gave observant friars in Aragon the right to elect their own vicars outside the jurisdiction of the provincial. The provincial had been the head of the Franciscans, but as observant reform grew, the observants were allotted more independence from conventual governanace.[25] The observant Franciscans continued to gain popularity due to the disciplined life they exhibited, their work in missions, and their active preaching. Thus, their services were requested and new houses were established with greater frequency than the conventuals. By the time of Cardinal Jimenez, the observant Franciscans were a burgeoning force, and so his efforts at expanding the reform of religious orders was very

---

[22] William H. Prescott, *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic: Volume II,* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1871), 368-400.
[23] John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order From its Origins to the Year 1517,* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968), 377-380.
[24] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order,* 377-380.
[25] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order,* 442-456.

fruitful. In 1516 pope Leo X attempted to bring an end to the divisiveness of the Franciscans and summoned leaders from both orders to Rome in 1517. The conventuals refused to relinquish the concessions they had received from earlier popes regarding the liberal interpretation of poverty. Finally, the pope declared that the observants were to elect a new Minister General for the Order, essentially placing the direction of the Franciscans in the hands of the *reformati*- those individuals dedicated to the reform of the religious life. Leo X issued the bull *Ite vos in vineam meam,* which mandated that the *reformati* were henceforth to be called the Order of Friars Minor. He further proclaimed that the observant vicars were to be obeyed by all friars as the true ministers under apostolic authority. From that time on, all Minister Generals had to be chosen from among the reformed sectors of the order, as did all who were to serve in any office or administrative role.[26] The nature of the order allowed its members to be in constant contact with the local populations. Concurrent with the apostolic mission and the presence of a pious laity in the thirteenth century, the Franciscans' work drove them to incorporate lay appendages to the order.

A third rule of St. Francis added a tertiary order in Spain in the mid fourteenth century. These third orders are directly linked with the spread of reform spirituality in Spain among the laity. This spread was due not only to increasing numbers of individuals in Third Orders, but also to their lay status and close involvement with the rest of society. The further implication of tertiaries was that the laity could be involved in a form of the spiritual 'religious' life. The first semblance of the Third Order emerged during the life of St. Francis. In 1214 Francis wrote the *Letter to the Faithful* in response to requests made by laypersons in search of a more devout life. Francis' letter concludes:

---

[26] Moorman*A History of the Franciscan Order,* 569-585.

> I, Brother Francis, your little servant, beg and beseech you by the Love which is God, and desiring to kiss your feet, that you will humbly and lovingly receive these fragrant words of our Lord Jesus Christ and cheerfully put them into practice and observe them to perfection. Let those who cannot read have them read to them often, and let them keep them with them and carry them out unto the end, for they are spirit and they are life.[27]

The instructions contained in this letter include frequent participation in the sacraments of confession and communion, regular tithing and charity, and a simple lifestyle characterized by humility.[28] In 1221, Honorius III gave the lay followers of the Franciscans a Rule. This Rule contained minimal standards of behavior and religious observance; its significance rests on its acknowledgement of such a body and the organization that it outlined. Members were to choose a religious to be their director and to meet monthly. The spirituality that was learned by the tertiaries in their meetings and observed in daily life was further transmitted to the population. Over time the Third Orders grew in numbers, and various communities thereof began to formulate a more communal identity. More groups of tertiaries moved away from the original practice of living separately and many moved to live together in fellowship and pious devotion, while still engaging in their normal occupations throughout the day. With the increase in cohesiveness and self-identity among such tertiary groups came a greater similarity to the religious life, and thus a greater dedication to works of ministry, such as works of mercy and charity affecting society in general. In the wake of the growth and development of

---

[27] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order,* 42.
[28] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 42.

the Franciscan Third Order came a broader fourteenth century movement aimed at a common life. Many of those, such as the Begards and Beguines based their comportment on the Rule of the Third Order.[29] Likewise, the *devotio moderna* of the Netherlands, which will be discussed at length later, grew out of the same spirit of the Franciscan Third Order. As groups of the Third Order were established in great numbers, ecclesiastical concern grew that these bodies would cultivate spiritual beliefs and practices that were not a part of the Catholic tradition. John XXII, in 1319, confirmed and strengthened the necessary role of friars in guiding in tertiaries, who were to live "'under the care and teaching of the Order of Friars Minor'".[30] Still, tertiary groups remained a source of suspicion and potential deviance. The official approval and establishment of tertiaries in the thirteenth century spawned a spirit of lay religious practice that was highly influential to the future of Catholicism. Lay communities of tertiaries and of other groups captured by the idea of a religious life outside the traditional orders became the sources of a spirituality that was based in the ideals of the Franciscans- charity, humility, sacramental observance, inner devotion, and the like. As such groups proliferated and came into their own identities, they were breeding grounds for new spiritual beliefs. The reality of the development of nontraditional systems of belief within communities of tertiaries is evident by the church's attention to such groups. The *Liber Sententarium* is an account by a Franciscan Inquisitor that relays the trial of a large community of tertiaries whose beliefs were denounced in 1321- 1322.[31] Within these communities individuals ascribed to the a distinct spirituality with direct ramifications for those around them. Their activities with the general population were much like those of the Franciscan

[29] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 417-428.
[30] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 417-428.
[31] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 302.

observants, and thus were immediately relevant and influential to the general population. Some of these spiritual ideas and practices were tolerated and accepted by ecclesiastical officials, while others were not. There was a fine line between the spiritualities produced by lay 'religious' that were acceptable and those that were not.

The role of mysticism in the spiritualities of the later middle ages serves as an elucidating point of demarcation between approved and rejected beliefs. Meditation is an essential aspect of mysticism, but alone it is not mysticism per se. Mysticism is adequately defined as the direct experience of God's presence. Mystical writings, which can be found in both orthodox and unorthodox works dating from this period, usually aim at either describing such an experience, or at guiding an individual on the path to achieve such an experience. The *scala perfectionis*, or mystic way, consists of three main stages: the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive or contemplative. The goal of the purgative is to cleanse one's life of sin so that the mind and soul are better suited to focus on Christ. The illuminative stage is when the individual focuses on Christ and on his own inner life. Finally, in the unitive or contemplative stage the individual reaches the union of his will with God's. In his *The Flowering of Mysticism*, Bernard McGinn posits a new mysticism that arose with direct implications for the spirituality of European society. He states that this new mysticism represented "new ways of understanding and presenting the direct consciousness of the presence of God".[32] What is embodied in this new understanding is of more importance than the definition of itself. Several integral aspects of this were highly novel and significant to religion and spirituality in sixteenth century Spain and Europe alike. Of central importance was the gradually spreading conception

[32] Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism*, (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998), 1-30.

that clergy belonged in the world. No longer was monasticism justified in holiness by its renunciation of and seclusion from the world and its problems. As indicated by the proliferation of the mendicants, clergy were to involve themselves in the world and in the care of souls; this was regarded as the ideal. With this innovation came a greater place for laity in religious life as participants in their own spirituality. The notion grew that all Christians, not just the 'religious' could draw near to God and experience him in their lives.[33] The formation of tertiary orders, lay organizations, and the general increase in lay spiritual dialogue is confirmation of this process that was underway by the thirteenth century. Meditation was a pivotal aspect of Franciscan spirituality and of the emerging spiritual currents of this era. In the vein of increasing lay engagement, efforts were made by various entities in society to enable the secular world to practice meditation on Christ's life and salvation in their daily lives. In this context, it is easy to see how the delineations of orthodoxy could become muddled, causing the church hierarchy to become increasingly cautious. The widespread embracing of newly popularized spiritualities often imbued with mystical and egalitarian approaches to religion increased the caution of ecclesiastical officials. Such spiritual ideologies implicitly undercut the role of the church in the lives of individuals. If the masses adhered to the religious practices advocated in mystical and devotional works, the church was marginalized by the emphasis on meditation, virtuous living, and internal communion with God.

Franciscan spirituality included a kind of personal mystical experience that culminated in aligning oneself with God. St. Francis spent much time in meditation upon Christ's life and his sufferings, and urged his followers to draw as near as they could to

[33] McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism*, 1-30.

Christ by placing him in their thoughts. Thomas of Celano wrote the *First and Second Lives of St. Francis*, a biographical account of the saint's life, which he had witnessed. He describes Francis' spirituality:

> He wanted to follow the doctrine and walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to do so perfectly, with all vigilance, all zeal, complete desire of the mind, complete fervor of the heart. He remembered Christ's words through constant meditation and recalled his actions through wise consideration. The humility of the incarnation and the love of the passion so occupied his memory that he scarcely wished to think of anything else.[34]

The role of meditation and devotion to Christ's life and passion are evident here, and later Franciscan leaders continued to write in this vein. Saint Bonaventure became Minister General of the Franciscans in 1257 and contributed greatly to the order's devotional works. In his work *Itinerarium,* Bonaventure wrote a telling statement of his spirituality: "'the adorable humanity of Christ is the royal road which leads to contemplation'".[35] Saint Bonaventure instructed many in the intricacies of contemplation so that the spirit would be edified and embraced by God. Later in his devotional piece *Itinerarium* he wrote:

> Ask grace, not learning; desire, not understanding; the sigh of prayer, not industry in study; the spouse, not the master; God, not man; mist, not clarity... Let us die, therefore, and by the door of death enter into this darkness. Let us impose silence on our anxieties, our concupiscences, and

[34] www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/stfran-lives.html
[35] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 260.

> upon the working of our imagination. Let us, with Christ crucified, pass from this world to the Father.[36]

The Franciscans continued to develop their devotional focus, and many of their ideas were eventually encompassed in a distinct methodology. The term *recogimiento* came into usage in the 1520's to describe the process of meditation among the Franciscans. *Recogimiento* called for methodical prayer and meditation and was outlined by Francisco de Osuna in his 1527 *Tercer abecedario espiritual*. According to this work, an individual was to perform meditative exercises in a dark and silent place to facilitate a focusing of the senses. Osuna also articulated three forms of prayer that are necessary to the practice of *recogimiento*. These consist of vocal prayer, prayer within the heart meditating upon Christ's life and passion, and then the most perfect type of prayer, the mental or spiritual.[37] This practice is fraught with mystical elements, most clearly observed in the correlation of the three types of prayer with the three mystical stages. In his work, Osuna suggested that *recogimiento* was acceptable for all, but realistically best suited to those of the religious life and those with the leisure time to properly follow the manual. Naturally, this work and the ideas therein spread beyond those in orders, and even beyond those in contact with the manual. Isabel de la Cruz and her earliest followers Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, and Maria de Cazalla functioned in close proximity to the Franciscans and so were familiar with the spirituality that was finally recorded in *Tercer abecedario espiritual*. However, the spirituality that came to be associated with the *alumbrados* differed from this acceptable devotional practice.

---

[36] Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, 261.
[37] Alistair Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The Alumbrados,* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 1992), 7-24.

Directly from the Franciscan third order came the spirituality that was later termed *alumbradismo* and persecuted by the Inquisition. Isabel de la Cruz became a Franciscan tertiary in 1512 and is credited as the first of the *alumbrados*. Prior to becoming a tertiary she was a *beata*, and thus accustomed to the practice of the 'religious' life without enclosure.[38] *Beatae* lived a variety of ways, but the general practice was to follow a particular rule in pursuit of a pious life. These women lived similarly to members of 'religious' communities, yet were not attached to any Rule or organization. Some of these laywomen came to be associated with mysticism as they spread messages they had received in visions to their followers. Juana de la Cruz exemplifies the mystical tint of *beatae;* she was the head of a *beateria* where she worked miracles and had revelations from God. The revelations of *beatae*, such as Juana, were claimed to be direct divinations of God's will.[39] As a result of their claims to grasp God's will outside of the traditional sources of scripture and Catholic dogma, they came to be closely observed by ecclesiastical authority in order to prevent the spawning of a heterodox or heretical group. Isabel and those associated with her held some ideas whose orthodoxy was questionable and so they had to answer to the Inquisition. The term *alumbrado* was used rampantly in Spain throughout the sixteenth century as a term available to throw at any ideology that seemed novel. The *alumbrado* spirituality is imperative to consider alongside the Franciscans in a discussing Spanish spirituality: the Franciscan tradition advocated meditation and devotion to draw the soul nearer to God, whereas the *alumbrados* believed they had a method to directly receive God's will. The

---

[38] R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 45-48.
[39] William A. Christian, *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 86-87; 184-187.

alumbrado version of prayer was intended to accomplish self-abandonment, which is the meaning of the name given it, *dejamiento.* This form of prayer could be practiced by anyone at any given time. A *dejado* did not have to separate himself in a dark and silent place. Rather, he could perform the prayer while working. Also according to these guidelines, the *dejado* did not have to captivate his senses the way the *recogido* must. For instance, when sinful thoughts entered the mind of a *recogido*, he was to block them out in order to purify and direct his mind and soul. The *dejado*, on the other hand, did not have to block out such temptations and impure thoughts. *Dejamiento* posited that such thoughts might be from God. And so, instead of blocking them out, he must exercise his will to refuse acting on the temptation.[40] The distinction between these two forms of spiritual prayer did not constitute the grounds for declaring *alumbradismo* a heresy; the situation was far more complex than that. The *Alumbrados* were not persecuted as heretics until the 1520's when a combination of events pushed the Inquisition in such a direction. Elements of mysticism best describe the spiritual currents of these tertiaries and their outcroppings, and of many individuals in Spain, although most were not themselves mystics.

There is a distinction to be made between the mystical way and the way of many new spiritualities. Mystics believe that the specific three-part path- purgative, illuminative, and unitive- leads one's soul to union with God. The mystical component in many of the spiritualities included snatches of mystical techniques and goals, but did not advocate this path as a way to obtain direct insights from God through a mystical union with him. Both mysticism and devotional spiritualities involved the occupation of one's mind with images and meditations upon Christ's life and his saving role. For many

[40] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados,* 25-42.

spiritualities this was done to foster a life in congruence with Christ's example and his Biblical instructions. It was to be practiced to nurture an individual's soul so that he might better love his neighbors and his God, and actively participate in his salvation. The difference in the goals and claims of these entities was a point of dissociation between the two that enabled the survival of some and denouncement of others. In the early sixteenth century the Inquisition extended the focus of its apparatus beyond the *conversos* to ideologies and practices that were not easily recognizable as orthodox. Among the first recipients of inquisitorial investigation were *alumbrados* who, though spiritually similar to Franciscans, were outside normative Catholicism. This shift in focus is in large part due to the intensifying threat to Catholicism that arose with Lutheranism. The relative ideological openness that characterized Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella and into the sixteenth century had enabled a variety of spiritual views to infiltrate Spain and also to be cultivated therein. The result of this influx, combined with indigenous currents, was a vast body of ideas that were apparently nontraditional and thus their orthodoxy was not understood or yet determined. And so when Lutheranism became an obvious threat, Spanish authorities dedicated themselves to preventing its establishment in Spain. Novel ideas were immediately subject to question as they could be vessels of Lutheranism. The exact nature of Lutheranism was so undefined, as the writings that had actually made it to Spain were accessible only to high theologians learned in Latin, so that to most, any nontraditional idea or practice could potentially be a part of its precepts. Spain and its Inqusition came to denounce Erasmianism and Lutheranism. Accusations flourished that various spiritual currents were of this origin, resulting in a climate of fear and distrust. No longer were the *beatas*, mystical programs, and visionaries regarded as expressions of

pious religiosity. Religious enthusiasm was now seen as a garden of novelty that needed to be controlled. In Spain, the *alumbrados* were the first affected by many subsequent inquisitorial denunciations.

The proceedings against *alumbradismo* hinged on several issues of religious practice that the Inquisition found suspicious. These issues were compiled in an edict of faith in 1525 composed of forty-eight propositions that hostile individuals attributed to the major figures of this loose movement, specifically Isabel de la Cruz, Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, Maria de Cazalla, and Juan de Cazalla. The edict listed various statements that had been reported and then judgements of each statement, such as "heretical" were listed as well. A noteworthy aspect of the trials is the *converso* origin of the most prominent figures in the movement: Isabel de la Cruz, Maria de Cazalla, and Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz were all new Christians. Because the Inquisition developed trying *conversos* as Judaizers, the *alumbradismo* trials were initially tinged with the pattern of Judaizer interrogation and suspicion. Such charges were dropped quickly, but the movement continued to be associated with the *conversos.* The distinctions between *dejamiento* and *recogimiento* were not vastly different, but *dejamiento* was subject to questioning in this process. One of the greatest issues at hand was the *alumbrados* position communion with God and sin and grace. They were attributed the belief that they could know that God had endowed them personally with His grace and love. The Inquisitors questioned the claim that one could be sure he had received the love of God, meaning the experience of God and His consolation. At the root of this was the suggestion that these individuals would not err or be deceived when living in the love of God. Despite Isabel de la Cruz's view of *dejamiento* as simply a process of removing the desire to sin, she still stated that "'as long

as she retained this love of God she could not be deceived and that she could not err as long as she remained in this love of God and her neighbor'".[41] Along similar lines, Alcaraz told the Inquisitors that "'love was so deeply rooted within him that it was impossible for him misinterpret the scriptures or to err'".[42] His reference to scriptural interpretation highlights another controversial issue in the proceedings. Spanish churchmen were alarmed that laypersons with no theological training were interpreting the Bible. Particularly after the outbreak of Lutheranism, the interpretation of scripture was to be undertaken only after education in the proper meanings of scriptures as determined by the church. The mystical and devotional notion of two types of knowledge, and the emphasis on the inner, spiritual understanding of God were immediately relevant. The concept of reaching God without learning and intervention had not been condemned, but it became a point of contention in the *alumbrado* trials. Francisco de Osuna and other acceptable mystical and spiritual writers expressed that formal education was unnecessary, but it was Alcaraz who was accused of despising learning. To this he replied, "'A saint says that he whose knowledge is infused speaks as a man with experience, like one who has tasted the honey and says its sweet. He who has not tasted of it says it is sweet, but he has only tasted of it through knowledge. This is a difference between men.'"[43] The *alumbrados* were also accused of abandoning the ceremonies of the church, a common accusation of earlier heresies. Alcaraz claimed that he did observe the orthodox practices of the church, but the implicit threat persisted that *dejamiento* undermined church rites; hence, it were suppressed in Spain.

---

[41] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados*, 35.
[42] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados*, 35.
[43] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados*, 38.

The previously mentioned *devotio moderna* movement arose from the same spirit that spawned the Franciscan Third Order, but the spirituality espoused by its adherents did not garner the persecution and suppression experienced by the *alumbrados* when the movement reached Spain. The *Devotio Moderna* emerged in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries as a lay association based in communal living and religious life. Unlike the third orders that were attached to various mendicant orders, this was a purely lay movement. Gerard Groote, a lay preacher, was its founder. The influence of the Cistercians on Groote's spirituality is an important element to consider.[44] Adherents of the *Devotio Moderna* aimed at internal piety and the moral ordering of one's own life. Such emphasis on inner piety mirrored that of traditional monasticism, but like the mendicants, this group saw application and involvement in society as of the utmost importance. Meditation was a principal facet of this lifestyle and was laid out in works by formative figures including Florens Radewijns, who greatly assisted Gerard Groote in laying foundations. Because he was so integral a figure in *Devotio Moderna*, and was Groote's cofounder of the Brethren of the Common Life, his treatise *Multum Valet* is appropriately regarded as a seminal devotional piece. Thus, it influenced those who came into contact with it, many of whom wrote in the same vein and further spread his ideas. *Multum Valet* sets out two ends for which each action must be en route of; love of God and purification of the heart are the ultimate aspirations. According to Radewijns, meditation is essential to striving toward these objectives and he elucidates the proper meaning and performance of meditation relevant to such aims. Regarding purification of

[44] The Cistercians began in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. The reason for their founding was the desire to rigidly follow the rule of Benedict; they sought to maintain pure observance thereof. Bernard of Clairvaux was a formative figure for the Cistercians and his many writings depict the spirituality and aims of the order, particularly his *On Loving God*. This movement was influenced by the Cluniac reforms of the preceding years, and was highly significant to the reform of orders and the Observant movements.

the heart, an individual must purge himself of inappropriate desires. Though this is an element of mystical practice, he does not outline the mystical path in his writings. Radewjins mentions this mystical *via purgativa* and also holds up meditation, prayer, reading, and manual labor as effective means of purifying the mind and heart.[45] Manual labor constituted a fundamental tenet of *devotio moderna* as followers were to live off the labor of their hands. This labor did not preclude meditation while working; instead, individuals were exhorted to meditate during any free moments they had throughout a day. In pursuit of the love of God, the *via illuminitiva* is noted, wherein one ruminates on God's blessings, which include Jesus' life. Radewijns instructs individuals to meditate on devotional tracts of Christ's Passion.[46] As second under Groote, and then as leader upon Groote's death from 1384 to 1400, Florens Radewijns' instructive treatises illustrate the principles of the movement and the prescribed way of life. Radewijns refers to devotional works and meditation as crucial to the pursuit of a properly ordered life. He echoes the sentiment of Gerard Groote's spirituality, which aimed at man's salvation with an emphasis on love and contemplation of God.

The most influential and widespread writing to come from the *Modern Devotion* was Thomas a Kempis' *Imitatio Christi* or *Imitation of Christ*. By the sixteenth century Kempis' work was translated and available in Spain, and so could be encountered by the literate. Like the ideals of his founder, Kempis' devotional work is fraught with elements of mysticism and also focuses on the importance of meditation on Christ's example to ensure that one's intentions are devoted to purity of heart and love of God. The *Imitatio Christi* is actually a combination of four treatises instructing individuals to persevere on

---

[45] R.R. Post, *The Modern Devotion* in *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought Volume III*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 314-325.
[46] Post, *The Modern Devotion*, 314-325.

the devout path. He explains that one must remain conscious of Christ's passion in the intellect and also in desire and will. The opening words of Kempis' work reveal the purpose and tone of the ensuing chapters, "Let therefore our chiefest endeavour be, to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ."[47] His emphasis on the interior, spiritual life aimed at communion with God implicitly reduces the intermediary role of the church in religious practice. Just as mysticism in general detracted from the necessity of ecclesiastical arbitration, posing a threat to the hierarchy, this devotional work embodied a similar threat. Thomas a Kempis places scripture at the heart of the *Imitatio Christi* and only mentions the machinations of the Catholic Church in the final section entitled "Concerning the Sacrament". And so, although there was no explicit challenge to Catholic structure, this devotional in circulation held the potential to undermine established practice.[48] Further, *Imitatio Christi* elevates understanding through the spiritual life rather than through theological study and the like, although Kempis does not condemn learning. He writes, "'There is a great difference between the knowledge of an illuminated and devout man and the knowledge of a learned and studious clerk.'"[49] Thomas a Kempis' treatise is intended for all, not for students and clerics of theology. This trend is characteristic of later medieval and early modern spirituality. Mysticism advocates this type of knowledge that comes from God as does the *Imitatio Christi*:

> "The Kingdom of God is within you" saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest. Learn to despise outward things, and to give thyself to things inward, and thou shalt perceive the Kingdom of God to come in

[47] Thomas Haemmerlein, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1.
[48] Wallace K. Ferguson, *Europe in Transition: 1300-1520,* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company), 337-371.
[49] Ferguson, *Europe in Transition*, 351.

> thee... All His glory and beauty is from within, and there He delighteth Himself. The inward man He often visiteth; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, exceedingly wonderful.[50]

The task set out for readers of this devotion is to prepare one's inner spirit for Christ's presence by living a virtuous life in thought and deed; this is to be achieved mostly by meditation on Christ's life and passion. The *Imitatio Christi* and the ideals of the *Devotio Moderna* made their way to Spain, influencing and intermingling with facets of Spanish spiritual and reform movements.

During their reign, Ferdinand and Isabella sought to build up their empire and to do so they invited the growth and establishment of learning among other things. They appointed Cardinal Jimenez de Cisneros archbishop of Toledo and primate of Spain in 1495; in 1507 he became inquisitor- general and cardinal.[51] Cisneros greatly expanded learning and also lay religious involvement during his years as archbishop, and was supported by the Catholic Kings who had by this time been given authority by pope Alexander VI to manage monastic reform. Cisneros was an Observant Franciscan and even prior to his years in high positions he dedicated himself to the work of reform- particularly reforming orders to Observant practice. In 1499 he founded the Complutensian University at Alcala de Henares where he implemented a curriculum that included humanism.[52] Grammar and rhetoric were central as was learning Biblical languages because Cisneros esteemed understanding God's word as the integral component of a theological education. He required that the competing Thomist,

---

[50] Haemmerlein, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, 49.
[51] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados,* 7-24.
[52] Erika Rummel, "Voices of Reform From Hus to Erasmus" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation,* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 79-80.....

nominalist, and Scotist schools of thought be taught at Alcala. He was essentially a patron of humanism and saw it as beneficial to true religious reform and practice as exemplified in his contribution to the masterpiece *Complutensian Polyglot.* This was a collection of the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages and included the Vulgate translation, which was the official version of the Catholic Church.[53] Because of Cisneros' affinity for humanism when applied to religious use, he was initially favorable to Erasmus' beliefs and writings. Prior to the religious splintering instigated by Luther's Ninety-Five Theses during the reign of Charles V, Erasmus was a popular figure in Spain. He wrote of the corruptions that plagued the church and its clergy in a mocking tone, particularly in his *Moriae encomium* or *Praise of Folly,* but he was not perceived as a dissenter threatening to church unity. Rather, his controversial works touched on many of the issues that reform-minded persons were aware of and similarly critical of. Thus it is not surprising that Jimenez de Cisneros would welcome Erasmus' work to be studied at Alcala. In 1526 Castilian printer Miguel de Eguia began to print Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis christiani* the *Handbook of a Christian Soldier* in the vernacular and remarked of its popularity, "'In the court of the emperor, in the cities, in the churches, in the convents, even in the inns and in the streets there is no one without a copy of Erasmus' *Enchiridion* in Spanish.'"[54] However, by the 1530's the mood had changed for those concerned with the maintenance of orthodoxy and Erasmus came to be associated with Lutheranism, an association that would always haunt him. Still, much of his work had permeated the minds of scholars who had come into direct contact with it, and had even reached the masses through its influence on readers and its Castilian translations. In the end, the

[53] Ronald G. Witt, "The Humanist Movement" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation,* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 113-114.
[54] Hamilton, *The Alumbrados,* 77-90.

apparent freedom in education and idea exchange was rapidly reversed when Lutheranism became a veritable threat to Catholicism.

The sixteenth century turned in to an era of fear and suspicion. There were so many ideas in circulation whose orthodoxy had not yet been determined; thus there existed a mass of ideas that were not categorized. Some spiritualities differed very little from one another, but, one could escape the Inquisition's judgment, while the other was denounced as heresy. The shared characteristics of the denounced *alumbrados* with popular spiritual ideologies propagated in devotional works and by orders and laity alike are manifestly evident. The *alumbrado* movement began among Franciscan tertiaries, and resembled the Franciscan's 'orthodox' practice of *recogimiento.* Yet, the *alumbrados* spirituality was among the earliest cases targeted by the Inquisition, as it abandoned *converso* trials to deal with a potentially dangerous situation to the orthodoxy of Spain's faithful. Subtle deviations were seized upon because of the intensifying fear of ecclesiastical splintering that had occurred with Lutheranism. Still, the reigning elements in the religious atmosphere aimed at the practice of inner renewal, through meditation and love, leading to pious living- with the love of God and one's neighbors. Mysticism was a thriving activity in various circles, most notably among Franciscans, their tertiaries, and their byproduct: the *alumbrados.* Ignatius was most clearly influenced by the *devotio moderna*'s form of prayer and meditation, which resembled the substance of Franciscan influences. His own experiences, outlined in his autobiography, reveal that he had encountered God through visions and illuminations, through which he ascertained direct understanding of faith. These accounts are characteristically mystical, but he did not ascribe to a mystical methodology, nor did he propound one in his own ministry. Rather,

he merged his spiritual influences and experiences into a spirituality aimed at helping others to examine their lives, confess all that is sinful, and to begin a new life of constant inner renewal and love.

IV. IGNATIUS, HIS SPIRITUALITY, AND THE JESUITS

Inigo, who was called Ignatius after his conversion, was born in 1491 to a noble family of the Basque region in the Kingdom of Castile.[55] The year of his birth in Spain situates his life in the midst of the reign and policies of Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as the popular currents that were in circulation in Spain. The indoctrination of Europeans in general, but particularly Spaniards, of an urgent need for stringent and active combat to uphold Catholicism and fight unorthodox movements can be traced through Ignatius' spiritual years. The whole of Christendom was aware of threats to Catholicism from the invading Turks, and also from various heresies that the church campaigned against. Spain was shaped by this fervor, as well as the *reconquista* mentality of previous years. This mentality was particularly conjured by Ferdinand and Isabella, who were highly Catholic and militantly dedicated to a unified identity for Spanish kingdoms. 1521 is the acknowledged date of Ignatius' conversion to the spiritual life, but his life prior to this is integral to his later development. Young men in Spain idealized the life of knightly battles and courtly love, a social trend that Ignatius wholeheartedly ascribed to. His personality was not one of moderation; his inclination was to follow an ideal or practice to the extreme. This facet of his character stayed with him throughout his life, and in this early period, characterizes his association with ideals of chivalry. Ignatius passionately read and emulated the fictional life of Amadis de Gaul. This example and the knightly, chivalric ideals of Don Quixote inspired Ignatius and consumed his reputedly hyperactive

[55] John C. Olin, *Catholic Reform,* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 23.

imagination.[56] Inigo was heavily influenced by traditions of knighthood and dedicated himself to achieving status through the venue of militant prestige. During the first battle between Francis I and Charles V in the Hapsburg- Valois wars, when the French invaded Navarre and tried to control Castile in 1521, Ignatius' adhered to his knightly values resulting in a life-altering injury.[57] A canon ball mutilated Ignatius' legs, an injury that had drastic ramifications on the direction of his life. The efforts of surgeons could not rectify the immensity of the damage to enable him to return to his former pursuits. As he recuperated, he became bored and requested books to read. Two of these books set his mind on a path that significantly affected his surfacing spirituality. The books were *The Life of Christ* (*Vita Christi)* by Ludolf of Saxony and *The Golden Legend (Legenda Aurea)* a book on the lives of the saints written by Jacobus de Voragine.[58] These books were imbued with the essence of a spiritual current that had begun among members of the religious life in the preceding centuries and were catalysts for Ignatius' transformation. Rather than entrenching himself in the ideals of chivalry, Ignatius ruminated on the acts of Christ and many of the saints.

Ignatius' imagination was captivated by the idea of a life dedicated solely to spiritual concerns. Saint Francis, Saint Dominic and especially Saint Humphrey[59] whose lives he read in Voragine's *The Golden Legend* exemplified the sort of lifestyle he

---

[56] James Broderick, *The Origin of the Jesuits,* (New York: Image Books, 1960),22-27. Broderick discusses the influence of manuals of chivalry similar to Amadis de Gual. He sees the influence of the popular emphasis on knighthood and chivalry on Ignatius' later actions toward God and the Virgin Mary.

[57] H. Boehmer, *The Jesuits,* (Philadelphia: The Castle Press, 1928), 19. Francis I and troops were contesting Charles V's victory in Castile. They led a siege at Pamplona where Ignatius was an officer. The French general called for an utterly debilitating surrender. Ignatius' responded by refusing and the French mercilessly attacked.

[58] Joseph De Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice,* (Chicago: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964), 24-26.

[59] De Guibert, *The Jesuits*, 24; Thomas Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life,* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976), 30. Saint Humphrey was a hermit who allowed his hair and nails to grow after making his vigil and consecration.

aspired to imitate. Ignatius began to practice the asceticism that he had read of as he incessantly worked to focus his thoughts on Christ and his passion. Ignatius' imagination played a central role in his conversion and spiritual development, which explains his later emphasis upon the role of the imagination in *The Spiritual Exercises.* With these spiritual ideologies in his mind, Ignatius traveled to Montserrat in Spain, where he made a general confession lasting three days. From there he went to Manresa wearing sackcloth; here his spirituality began to materialize in more definite form. Ignatius discovered Thomas a Kempis' book *The Imitation of Christ* while in Manresa. *The Imitation* epitomized the *Devotio Moderna.* By the time Ignatius left Manresa, he had formulated at least a rudimentary form of the *Spiritual Exercises.* Following his one-year pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Ignatius returned to Spain to pursue a formal education. This began in 1524 with Latin lessons in Barcelona for two years, followed by year at Alcala and then to Salamanca from July of 1527 until the end of that same year. Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros, who had been Isabella's confessor, founded the University at Alcala and was himself educated at Salamanca before becoming a Franciscan. He was concerned with the spirituality of the church and was a great patron of humanism.[60] Jimenez was particularly dedicated to reforming the diocesan clergy and reinvigorating the pastoral aims of the Church, two goals that were achieved in the Jesuit Order. Alcala was the center of humanism in Spain as Cisneros associated *studia humanitatis* with a new study of scripture and patristic sources to effect religious reform.[61] While absorbing the education at Alcala and the accompanying ideological currents, Ignatius led many in the *Spiritual Exercises.* At Alcala in 1526 records reveal that Ignatius faced Inquisitorial trial for his

---

[60] Rummel, "Voices of Reform From Hus to Erasmus", 79-80.
[61] Olin, *Catholic Reform,* 5.

spiritual activities. He was tried on suspicion that he was a member of the *alumbrados*. He was acquitted and told not to speak publicly on religion until he finished university training in theology. Again in Salamanca Ignatius faced a trial wherein the Inquisitor judges each had a copy of the *Exercises* and they pressed to determine its orthodoxy. He was released and approved to teach Catholic doctrine and, in his words, "about the things of God, so long as they never defined that 'this is a mortal sin or this is a venial sin'".[62] Because he felt the strictures of Spain impinged upon his helping of souls, Ignatius left Salamanca in February of 1528 for Paris to study at the college of Sainte-Barbe. In France he encountered six men who gathered into a companionship based around Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* and lifestyle of aiding others' souls and pastoral efforts. On the day of the Feast of the Assumption on the hill of Montmarte outside Paris in 1534, the seven men made vows of poverty, chastity, and to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[63] A noteworthy contingency plan was included in this first vow; if they could not get to Jerusalem within a year of being in Rome, or if they could not stay in Jerusalem once there, then they vowed to offer themselves to the service of the pope.[64] Three Frenchmen joined shortly after and the nine companions met Ignatius, who had gone home under medical advice, in Venice in 1537.

After a few months in Venice, Ignatius' companions went to Rome to request the pope's blessing for their aspired trip to Jersusalem. They returned to Venice with papal blessing. Back in Venice those companions who were not previously ordained for the priesthood- a group that included Ignatius- received their ordination for the mass from the

---

[62] Joseph F. O'Callaghan, transl., *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), 66-71.
[63] Michael Foss, *The Founding of the Jesuits,* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1969), 106-107; Broderick, *The Origin of the Jesuits,* 44.
[64] Boehmer, *The Jesuits,* 57.

bishop of Arbe.[65] They were ordained under two titles: *sufficientis scientiae,* sufficient knowledge, and *voluntariae paupertatis,* voluntary poverty. The first title gave them the option to teach for their sustenance. The second title of voluntary poverty differed from that of the mendicants' *sub titulo paupertatis*, under the title of poverty, which had cause so many disputes within such orders. The two titles chosen by the first companions seems paradoxical, as one who is voluntarily poor should have no use for the title of their knowledge. The companions had agreed n Paris to accept no fees for their ministry.[66] It is apparent that both titles functioned to characterize the essence of the order: they were to be educated, but this education was used for ministry and not profit. The papal nuncio then gave them their 'faculties', which authorized them to preach and elucidate Holy Scripture throughout Venice. Ignatius and his nine companions abandoned the hope of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1537, which, had led them to Venice in the first place. According to Ignatius, "In that year no ships sailed for the east because the Venetians had broken with the Turks. So, seeing that their hope of sailing was far off, they dispersed throughout the Venetian territory, with the intention of waiting the year that they had agreed upon; after it was finished, if there was no passage, they would go to Rome".[67] They found no passage to Jesrusalem within the year and headed to Rome in 1538. In Rome began a new and defining chapter in their lives and fate.

In the fall of 1538 they offered themselves to Pope Paul III. Paul III's position on reform in the midst of the reform-centric sixteenth century helps explain his affinity for the Jesuits that began as soon as he met them. He has been called the first

---

[65] Ignatius, Xavier, Lainez, Salmeron, Rodrigues, Bobadilla, and Codure were ordained at this time. O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 87.
[66] Joseph F. Conwell, *Impelling Spirit- Revisiting a Founding Experience: 1539 Ignatius Loyola and His Companions,* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997), 76-78.
[67] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 87-88.

Counterreformation pope, but this title must be qualified. He was concerned with the political and religious issues related to reform and sought to ensure the continued prominence of the Catholic Church. He promised that councils would be an integral facet of his reform policy, and called his first reform council in 1532. In 1537 the *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia,* written by cardinals and prelates at the request of Paul III, asserted that the present ills in the Catholic Church were a result of the papal government as it enabled abuses in the system, a diagnosis that Ignatius agreed with.[68] Further, Paul III surrounded himself with many reform-minded cardinals who, though not homogeneous in their reform notions, set the reform tone for his papacy. [69] Paul III's openness to criticism and willingness to surround himself with those who were critical attests to his goal of improving the ecclesiastical system. Ignatius' company, which included Pierre Favre, Francis Xavier, Diego Laynez, Alfonso Salmeron, Simon Rodriguez, Nicholas Alfonso (called Bobadilla, the name of his home town), Claude Lejay, Paschase Broet, and Jean Codure, decided that they would become a religious order if the pope would approve of it: Paul III's approval utilization of the Society would have great ramifications for the following centuries of Catholicism. The Jesuits were not the first group to form around the spirit that they did. Within Italy itself new orders and organizations were found that possessed striking similarities to the Jesuits. One of these was the *Oratory of Divine Love*, a loosely bound community of various backgrounds- from low-level laity to high-level church figures. Their aims were similar to those of the Jesuits; they were to help each other and others by charity and spiritual direction, participate in religious

---

[68] Elisabeth Gleason, "Catholic Reformation" *Handbook of European History 1400-1600,* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 320-326.

[69] The cardinals chosen by Paul included Gasparo Contarini, Reginald Pole, Gianpietro Carafa Girolamo Ghinucci and Bartolomeo Guidiccioni. Gleason, "Catholic Reformation", 328.

exercises complemented with many sacramental visits, and also to use prayer as a means to manage their lives as Christians.[70] Gian Pietro Carafa and Gaetano di Tiene split from this group to form the Theatine order, which was emblematic of the new kinds of orders that emerged in this era. These men recognized the limitations of such a loose body on efforts to do good. And so they formed this new order with the same essential ideas, but with a new approach in practice. The Theatines valued strict adherence to poverty as a primary facet of their order. They went out among the lowliest and poorest people, the ones most in need. However, as Ignatius saw and avoided in his order, their absolute stance on strict poverty severely debilitated their efficacy. Ignatius held similar spiritual ideas for his order- from the aims espoused by the *Oratory* to the pastoral outreaches of the Theatines- but he organized them in more pragmatic form. With regard to finances, he accepted the donations of others and insisted that his followers do the same.[71] Thus, the Jesuits shared common ideas and practices, but incorporated them differently such that the order functioned smoothly and effectively.

They drew up a document signed by each to make the vow of obedience that marked religious orders and to become the Society of Jesus "if, with the Lord's favor, it shall be confirmed by the pope".[72] Also in this document were outlines of the group's identity, rules, and proposed practices. There were five decrees in the *Formula of the Institute,* whose content is known. The points were specifically addressed in the pope's apostolic letter, *Cum ex plurium.*[73] Paul III's secretary, Cardinal Ghinucci, saw no precedent for the proposed rules against asceticism and against organ music or chanting

[70] Foss, *Founding of the Jesuits,* 104-112.
[71] Foss, *Founding of the Jesuits*, 111.
[72] Conwell, *Impelling Spirit,* 16-17.
[73] Conwell, *Impelling Spirit*, 2-9, 17-29.

in divine services; he deemed them uncanonical practices and denied approval. Bartolomeo Guidiccioni, another papal advisor, approved of the group's platform, but he initially refused to approve them because he despised the numerous orders of monks that quibbled incessantly. His perception of the orders was not uncommon; criticism of the orders was a significant part of the increasing disillusionment regarding the Catholic Church. The fourth and fifth Lateran Councils in 1215 and 1512 respectively had addressed the issue and attempted to bridle the growth of new orders with marginal success. Guidiccioni conceded to the establishment of the group with a maximum capacity restriction of 60 members. Further, the Society and Ghinucci reached the agreement that members would recite the divine offices, but would do so on an individual basis. The group recitation of such rites took up a large amount of time and would prevent Jesuits from the degree of scattering mobility that they desired. This provided a freedom to engage in more pastoral work than even the other newly founded clerks regular, such as the Theatines, possessed. The language of the official approval of the tentative order's composition reveals Paul III's affinity for the spirituality and ministry of the Jesuits:

> Since this petition of yours had found our heart feeling well disposed toward you for a long time already, we immediately delegated this matter to our beloved son, Tommaso Badia, the Master of the Sacred Place; who, after carefully considering the matter, reported to us that the whole intent of your Society seemed to him to be good and holy. [74]

September 27, 1540 Paul III signed the Bull *Regimine militantis Ecclesiae* to establish the Society of Jesus. The first Jesuits under Ignatius were dedicated to preaching prolifically,

[74] Foss, *Founding of the Jesuits,* 119-122.

propagating the Catholic faith, meeting the needs of the laity, guiding individuals through the *Spiritual Exercises* with all of its goals, obeying authority, spreading the faith by missions, and educating individuals to enhance their spiritual and scriptural knowledge. Undoubtedly, what Paul and those around him had witnessed in the activities and personas of the early companions prompted their openness to and approval of the order.

The preface to the *Exercises* states: "Spiritual Exercises for overcoming oneself and for regulating one's life without being swayed by any inordinate attachment".[75] This systematized process mirrors the one that Ignatius felt himself led through by God; its purpose is to seek and find God's will in order to align oneself with it. *The Spiritual Exercises* are designed for an experienced leader to guide an individual through over a specific period of time, ideally four weeks but it was to be adapted according to the individual's schedule and needs. Before beginning, one was to focus his mind on the glory of God and His Kingdom as well as the role of humans to praise Him. During the first week, or period of time, one is led to ponder deeply the atrociousness of sins in his life. General confession of one's sins in his past life is the goal for the end of this initial period. As John O'Malley notes: "In this special context the confession is a dramatized statement to oneself, to God, and to another human being who here represents God that an important change in one's heart is in fact under way".[76] Ignatius recommends that from this point on an individual should daily examine his conscience. The second week propels the individual to contemplate the "Kingdom of Christ" and to focus on the life of Jesus on earth until the Last Supper.[77] This segment is the longest in the book; it very

---

[75] Joseph Rickaby, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola: Spanish and English With A Continuous Commentary,* (London: Burns & Oates, Limited, 1915.
[76] John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 39.
[77] Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises*, 77-168.

specifically guides the individual through Jesus' life and thereby makes numerous points of spiritual direction. The "Two Standards" are an integral component of this section; Ignatius tells individuals to meditate on Christ in his sovereignty and then on Lucifer, who is the enemy. The third week or period extends from the Last Supper to Jesus' death on the cross. The final section deals with Christ's resurrection and appearance to Mary and others. Three final appendixes of the *Spiritual Exercises* are found at the end of the work. The first is entitled "Contemplation to Obtain Love" and instructs an individual on how to contemplate in order to understand and enact Godly love. The next is "Three Methods of Prayer", the first of which addresses the Ten Commandments, seven deadly sins, three powers of the soul, and five senses of the body. It is specifically designed for the following purpose: [the] "method of prayer is to give form, manner, and exercises, how the soul should advance herself in them, and that prayer may be acceptable, rather than to give any form and manner of praying".[78] The second method expounds studying the individual words of the prayer. The third method of prayer utilizes rhythmical beats along with one's breathing in prayer. The final codicil to the *Exercises* attends to the relationship of the Jesuits and the individuals making the exercises to the Catholic Church. It is entitled "Rules For Thinking With The Church".[79]

Ignatius was balanced, at times precariously, on the fine line between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Among the most potentially threatening of his spiritual claims were his visions and infused knowledge. Jeronimo Nadal, one of Ignatius' earliest companions and a prolific writer, wrote the following:

---

[78] Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises,* 213.
[79] Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises,* 220-231.

> During Ignatius' sojourn at Manresa, God gave him a most profound insight into, and feeling for, the mysteries of our holy faith and the Catholic Church. At that time also He inspired him with the Spiritual Exercises by moving him to devote himself entirely to the service of God and the salvation of souls. He revealed to him this purpose, especially and in the most signal manner, in the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ and the Two Standards.[80]

Several important and potentially controversial statements are proffered in this account. Ignatius was not a trained theologian at this time, yet he claims to have insights into the faith and the church. Further, Nadal is recounting Ignatius testimony of an encounter with God. A key component of mysticism is the sense that one has been given knowledge and that it is not of oneself. Still, the role of the Catholic Church is mentioned and supported. Throughout his writings Loyola talks of illuminations and visions that he has received from God, and of the insights that God has revealed directly to him. In his autobiography Ignatius describes a recurrent vision with accompanying infused insights:

> Often and for a long time, while at prayer, he saw with interior eyes the humanity of Christ. The form that appeared to him was like a white body, neither very large nor very small, but he did not see the members distinctly. ...He has also seen our Lady in a similar form, without distinguishing parts. The things he saw strengthened him then and always gave him such strength in his faith that he often thought to himself: if there

[80] Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life*, 31. The "Two Standards" that are to be meditated upon are those of Christ and Satan.

> were no Scriptures to teach us these matters of the faith, he would be resolved to die for them, only because of what he had seen.[81]

This vision, and the accounts of other spiritual infusions, have apparent mystical underpinnings, in that they come from God into the soul of man. Yet, Ignatius' loyalty to the revealed scriptures is evident in this passage; he clearly places scripture at the heart of faith, then adds that if the scriptural tradition did not exist, his visions and insights would secure his faith. As seen in the previous chapter, for example in the *alumbrado* trials, authorities were quick to react against laypersons attempting to interpret scriptures and the faith. There is clearly no need for clerical intervention when God Himself is speaking to his soul; still, Loyola organized his spirituality in such that it was intimately reined to the Catholic Church and her service.

The composition of the spirituality indicated in *The Spiritual Exercises* and espoused by Ignatius' companions resembles spiritual ideas of several sources, some of which were deemed heretical prior to and throughout the sixteenth century. Thus, to understand the survival of Jesuit spirituality it is necessary to understand the manifestations of such spiritual influences in Jesuit ideology. Only then is it possible to explain the orthodox acceptance of Jesuit spirituality. The spirituality of the *alumbrados* in Spain was Inquisitorially denounced, and, despite important differences between the two ideologies, Ignatius' spiritual teachings bear traces of the *alumbrado* beliefs. The similarities between the two are like the parallels extant among the Franciscan spiritual currents in late medieval Spain, the spirituality and practice of the *devotio moderna,* and Jesuit spirituality. These corresponding ideologies will be explored once the differences that separated Ignatius and the Jesuits from the fate of persecution that befell the

[81] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola,* 38-39.

alumbrados. There are intricate differences between these two, one the most important of which lies in their relationships to the Catholic hierarchy. Ignatius' goal was to align himself with the will of God based upon his spiritual discernment thereof. Unlike the *alumbrados*, Ignatius' claim to have received direct knowledge from God did not render the Church unnecessary and threatened its integral position.[82] Throughout his writings, even when testifying about an illuminative or visionary experience, Ignatius constantly emphasized the rectitude and surpassing importance of scripture and the church's tradition. And, although he devoted his life to helping others develop a personal piety and relationship with God, his writings were not aimed at inducing a mystical union. Ignatius complied with the strictures that required him to attain a university education and clerical appointment prior to embarking on a full-fledged evangelical endeavor. Ignatius clearly pronounced his loyalty to the Catholic Church and maintained for it a requisite role in religious life and matters. In his writings, he did not condone attempts to interpret scriptures by untrained individuals. He advised individuals to assume the positions advocated by the church and its theologians; Thomas Aquinas, Augustine, and Paul are among those whose orthodox interpretations he frequently cites.[83] His "Rules For Thinking With The Church" mentioned previously as an addendum to his *Exercises* clearly evidence his total support of the Catholic Church. In this section, he instructs the faithful to adhere to each aspect of traditional Catholicism from worshipping saints, relics, and images to practicing total obedience and sacramental confessions. The thirteenth of these rules articulates the Jesuit ideal of complete submission to the Church:

---

[82] Conwell *Impelling the Spirit*, 153.
[83] Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises.*

> The Thirteenth: to make sure of being right in all things, we ought always to hold by the principle that the white that I see I would believe to be black, if the Hierarchical Church were so to rule it,- believing that between Christ our Lord the Bridegroom and the Church His Bride there is the same Spirit that governs and guides us to the salvation of our souls; because by the same Spirit and our Lord who gave the ten commandments our Holy Mother Church is guided and governed.[84]

Ignatius' dedication to upholding the Church and its precepts set him on the side of orthodoxy, despite perceptible tinges of heterodox spirituality. Rather, *The Spiritual Exercises* were very similar to the devotional treatises of the *Devotio Moderna*, those of the Franciscan spirituals, and other orthodox works.

This type of spirituality was highly influential to Ignatius, who treasured *The Imitation* throughout his life.[85] The *Imitation* also esteemed the vow of obedience to be the chief virtue. This idea of obedience as the vehicle by which an individual suppresses his will for the will of God became a cornerstone of Jesuit ideology. This submission to authority includes strict obedience to one's spiritual superiors- the greatest being the pope as head of the Catholic hierarchy- another integral tenet to the Jesuit founder. Ignatius felt stark vicissitudes from consolation to utter despair at Manresa. He experienced grave "scruples", intense anxieties, as Luther had over his proximity to God and his spiritual abilities. Ignatius abandoned his extreme asceticism when he discovered, after periods of torment and anxiety, that God was moving him towards a greater spiritual understanding. By the time Ignatius left Manresa, he valued self-discipline rather than self-mortification

---

[84] Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises,* 220-225.
[85] Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life,* 28.

as a means to draw nearer to God. He had discerned- through meditations on Christ and holy saints, visions, illuminations, prayer of an internal sort inspired greatly by *devotio moderna*[86], and experiences helping the poor- a spiritual concept that he embodied and upon which he based his *Spiritual Exercises*. The influence of the *devotio moderna,* specifically of Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation* is clearly manifest three-fold method of meditative prayer. The three stages of meditation outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises* include preparation by ridding the mind of distractions and choosing a subject worthy of meditation, actually meditating through the application of the mind, judgment, and will, and finally, for some, directing the desires discovered in meditation to God. The novelty of Ignatius' *Exercises* is due to the way in which he organized his spirituality- to be administered by a trained individual, to be undertaken according to a specific method, to be given to any and all seeking a stronger faith, to be modified according to the situation and ability of the individual. His spirituality and systematic approach thereto were explicitly designed to invigorate the church by enticing its constituents to a greater depth of faith and spiritual understanding. His spiritual teachings were intended to equip all with the knowledge to participate, with the church and its sacraments, in the attainment of God's saving grace.

Ignatius' accounts of his own spiritual experiences, contained in his autobiography, are beneficial to properly understanding his place in the realm of Spanish spirituality. As previously mentioned, Ignatius' wrote and spoke of experiences with God. In his autobiography, he set out five points that God had revealed to him by treating Ignatius "'just as a schoolmaster treats a little boy when he teaches him.'"[87] These five

[86] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 46.
[87] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola,* 37-40.

points were arrived at by visions and illuminations from God. One vision that he received caused him to feel immense devotion when praying to the Trinity The vision was of the Holy Trinity beneath three keys that indicate musical notes in a single harmony; this harmony is representative of the three parts of the trinity, all of which he saw as necessary to a faithful life. He writes of a time in Manresa that is indicative of his spiritual sentiments and experiences:

> As he sat, the eyes of his understanding began to open. He beheld no vision, but he saw and understood many things, spiritual as well as those concerning faith and learning. This took place with so great an illumination that these things appeared to be something altogether new. He cannot point out the particulars of what he then understood, although they were many, except that he received a great illumination in his understanding.[88]

Not only does this exemplify a mystical experience in the form of a divine illumination, but it also touches on the theme of two types of knowledge that were nearly ubiquitous at the time. He has distinguished between spiritual understanding and that attained by learning. At this time, he was still a layperson, yet he claimed, in very traditional mystical language, that he was privy to God's communication. This is so very tied into his spirituality and life mission. He sought to draw all closer to the presence of God and the lifestyle of Jesus. He did not teach a systematic path so that all could work to commune with God in the way that he had, through visions and illuminations. Rather, he used his insights to instigate his mission aimed at developing the souls of all persons, so that they would understand their salvation and the great gift he saw God had given them in the

[88] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola,* 37-40.

form of Jesus. His devotion to the trinity is relevant to his mission, as all three members were equally significant components in the salvation of the faithful. God, the creator and redeemer, had sent his son in corporeal form to establish the traditions of the church and to open the gates of heaven to those who followed the prescribed way. These tenets were the essence of Catholicism and his emphasis was simply repetition. Conversely, although the Catholic faith believed in the existence and importance of the Holy Spirit, this aspect of the religion was not a focal point in the church's popular teaching and preaching. Ignatius followed the trend of forbearers from the earliest days of Catholic tradition in his attentiveness to the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the faithful. Hence, a great deal of his directives, particularly the *Spiritual Exercises,* attempt to raise individuals' consciousnesses to matters of the spirit. This is explicitly revealed in Ignatius' account of his life:

> In Manresa the pilgrim had met a friar, a very spiritual man; he wanted to stay with him to learn and to be able to give himself more easily to the spirit and also to be of help to souls...While at Alcala he was busy giving spiritual exercises and teaching Christian doctrine and in doing so brought forth fruit for the glory of God. There were many persons who came to a full knowledge and delight in spiritual things.[89]

Ignatius participated in preaching, in line with the trends of mendicants in the late medieval era, and guided the populous in spiritual development. The degree of religious democratization, which occurred with increasing frequency in this era, as the laity became more involved in the spiritual practice of their faith, was ominously threatening to the church hierarchy; yet, it was a principal goal of Ignatius' evangelical efforts.

[89] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola,* 59-65.

However, he did not teach the masses to seek union with God or to elevate their own understanding above that propagated by the church.

Ignatius takes care in all his works to instruct those who feel guided by their souls into divinely bestowed knowledge that they must measure such experiences against the tradition of the Catholic Church. He directs individuals' who believe they have derived God's insights in meditation in the second week of the *Exercises*' section on *Rules for the Discernment of Spirits* to be wary of fallacious spiritual understandings. He exhorts such individuals to ponder whether the insights have come from God or from evil and deceptive spirits. In a letter to Teresa of Avila, who practiced mental prayer and later received visitations and knowledge she believed to be from God, Ignatius wrote:

> It often happens that our Lord moves and impels our soul to one particular course or another by laying it open- that is, speaking within it without the sound of any voice, raising it all to his divine love, without our being able to resist what he suggests, even if we wanted to do so. In accepting such suggestions, we must of necessity be in conformity with the Commandments, the precepts of the Church, obedient to our superiors and full of complete humility, for the same divine spirit is in us all.

The substance of Ignatius' spirituality is the cultivation of the souls of the Catholic faithful so that, with the authoritative Catholic tradition as their staple, they may conduct themselves with the love and understanding of God's will.

When the Jesuits set out as an organized Society they were laden with papal support and emphatic approval of their way of life and mission. The final portion of Paul III's apostolic letter evidences the lofty hopes he held for the Society:

> Since we have read this form of life of yours, contained in the above five decrees, and have judged that it would be suitable for the spiritual growth of your Society and the rest of the Christian flock whose care falls upon us, by the power of these presents we declare it to be worthy of praise, and by our apostolic authority we approve it, we bless it, we validate it, and receive it under the protection of this Holy See and confirm it, granting you the faculties to establish particular Constitutions for yourselves that you judge to be in accordance with the end of your Society and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ and the help of the neighbor. Press on, therefore, beloved sons in Christ, follow your call whithersoever the Holy Spirit leads you, and the vineyard of the Lord from now on, under the protection of this Holy See, work with your heart like good vinedressers, with our Lord Jesus Christ on your side, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit God forever and ever. Amen.[90]

Pope Paul III and many of those who had seen or experienced the spiritual efficacy of Ignatius and his companions' ministry recognized the potential service the Jesuits could provide for the cause of the Catholic Church. The life of Ignatius and his spiritual growth shaped the spirituality and mission of the Society of Jesus. Further, the experiences shared by the companions in their earlier work led them to Rome and the founding of the order. The discussion of these elements is absolutely relevant to the role of the Jesuits in Catholic reform, for it was this unique process of creation and organization that made the Jesuits so influential in Catholic renewal.

---

[90] Conwell, *Impelling the Spirit*, 401-421.

V. THE JESUITS AS THE IDEAL INSTRUMENTS FOR CATHOLIC REFORM

Because of the Jesuit emphasis on obedience to superiors, most clearly evidenced in their fourth vow of obedience to the pope, their strictly hierarchical organization, their spirituality, and their pastoral techniques, they were well suited for the demands of the latter sixteenth century. Even prior to the 'Catholic Reformation' referring to the period beginning with the Council of Trent, the Society possessed those qualities that characterize the essence of the reform movement. The Jesuit's relationship with Paul III was of great significance to the Order and the Catholic Church. When King Joam III of Portugal sought to Christianize his colonies in the Indies, the Jesuit Francis Xavier embarked on the mission with Paul III's support. Xavier lived the remainder of his life outside Europe engaged in the work of establishing Catholicism in newly discovered places.[91] The Jesuit desire and willingness to travel the world for the propagation of the Catholic Church, in the service of the pope, is a static feature of the Order. The Jesuit ideal was to minister indiscriminately; they were to serve the needy and particularly those who had fallen through the cracks of the European ecclesiastical system. Jeronimo Nadal wrote of pastoral care:

> The Society has the care of those souls for whom either there is nobody to care or, if somebody ought to care, the care is negligent. This is the reason for the founding of the Society. This is its strength. This is its dignity in the Church.[92]

---

[91] Stewart Rose, *Ignatius Loyola and the Early Jesuits,* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1871), 214-222.
[92] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits,* 73.

This excerpt is illustrative of the Order's attitude: service in God's will, often revealed through the commands of a superior; dedication to the pope as Christ's Vicar and head of his church; caring for souls and defending the Catholic Church. Yet, the Jesuits followed their ideals without moving into ecclesiastical positions. They stood in stark contrast to the embellished powers and positions of high-ranking clergy with their simplistic lifestyle and grounded activities. The Constitution guaranteed that members of the Order would not participate in the benefice system, which was an area of great ecclesiastical corruption. This facet of the Constitution disallowed Jesuits from presiding over benefices and acting as parish priests.[93] Therefore, the Jesuits were closely involved with the pope, and were imperative to the spread and renewal of Catholicism while remained detached from ecclesiastical functions. The Jesuits were, in all aspects, exactly what was needed to perpetuate the Catholic Church in the latter sixteenth century.

The Society of Jesus exemplifies much of what was sought in the reformation decrees promulgated at the Council of Trent. Although the Jesuits played no authoritative role in the proceedings of the Council of Trent, the proceedings and decisions of the council had ramifications for Catholicism and the role of the Jesuits. The Society's method of operation and spiritual composition lay outside the realm of the ecclesiastical abuses that the council aimed to reform. The accomplishments of the council fostered the beginnings of reform, the spirit of which already existed in the Society. The Council of Trent marks a period of transition for the Catholic Church through which it gained greater organization and standards of care, in addition to clarifying its stance against Protestant disbelief. Among the greatest sources of ecclesiastical abuse and criticism was the practice of patronage, whereby the papal curia bestowed benefices with high financial

[93] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits,* 73.

gains to clerics who did not necessarily reside therein. Through this system, the pope was able to maintain his influence and revenues. The costs, however, were financial burdens on populations and poor pastoral care, among other things. To reconsider the ecclesiastical organization implicitly made the papacy susceptible to diminished power and authority. The previously mentioned *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia* of 1537, drawn up at the behest of Paul III, clearly outlines the problems innate in the present administrative system. The greatest problems noted are the need for better qualified bishops and priests, a reduction in the practice of giving benefices for reasons irrelevant to pastoral care, eradication of the individual hoarding of incomes by clerics, greater autonomy in discipline for bishops within their dioceses, and the like, most pertinent to practices of the uppermost sector of ecclesiastical authorities.[94] The *Consilium* highlighted the most blatant and damaging inadequacies of the pontiff and its administration. To enact reform on a scale that would correct these problems would require a massive restructuring of the Catholic hierarchy. This did not happen in the pontificate of Paul III, although he was responsible for the Council of Trent. This council had three express aims including to clarify definitions of doctrines countered by Protestant claims, to unify the church in peace and orthodoxy, and to reform the church in problem areas.[95] The Catholic Church was not reinvigorated by a dramatic transformation of its precepts and machinations. Instead, the renewal came from a new spirit of dedication to the cause- in attitude and practice- that embraced the pastoral needs of the era and was legitimized and enforced in a systematic manner; the Jesuits had the systematization and composition that the council and the spirit of renewal called for. The

---

[94] John C. Olin, *The Catholic Reformation: Savaronola to Ignatius Loyola,* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969), 182-197.
[95] Olin, *Catholic Reform*, 23-37.

events of the council are absolutely relevant to the role of the Jesuits in Catholic reform, and so will be outlined for later discussion.

At the time of the council's commencement, Christendom was divided between politically legitimized Protestant territories in Germany, the independent English church, and Catholic Europe. The most pressing concerns for the Council were related to either heresy or reform; although linked, these two required different discussions and resolutions and so had to be weighed against each other to determine precedence. To focus upon heresy by redefining orthodoxy and speaking against all deviant ideologies meant a more reactionary approach in which repression would be a tactic as the church embattled itself with heterodoxy and Protestantism to achieve dominion. Inherent in this agenda was the possibility of greater losses by failing to consolidate and reform the extant church. To focus on reform meant that the church would gather the various ecclesiastical heads and formulate a solution to best address its problems and reorganize itself for better functioning. Despite the painfully manifest presence of Protestantism with its threat to Catholicism, it was not until 1544 that Paul III issued a bull calling for a church council. His *Laetare Hierusalem* and the eventual Council of Trent in 1545 was late in coming due to numerous impeding factors. High on the list of these factors was the pope's reluctance to instate a church council. Since the period of conciliarism's popularity, the papacy had worked to free itself from the entanglements of conciliar preeminence in ecclesiastical matters. Paul III, like many of his predecessors, had fought to reestablish the power of the papacy and feared that a council would take the future of the church out of his hands and when he finally called for it, he believed it should be held in Italy. Another complication was Charles V's agenda, which he was able to advance

because of his immense political power and his central role in fighting Protestantism. He insisted that the Council take place in his Empire because he was trying to negotiate with Protestants to resolve the schism in his realm. Francis I of France and Charles V were fighting over territory and Francis I also had other demands for the location of the council.[96] Trent was finally decided upon as the region for the council. Trent was between the Holy Roman Empire and Italy and though the language was mostly Italian, the city belonged to Charles' Empire.[97]

The Council of Trent actually took place in three different installments, the first of which opened December 13, 1545; here the procedure was decided upon as were the chief points of consideration. The pope had sent three cardinals as papal legates, Giovanni del Monte, Marcello Cervini, and Reginald Pole; all were cognizant of the importance of addressing reforms and Pole was a particularly active reformer. The procedure agreed upon dictated that the legates were to propose the issues to be ruled upon and the *congregatio theologorum minorum* or ecclesiastical consultors would write them out. These items were then to be discussed by *congregatio proelatorum theologorum* and *congregatio proelatorum canon istarum* or dogmatic and canonical specialists before being discussed in specifics and ruled upon in the *congregatio generalis*, general council. An initial issue arose over whether church reform or church doctrine should be given precedence in discussion; the council ruled that both would be handled all throughout the process.[98] During this first phase they ruled that the Bible as well as church tradition were God's revealed standards. They supported the Vulgate as

---

[96] Herbert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent: Volume I,* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1949), 446-489.
[97] Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal.*
[98] Catholic Encyclopedia Online

the true text to be used in debates and sermons; the issue of translation into vernaculars was not decided upon. Charles V and his representatives did not want the council to issue statements on dogma because he held the hope of reconciliation with the Protestants and felt such decrees would deepen the division. Nonetheless, church doctrine was promulgated regarding justification, original sin, the sacraments in general, baptism and confirmation in specific, as well as a decree outlining false doctrines that aimed directly at Protestant claims. Justification *sola fide,* or by faith alone, was a central component of Luther's religion. This view of justification removed the role of sacraments and works in the attainment of salvation. The council ruled that justification was dual faceted process wherein faith and sacramental observance with the Catholic stress on works of charity were requisite. As for reform, Paul III and his legates saw the council's prerogative to delineate abuses and appropriate amendments as a threat to papal supremacy and so sought to minimize rulings of this sort. Here too, the council did not bend to the demands of an institutional head. The main objective in reform was to correct problem areas in ecclesiastical organization and practice for the improvement of pastoral care. Ecclesiastical administration, religious orders, clerical training, financial abuses, pluralism and absenteeism were serious points in the discussions. One of the most prominent issues was that of Episcopal residency. Bishops often obtained multiple benefices and then placed other individuals in charge of their oversight while continuing to collect revenues though in residence at a different location. Popes often permitted bishops to appoint others to oversee their benefices when they were engaged in papal affairs. So, if the council ruled against the rectitude of this practice, it would effectively assert its authority over that of the papacy. In the end, no conclusions on this area of

reform were reached. The council was postponed in 1547 after having defined integral aspects of Catholic doctrine and condemning a number of Protestant beliefs. Charles V's war with the Smalkaldic League, which had experienced early successes, contributed to the hiatus, as did a Typhus outbreak at Trent.[99]

The Council met again from 1551 to 1552 under Julius III with his bull *Quum ad tollenda*. The decrees of this phase of the Council of Trent had definitive ramifications for Charles V's campaing to reintegrate the Protestants. The Council ruled in affirmation of transubstantiation and Extreme Unction, which opposed primary constituents of Protestant theology. Decrees on ecclesiastical discipline and reform were discussed and debated, but no major conclusions were propounded in final form. The Council was again interrupted as another Protestant development commanded the attention of the Holy Roman Emperor. Charles V had reached an agreement with Protestants at the Diet of Augsburg in 1548. However, this was a transient unity and at the 1555 Peace of Augsburg Emperor Ferdinand I acknowledged the legality of Lutheranism.[100] Following the close of the Council, popes undertook various reform efforts. The Jesuits Lainez and Salmeron had been sent as papal representatives to negotiate in the interest of the papacy. Julius III was an enthusiastic supporter of this order and its influence is evident in his reform initiatives.[101] Notably, in 1552 Julius III gathered cardinals to discuss and execute administerial reform. As a result of their deliberations and input on such issues as religious orders and duties of residence, Julius III approved the bull *Varietas temporum*.[102] But, this bull was never publicized and the next period of papal reform was

---

[99] Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 10-25.
[100] G.R. Elton, *Reformation Europe 1517- 1559*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1963, 1999), 188-189.
[101] Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 388-401.
[102] Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 10-25.

under Paul IV. Paul IV was a founder of the Theatine Order[103] in 1524, which is indicative of his zeal for the apostolic life. During his papacy, he was harshly repressive and suspicious. He adamantly disliked the Jesuits and considered abolishing the order. He accused and imprisoned several prominent Catholic cardinals and issued a strict Index of Forbidden Books that included humanist as well as Protestant denunciations. This Index also prohibited the use of vernacular Bibles, a seemingly counterproductive measure in the changing religious world. Paul IV was not constructive to the attempt by recent ecclesiastics to bring the church up to speed with the necessities of the era. His efforts resembled those of earlier popes who sought to eradicate the novel considerations of the period. Thus, his papacy aimed at an uncompromising return to previously unsuccessful ways and reduced the accomplishments that had been made.[104] After his death in 1559 the possibility of a meeting of the council was renewed.

In 1562 Pius IV reconvened the Council in what would be its last occurrence. He was finally able to do so because the 1559 Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis had ended the dynastic wars in Western Europe. But, Calvinism was growing in Europe and most aggressively in France. Calvinism had been left out of the Peace of Augsburg's reconciliation between Roman Catholic and Lutheran Princes. Still the papacy reconvened the council with the support of its greatest political ally, Spain- ruled at this time by Philip II.[105] The situation in France appeared to be gravely dangerous to the Catholic Church, particularly in light of Lutheran political success in the Holy Roman Empire. France had not been involved in the previous meetings of the Council of Trent and so had not expressly condoned its determinations. Many attendant at the council were

---

[103] Gleason, "Catholic Reformation", 317-345.
[104] Gleason, "Catholic Reformation", 317-345.
[105] J.H. Elliott, *Europe Divided: 1559-1598, 2nd Edition,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1968, 2000), 3-23.

apprehensive that the French would have a council of their own that was irrespective of the findings at Trent. Although a national council was called in 1561, it did not agree upon its own reforms and concessions to the Calvinists. Instead, French bishops joined the Catholic Council in 1561.[106] In 1562 The French Wars of Religion broke out, which lasted until 1598. However, the council was already underway and nearing its end; thus, the issue of Calvinism was not give priority. The source of the greatest controversy at this meeting was whether the provision that bishops must reside in their benefices was due to canon law or to divine ordinance. Both sides argued heatedly on this issue, for the real debate had to do with ecclesiastical hierarchy itself. If the ecclesiastical duty to reside in a given see came from God rather than from the pope, then the pope had no right to issue exemptions from that duty.[107] And if bishops had to stay in their benefices, the power of the papacy would be greatly diminished, as the dispensation of these offices was a tremendous benefit. The Jesuits, particularly Alfonso Salmeron, were significant figures in this final chapter at Trent. Salmeron and other Spanish theologians advanced the cause that God had given bishops their ordination as overseers of religious practice within their benefices; according to this view the pope only controlled which benefice a bishop was to care for.[108] At the end of this final period at Trent, the church felt itself prepared to engage in its newly reassessed and confirmed proper functions. In this context, the Jesuits were the suitably formed, previously extant, and decidedly potent, force for Catholic reinvigoration.

The *Formula of the Institute*, found at the opening of the Jesuit *Constitutions* and in the bull of the order's approbation, serves as a mission statement for the order. Ignatius

---

[106] Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal,* 10-25.
[107] Pierre Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation,* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1963), 64-91.
[108] Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal,* 10-25.

and his early companions wrote this document prior to their official founding, and it was later submitted for papal approval. This is a document of central importance, for it reveals the Jesuit purpose:

> To strive especially for the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine, by means of public preaching, lectures, and any other ministration whatsoever of the word of God, and further by means of the Spiritual Exercises, the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity, and the spiritual consolations of Christ's faithful, through hearing confessions and administering the other sacraments. Moreover, this society should show itself no less useful in reconciling the estranged, in holily assisting and serving those who are found in prisons or hospitals, and indeed in performing any other works of charity, according to what will seem expedient for the glory of God and the common good.[109]

This formative writing elucidates the essence of the Society of Jesus. The goals, activities, and spirit of the Jesuits, reflected in this document, situated them as viable instruments of Catholic reform. Upon examining the ecclesiastical problems and ensuing reform decrees, the true significance of the Jesuits in the era of their founding becomes strikingly evident; thus, the role they played in Catholic reinvigoration can be understood.

In considering the substance of the reform decrees with the Jesuits, it is evident that the Society fulfilled the tasks of ministry so badly needed by the church hierarchy. A primary topic at the council was reform of the ecclesiastical system- mostly concerned

---

[109] George E. Ganss transl., *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus [by] Saint Ignatius Loyola*, (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), 63-73.

with the quality and behavior of its authorities as enabled by its structure. The admonition of the clergy in the first reformation decree of the council is echoed and appended throughout later decrees; this first reformation decree, from chapter I of the sixth session of Trent's first convening, states:

> The same sacred and holy Synod,- the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding,- wishes to apply itself to restore ecclesiastical discipline, which is exceedingly relaxed... admonishes all those who, under whatsoever name and title, are set over any patriarchal, primatial, metropolitan, and cathedral churches, and hereby accounts all such admonished, that, taking heed to themselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed them to rule the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, they be vigilant, as the Apostle enjoins, that they labor in all things, and fulfil their ministry: but let them know, that fulfil they cannot, if like hirelings they abandon the flock, committed to them, and apply not themselves to the keeping of their own sheep.[110]

In addition to the reference to laxity in discipline, is a condemnation of the gross neglect in pastoral care by those who hold benefices but do not reside within them, nor make regular visitations. In direct contrast to the ecclesiastical neglect and greed that is chastised in this decree and throughout the council's decrees are the Jesuits. Here it is relevant to reiterate the Jesuit's constitutional provision that no member of the Order was permitted to preside over a benefice or a parish. Thus, they were safeguarded against acquiring a position that readily enabled shortcomings in ministerial obligations. The majority of the reformation decrees aim to improve some aspect of the quality of care

[110] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct06.html

practiced by bishops and other ecclesiastical figures. Benefices were prone to abuse mainly because of the potential for great personal wealth with little activity. Papal dispensations were available with relative ease to those who held multiple benefices. In the case of bishops' non-residence, they were to appoint a vicar to fulfill their duties. However, before reforms were seriously enforced by the popes during Trent and beyond, the bishops often kept the income of the benefices and left incompetent individuals to care for their benefices. The rulings at Trent not only demanded that the practice of retaining multiple benefices be more tightly regulated and curbed where possible, they also addressed the financial aspect. The chapter I Reformation decree at the twenty-third session of Trent states: "the holders of several Benefices with cure of souls shall exhibit their dispensations to the Ordinary, who shall provide the churches with a vicar, assigning a suitable portion of the fruits."[111] This decree illustrates Trent's attentiveness to making sure that the incomes of benefices were used in the care thereof. The decrees of the Council of Trent were designed to be carried out by the officials of the church. Because officials had been the veritable source of abuse and neglect, the council took steps to create greater centralization and oversight procedures. Bishops and other ecclesiastical officials were to be held accountable for their actions by other arms of the hierarchy. Chapter II of the reform decrees issued at Trent's twenty-fourth session follows:

> A Provincial Synod [is] to be celebrated every third year, a Diocesan Synod every year... Provincial Synods, wheresoever they have been omitted, shall be renewed for the regulating of morals, the correcting of

[111] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct06.html

> excesses, the composing of controversies, and for other purposes allowed by the canons... Patriarchs, Primates, metropolitans, and bishops shall not fail to visit their respective dioceses... the principle object of these visitations shall be to lead to sound and orthodox doctrine, by banishing heresies; to maintain good morals, and to correct such as are evil.[112]

The excerpt echoes the sentiment of the first citation, which noted the role of the Ordinary in overseeing that a suitable vicar is chosen and that this vicar receives funds for his responsibilities. Here visitations and Synods are required so that a system is in place and functioning to ensure that individuals are engaging in their assigned tasks. Throughout the council, the quality of ecclesiastical officials, as well as their financial activities and lifestyle were basic concerns.

Not only were the Jesuits constitutionally prohibited from assuming benefices and the like, but they were also organized into a system that was not conducive to the problems that plagued the traditional hierarchy. Their society was based very much on streamlined authority. The Jesuits' highly centralized government, their rigorous indoctrination process, their educational demands, their emphasis on continual inner renewal, and their in-depth selective methods ensured that their members would be of good quality. The *Constitutions* demand complete obedience to superiors. The ultimate authority in the Society rests in the general congregation, the body that elects the general. Ignatius was the first general of the Jesuits and, according to the *Constitutions*, the general holds this position for the entirety of his life. The only time the general congregation was sure to meet was upon the death of a general, at which time a new one was to be elected. The Society had this democratic basis, but in reality the general held

[112] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct24.html

complete administrative and spiritual authority. The general chose the provincial, whose task it was to oversee the Society in a country or a given area. The general also chose local superiors, who were under the authority of the provincials. These local superiors served in colleges, as masters of novices, as provosts of professed houses, and in other administrative functions. The general held the only position that was for life; all other positions were more constrained by terms. There were four categories of members of the Society. First there were novices who had not yet taken vows and were taught the spirit of the Order and the disciplines of the lifestyle. After two years such individuals made simple vows, but were not yet members of the Society. Then, if they wanted to join the priesthood, they began formal studies that lasted from three to fifteen years. They usually had to complete a time of teaching and become priests, followed by a third novitiate year. After being evaluated and approved and having attained the Doctor of Theology degree, they could become professed members. The vows to be professed were the traditional religious vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, as well as the Jesuit fourth vow of obedience to the pope. Only the professed members functioned as generals, provincials and superiors, as they had undergone rigorous training both in the educational sphere and in the tenets of the Society. The structure of the Society, with its requirements for membership, was clearly organized such that those who were not devoted to their mission were not tolerated. The chain of authority did not tolerate insufficiency and members that did not exhibit the Jesuit ideal were treated accordingly. Further, the process of education and training in the Jesuit life that was required for members ensured a Society conformed to the enactment of its ideals.

In contrast to the apparent inadequacy of many bishops, pastors, and cardinals, the educational and personal requirements of Jesuit members promoted qualified individuals to prominent positions. The conduct, education, and spiritual interest of ecclesiastical persons were the object of much discussion at Trent. Several decrees to this effect were promulgated, indicating how and why to remedy the problem of pastoral inefficacy. Chapter I of the reform decrees at Trent's twenty-fourth session was addressed to those responsible for appointing bishops, priests, and cardinals, the council wrote:

> As regards all and each of those who have, in any way, any right from the Apostolic See, or who have otherwise have a part, in the promotion of those to be set over churches... the holy Synod exhorts and admonishes them, that they above all things bear in mind that they cannot do anything more conducive to the glory of God, and the salvation of the people, than to study to promote good pastors, and such as are capable of governing the church; and that they sin mortally, becoming partakers in others' sins, unless they carefully endeavor that those be promoted whom they themselves judge the most worthy of, and useful to, the church, not guided by entreaties or human affection, or the solicitation of pretenders; but by the merits if the individuals require at their hands.[113]

This excerpt touches on the grave problem of uninterested and unqualified bishops that were often appointed for reasons entirely irrelevant to the spiritual and religious requirements of the office. In order to carry out true reforms that would make a recognizable difference in the lives of the laity, the council sought to create a hierarchy that was attuned to the needs of pastoral care and administration. Likewise, they made

[113] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct24.html

provisions for a better-educated and more knowledgeable pastoral administration- in matters of Catholic faith and spirituality; chapter XVIII of Trent's reform statements from the twenty-third session reads:

> The holy Synod ordains, that all cathedral, metropolitan, and other churches greater than these, shall be bound, each according to its means and the extent of the diocese, to maintain, to educate religiously, and to train in ecclesiastical discipline, a certain number of youths of their city and diocese, or, if that number cannot be met with there, of that province, in a college to be chosen by the bishop for this purpose near the said churches, or in some other suitable place... that so this college may be a perpetual seminary of ministers of God.[114]

This new requirement was a significant advance for the church in terms of educating those suitable for ecclesiastical offices. Although its enforcement would be determined by later popes, this provision promised to enrich the standard of care for the laity. From the time of its founding, the Society of Jesus had educational requirements in place that ensured those responsible for the care of the laity had the background to properly engage in pastoral activities. Further, the *Constitutions* set out a process for admitting new members that carefully considered their qualifications and desire for the ministry. An examination of the Jesuit organization and requirements of members further elucidates the significance of the Society in answering the needs expressed at Trent.

Beginning with the *Formula of the Institute,* the *Constitutions* explicate the Jesuits' system of operation and the requirements of life in the Society. The *Formula* itself was to be read and understood by anyone seeking entrance into the Society, so that

[114] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct23.html

he would know the nature of what would be expected of him. Following the *Formula* is the *General Examen*, which is designed for examining applicants who wish to be admitted. It is composed of a number of questions directed at the applicant in order to find out whether or not he is appropriate for the religious life of the Society. The questions inquire about his parents, their lives, their character, and then about the applicants own life, his character, his qualifications, and his motives. Motives are an important consideration in this section; the Society sought to admit only those who truly desired to be a part of their ministry. This section also delineates the demands of the Jesuit life, the spirit of humility and obedience at the heart of the Order's spirituality, and the tests that an individual must undergo along the way to being admitted.[115] If an individual is accepted, he is to spend ten days pondering the rules, procedure, and lifestyle that he will choose. After this, he is to meditate upon all that he has been exposed to and to be certain that his motives and spirit are aligned with what will be required of him. He is then able to begin as a novice, as detailed in the *Constitutions*. There are two types of novices, those directed at becoming priests, and then those who will serve the Society in domestic and other ways. Novices undergo the *Spiritual Exercises*, engage in domestic labor, spend months serving the in hospitals. They are also sent on a pilgrimage with no resources, in order to prepare them for possible future missions wherein they will have to beg for sustenance. Meditation is also a central aspect of the novitiate and is part of daily routine. Obedience is chiefly stressed during the novitiate, as indicated by Ignatius in a letter to a master of novices:

[115] Sources for the *Formula* and *General Examen*: Ganss, *Constitutions*; De Guibert, *The Jesuits*, 139-145; Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life*, 68-116.

> With regard to those already admitted, I have this to remark, that what he most carefully keeps in mind, and the non-observance of which he most keenly deplores is not serious sin, as we may suppose one to be free of that, but obedience, which should extend, not only to the carrying out of an order but even to making the superior's will and judgment one's own in everything where one can be sure there is no sin.[116]

Throughout the novitiate period novices are placed in situations that will later be part of their activities so that their superiors can observe their abilities.[117] At any time during a member's life they may be dismissed from the Order, particularly if they are found to be unsuitable during the novitiate.

Part II of the *Constitutions* discusses dismissal from the Society. The Jesuits were notable in their policy for dismissal, as their policy was the most conducive to exercising the power of dismissal. Four reasons are given for which an individual may be dismissed. First, if his maintenance in the Society would not honor God, he can be released. Second, if his membership runs counter to the good of the Jesuits, he may be let go. Third, if it is not good for the individual and the Jesuits, again, he may be dismissed. Finally, if his presence in the Society is detrimental to individuals outside the Society, he can be sent away.[118] Thus, the superiors of the Society have the ability, if an above condition is met, to dismiss a member of the Society who, for whatever reason, does not meet the standards of the Order. In a letter to the provincial of Portugal in 1552, Ignatius wrote regarding dismissals:

---

[116] Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life*, 86-87.
[117] Ganss, *Constitutions*; De Guibert, *The Jesuits*, 96-105.
[118] Ganss, *Constitutions*, 210-217.

> This matter seems to have gone so far because of the fault of whose duty it was to correct it, but who failed to do so. May God our Lord forgive him! How much better would it have been to remove from the Society a diseased member and protect the healthy, than to allow it to remain and infect with so serious a disease many others by example and association. On another occasion I have written how gratified I was that Master Leonard in Cologne had dismissed nine or ten together who had done wrong... If there is anyone who is unwilling to obey you- and I say this, not to you alone but to any of the superiors or local rectors in Portugal- do one of two things: either dismiss him from the Society, or send him here to Rome if you think that a particular individual can be helped by such a change to become a true servant of Christ our Lord.[119]

This letter makes it clear that the policy of dismissal was indeed utilized and encouraged. Ignatius intended the Jesuits to be comprised of men who were truly dedicated to the cause of the Society, which entailed absolute adherence to the integral tenet of obedience. The Jesuits were to be one in spirituality and comportment. Those who deviated from this core were not tolerated as they detracted from the Society in damaging ways- not only were they harmful to those within the Society, but they also interacted with the laity. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, had no such readily enforceable standards through which they could regulate the appropriateness of one engaged in spiritual activities. The Council of Trent did make pronouncements in the attempt to create such checks on ecclesiastical officials, but the centralization and systematic procedure did not exist to regulate clerical members in the efficacious fashion of the Jesuits. The church faced the

[119] Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life*, 83.

dual problem of poorly educated and unfit ministerial workers, as well as an ineffective system to remove unsuitable ecclesiastical members. In addition to executable provisions for dismissal, the Society of Jesus had an educational requirement and pastoral agenda built in to its constitutions.

Education was briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter as an issue discussed at the Council of Trent. The decree previously cited required all those presiding over areas of the laity to create an institute to educate future members of the clergy. The reformation decree documented in chapter I from the fifth session of the council implies the noxiousness of unlearned prelates:

> That the heavenly treasure of the sacred books, which the Holy Ghost has with the greatest liberality delivered unto men, may not lie neglected, [the holy Synod] hath ordained and decreed that,-- in those churches where there is found to be a prebend, prestimony, or other stipend under whatsoever name, destined for lecturers in sacred theology,-- the bishops, archbishops, primates, and other Ordinaries of those places shall force and compel, even by the subtraction of the fruits, those who hold such prebend, prestimony, or stipend, to expound and interpret the said Scripture... As to churches whose annual revenues are slight, and where any number of the clergy and laity is so small that a lectureship of Theology cannot be conveniently had therein, let them have as at least a master—to be chosen by the bishop, with the advice of the chapter—to teach grammar gratuitously to the clerics, and other poor scholars, that so they may afterwards, with God's blessing, pass on the said study of sacred

> Scripture... In monasteries also of monks, let there be in like manner a lecture on sacred Scripture... In the public colleges also, wherein a lectureship so honourable and the most necessary of all, has not hitherto been instituted, let it be established by the piety and charity of the most religious princes and governments, for the defence and increase of the Catholic faith, and the preservation and propagation of sound doctrine.[120]

Clerical learning was key to the perpetuation of Catholicism, as without this, the laity could not properly be ministered to, nor could either party truly understand their faith. Thus, the council determined to amend this failing by inculcating the clergy with at least the most elementary education. The fact that the council would be pacified by a very minimal education in grammar and scriptures indicates the gravity of the current situation. In the tradition of Ignatius' experience and those of his initial followers, learning was a fundamental ingredient to the religious life. The *Constitutions* require all members of the Society to study and learn the basic Catholic doctrines and their meanings- particularly the Sacraments,- Jesuit pastoral methods, prayer and meditation, Jesuit spirituality and missionary aims. And, those in Jesuit training who desire to become priests must become formed scholastics. In this phase the individual is to complete his schooling, obtain entrance into the priesthood, teach for a period, and then go through another year as a novitiate. This novitiate is called the 'tertianship' and while it lasts the individual is still on probationary terms. And then, usually after having attained a Doctorate of Theology, the individual may become a professed member of the Jesuits. These individuals hold the high-ranking positions and take the fourth vow of obedience to the pope. Those who do not follow the path to priesthood enter a third year

[120] http://history .hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct05.html

of novitiate directly after the first two and are examined. If found suitable, they take the religious vows and become formed coadjutors. In the 1546 bull *Exponi nobis,* Paul III allowed the Jesuits to have two classifications of members: 'spiritual and temporal coadjutors'. The spiritual coadjutors were the fully professed Jesuits, and the temporal coadjutors were those referred to as 'formed coadjutors'.[121] As a result of these constitutional provisions, highly learned members headed the Jesuit ranks, and even the temporal coadjutors received a practical education. The relationship between learning and preaching marks the broader significance of education.

Preaching was the essential function of ecclesiastical prelates in late medieval religious orders. The lack of education, and in some cases, negligence on the part of many religious officials had contributed to a perceptible decline in preaching and teaching, the objectives of spiritual care. All recognized the importance of preaching as an imperative means of Catholic renewal. Those present at Trent similarly recognized this and issued a reform declaration, found in chapter II from the fifth session:

> But seeing that the preaching of the Gospel is no less necessary to the Christian Commonwealth than the reading thereof; and whereas this is the principal duty of bishops; the same holy Synod that hath resolved and decreed, that all bishops, archbishops, and primates, and all other prelates of the churches be bound personally—if they be not lawfully hindered—to preach the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ... Archbishops, curates, and all those who in any manner soever hold any parochial, or other, churches, which have the cure of souls, shall, at least on the Lord's Days, and solemn feasts, or if they be lawfully hindered, by others who are

[121] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits,* 345-347.

> competent, feed the people committed to them, with wholesome words, according to their own capacity, and that of their people; by teaching them the things which it is necessary for all to knew unto salvation, and by announcing to them with briefness and plainness of discourse, the vices which they must avoid, and the virtues which they must follow after, that they may escape everlasting punishment, and obtain the glory of heaven.[122]

The centrality of preaching is upheld here, along with its practical justification: to teach the laity the basics of their faith and salvation. On Sundays and holidays ecclesiastical prelates are bound to preach and minister to the masses under their supervision. Preaching is the heart of the Society of Jesus. Ignatius' own life, after his conversion, was based upon ministering to the souls of others. He gained the loyal companions that assisted him in founding the Order by teaching them inner renewal through the *Exercises.* In the *Formula*, which professes the essence of the Jesuits, preaching is the first activity listed.[123] Ignatius' encounters with the Inquisition, afterall, had occurred as a result of his preaching. In his *Autobiography* Ignatius cites ministering to others as his motivation to become educated; he writes: "After the pilgrim realized that it was not God's will that he remain in Jerusalem, he continually pondered within himself what he ought to do. At last he inclined more to study for some time so he would be able to help souls, and he decided to go to Barcelona."[124] As is typical in the founding of the Jesuits, preaching was pivotal to the Jesuit identity, just as it was to Ignatius. A segment of Jeronimo Nadal's journal reflects the Jesuit's esteem for preaching:

---

[122] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct05.html
[123] Ganss, *Constitutions.*
[124] O'Callaghan, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 54.

> Power in the Spirit means to speak from the heart and to speak with the forceful grace of the sacred word... The power of the Gospel cannot be explained by the words we utter, but it can be felt or relished or understood in heart and spirit... It is a great grace and excellent office in the church of God to be ministers of the Word of God. We know in the Spirit, my brothers, that Christ is also the infinite Word of God. We are ministers of that Word- for he sends us to preach; he teaches us; he is the Word inside us; he grants that we hear the Word of his teaching and know that it proceeds from him; he gives us our effectiveness, and he supplies love and divine power to our utterance.[125]

The Jesuits preaching of the word of God included scripture, teachings of the Catholic faith, and instructions on how to live a spiritually directed life.

The lessons that comprised Jesuit teachings were based upon the spirituality illustrated in the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions.* What they taught was very much aligned with the Catholic faith, although it was unique, and the Jesuit emphases matched those discussed at Trent. Several reformation decrees commanded ecclesiastics to teach the laity the scriptures, lessons on vices and virtue, the importance of the sacraments and the process of salvation as a joint endeavor through grace and works. Specifically, a reform pronouncement from chapters IV and VII mandated at the council's twenty-fourth session states:

> At least on the Lord's Day and other festivals, the children in every parish be carefully taught the rudiments of the faith, and obedience towards God and their parents... In order that the faithful may approach the reception of

[125] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits,* 102-103.

> the sacraments with greater reverence and devotion of mind, the holy Synod enjoins on all bishops, that, not only when they themselves are about to administer them to the people, they shall first explain, in a manner suited to the capacity of those who receive them, the efficacy and use of those sacraments, but shall endeavor that the same be done piously and prudently by every parish priest; and this even in the vernacular tongue.[126]

Without such instructions and care to ensure that all understood the beliefs and practices of their faith, individuals could not correctly live as Catholics. Protestantism had offered to many a clear and simple religion with enthusiastic proponents. The council decreed activities such as those listed above in order to involve the laity and imbue them with a greater understanding and sense of purpose. Throughout the converted life of Ignatius, to the initial years of the formal Society, the Jesuits had worked among populations to teach people the tenets of their faith and how to practice their religion. Pedro Ribadeneira, an early companion of Ignatius wrote of the founder's preaching and said it was, "'always an exhortation to good morals and to enter into oneself, and to arrive at a knowledge and love of God and prayer.'"[127] The Jesuits advised all to perform the sacraments of confession and communion on a weekly basis for the health of their soul. In addition to teaching the catechism and mode of salvation, the Jesuits taught individuals about the life of their soul. The specific emphases and practices of the Jesuits, described in their cardinal writings, equipped them with a unique spirituality that was highly effective in their ministry.

---

[126] http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct24.html
[127] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 27.

VI. THE JESUITS IN THE ACTIVITY OF CATHOLIC RENEWAL

At the time of their formal inception, the Jesuits continued in the vein of the pastoral work of Ignatius and his cofounders with the precepts that were developed during those initial experiences. The ministry of the Society was primarily concerned with preaching. All members had been through the *Spiritual Exercises* and were trained in the spirituality and aims of the Society. As the numbers grew and members were sent to various places throughout the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' world, centralized branches of the Order brought Catholic spirituality to the laity. The organization developed rapidly in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They maintained their central focus upon care of the souls of the laity even as they expanded in important areas of papal, theological, and educational importance. By 1541 Jesuit foundations were being established in various places throughout Europe, often at the request of a bishop or secular ruler. As the Jesuits spread, they became integral figures in the creation of an abundance of colleges, which particularly met the need implied in the Trent decree requiring bishops to build institutions of learning. The Jesuits developed a system of education that was rapidly dispersed and adopted where schools and colleges were built. Thus, they became the most important force in education at this time. With their proliferation came the ability to effect Jesuit spirituality in the hearts of those they served. In and outside of their schools, the Jesuits imparted the fundamental ideals of Ignatian spirituality. This was extremely amenable to the laity, many of whom had longed for inner renewal and piety within Catholicism. The bull of approval for the Jesuits provides a basis for understanding the order's aims and the manner in which they were enacted:

> Whoever shall desire to bear the arms of God under the banner of the Cross, and to serve the one God and the Roman Pontiff, His Vicar upon earth, in our society, which we wish to be called by the name of Jesus, having made a solemn vow of perpetual chastity, must purpose to become a member of a society principally instituted to work for the advancement of the faith by public preaching and the ministry of God's word, by spiritual exercises and works of charity, more particularly by grounding in Christian boys and unlettered persons, and by hearing the confessions of the faithful, aiming in all things their spiritual consolation. He must also act so as to have always before his eyes, first God, and then the plan of this Institute which is a definitive path that leads to Him... Above all things let them have at heart the instruction of boys and ignorant persons in the knowledge of Christian doctrine, of the Ten Commandments, and other such rudiments as shall be suitable.[128]

This portion of the bull *Regimine militantis ecclesiae* is the mission statement of the Jesuits. In fulfillment of these ideals, the Jesuits established themselves as an imperative source of Catholic renewal.

Just as Ignatius and his early companions had done in the years leading up to 1540, the formed Society led a rigorously active life of ministry. Members of the Order generally split up into couplets or triplets and went out to preach and lecture. Preaching was not novel, rather it had been popularized with the mendicant orders in the late-medieval era. Nonetheless, the preaching of the Jesuits, particularly on vices and virtues,

[128] This section of the bull is excerpted from Francesco C. Cesareo's "Quest for Identity: The Ideals of Jesuit Education in the Sixteenth Century" in: Christopher Chapple ed., *The Jesuit Tradition in Education and Missions,* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1993), 17-33.

garnered popularity and good repute for the Society. The Englishman responsible for the Rheims- Douay translation of the Bible wrote of the Jesuits particular efficacy in preaching while he was in Rome in 1576. Gregory Martin's account is excerpted in the Jesuit historian John O'Malley's work:

> And to heare the maner of the Italian preacher, with what a spirit he toucheth the hart, and moveth to compunction (for to that end they employ their talke and not in disputinge matters of controversie which, god be thanked, there needeth not) that is a singular joy and a marveilous edifying to a good Christian man... what shal a man heare but rebuking of vice, and exhorting to vertue, the fear of gods Justice, the hope of his mercie, the love of his benefites? These things are so handled with such a grace coming from the preachers mouth, that it calleth of al sortes great multitudes, and worketh in their hartes marvelous effectes... Jesuites, which desire leave of their superiours so to be occupied, and then going everyone with his fellow, and deviding them selves into these forsaid assembles, make the verie stal or bulke of some window their pulpet, and without al other ceremonies, only a Crucifixe in their hand or ready aboute them, they beginne some good matter of edification, agreeable to their audience, with ful streame of the plainest scriptures, and pike sentences of ancient fathers, and notable examples of former time, most sweetly exhorting to good life, and most terribly dehorting from al sinne and wickednesse, often setting before them the paines of hel, and the joyes of Heaven. As sone as they either heare his voice, or see him in the place, as

> many as are within that compasse and vew, gather rounde about him with great silence and attention, and with great fruite.[129]

Martin was clearly struck by the Jesuits preaching, in content and delivery; also related is some of the method and content of the Jesuit street preachers. According to the tenets of the Society and confirmed by the excerpted account, the Jesuits spoke rather plainly and on vices and virtues, usually groups of a few Jesuits. Whether preaching to crowds, engaging a few in conversation, visiting hospitals, and the like, the Jesuits were aided by the principles of their training, catechisms, and the *Spiritual Exercises*; the ideals of their ministry and the active life that was demanded combined with these assets to create an individualized and prolific ministry.

A defining feature of Jesuit pastoral activity was their willingness to adapt to the needs of those to whom they ministered. As the order grew and Jesuits were sent throughout the world, they were equipped with directions on how to customize their ministry to suit individuals in their care. In 1548 the *Spiritual Exercises* were printed for the first time, enabling greater circulation and use of the spiritual guide in Jesuit missions. Paul III had officially approved the work and so it was an acceptable tool.[130] The *Exercises* were designed to be administered by a 'master' who had been trained to guide others in such an important spiritual journey. The eighteenth "Observation" in the *Exercises* specifically instructs the master to adapt the guide according to the individual. Giving of the *Exercises* can range from the full spiritual retreat to a 'light' administration. The "Observation" states that for those who desire "some instruction and a certain level of peace of soul", a degree of teaching is appropriate. Among the suggested instructions

---

[129] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 97-98.
[130] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 127-129.

for these persons are how to examine one's conscience, an outline of some ways to pray-such as those taught in the first week, and the rudiments of the catechism. In keeping with the Jesuit stance on the sacraments and their importance to spiritual growth, spiritual advisors were also to encourage confession and communion on a weekly basis. Thus, as the Jesuits set out to fulfill their earthly missions, they had a flexible program with which they could accommodate the qualities of a given individual to make his experience more effective. People from all walks of life sought to perform the *Exercises* in large part due to the reputation of the Jesuits and the positive responses of those who had previously taken the *Exercises*. So many wanted to experience this Jesuit spiritual program that Jesuits began to administer them to multiple individuals at the same time. Because the *Exercises* were intended to be taken in a retreat environment such that one can give due focus to their soul's progress, the Jesuits built their first housing for men doing the *Exercises* at the college in Alcala in 1553. Buildings like this one were built in other places and by 1564 the Jesuits were instructed to make sure that most, if not all, students in Jesuit schools made the *Exercises*.[131] As the Jesuits went out and engaged in the activities of their ministry, they drew many to the Order in the process of spiritually guiding the masses.

The growth of the Jesuits in the years following their establishment reflects the appeal of their ministry and indicates the means by which it reached so many individuals throughout the known world, and also their increasing educational involvement. In 1556 there were about one thousand members and thirty-three colleges. In 1580, the Society had about five thousand members and one hundred forty four colleges. By 1615, these numbers had risen to thirteen thousand members and three hundred seventy two

[131] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 127-133.

colleges.[132] These statistics reveal the parallel growth of Jesuit schools with their numerical increases in members. Colleges were not initially a part of the Jesuit program, but by the second decade of their existence the Jesuits began to associate education with their primary ministries. One year prior to Ignatius' death, Polanco spoke for the founder in a 1555 letter saying, "Our father's intention is that, especially in these initial stages, the colleges must multiply rather than the houses."[133] In 1560 Polanco wrote another letter to the superiors of the Society, this time in Lainez's name:

> Generally speaking, there are two ways of helping our neighbors: one in the colleges through the education of youth in letters, learning and Christian life, and the second in every place to help every kind of person through sermons, confessions, and other means that accord with our customary way of proceeding... every Jesuit must bear his part of the burden of the schools.[134]

The Jesuits were an educated and highly organized group who quickly showed themselves to be effective ministers and teachers. In light of their successes in pastoral ministry and their willingness to travel according to the needs of ministry, they were increasingly called upon to take part in educational activities. The 1547 bull *Licet debitum* granted the Jesuits permission to teach all disciplines, including theology, anywhere they saw fit to do so. This was a very liberal approbation for the times, and ensured the Jesuits' continued significance to education.[135] The manner of founding of the College of Messina, whereby the citizens petitioned the Society to establish a college

---

[132] Clancy, *Introduction to Jesuit Life,* 121.
[133] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 200.
[134] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 200.
[135] O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 201.

there, was repeatedly replicated. The Constitution of the founding document for the College of Messina in 1548 articulates the ultimate vision in the founding of Jesuit schools. This document, the *Libellus Quo Initia Scholarum Collegii Messanensis Annuntianntur*, reads:

> Above all else, attention must be given to assisting the souls in spiritual matters through the reading of some good instruction concerning Christian doctrine, that is, that which needs to be known and observed by all faithful Christians. These lessons should be adapted for both the old and the young. In this way, with divine assistance, all of the lessons and exercises, will be conducted with great care and diligence, according to the method of Paris, which is the most useful and exact. This will quickly result in good habits and spiritual profit, allowing for the greater glory of God and usefulness and consolation for the souls of the faithful.[136]

The founding of the Messina College was influential in the establishment of later schools. Schools became integral to the Society's missions and were a distinguishing factor for the Jesuits.

Education became a principal means through which the Jesuits exerted the greatest influence. Though educating the laity was not a part of their initial plans, it was an area of need and an opportunity for ministry, which they quickly entered. Francis Xavier, the first Jesuit sent on a foreign mission, began a college in Goa that became a model for subsequent Jesuit foreign schools. At this college, Jesuits educated the indigenous Indians, as well as the Portuguese inhabitants of the colony, in both the

[136] Cesareo, "Quest for Identity: The Ideals of Jesuit Education in the Sixteenth Century", 17-33.

humanities and the tenets of Christianity.[137] This college was the first of its kind, as the other educational institutions built by Jesuits were for the education of those entering the Society. However, by 1550 the Jesuits had opened colleges for the education of the laity. Sections from the preamble and chapter seven of the *Constitutions* Part IV deal with educational ministry, and function to direct the spirit of this undertaking:

> The aim which the Society of Jesus directly seeks is to aid its own members and their fellowmen to attain the ultimate end for which they were created. To achieve this purpose, in addition to the example of one's life, learning and a method of expounding it are also necessary... To take care that in our colleges not only our own scholastics may be helped in learning, but also those from outside in both learning and good habits of conduct, where schools open to the public can be conveniently had, they should be established at least in humane letters, and in more advanced subjects in accordance with the possibility which obtains in the regions where such colleges are situated. The greater service of the Lord is always to be kept in view. [138]

By 1553 the Society had established provinces in Portugal, India, Castile, Aragon, Italy, and Brazil.[139] In each province that the Jesuits came to minister within, they established schools in which they eventually taught a systematized curriculum delineated in the *Ratio Studiorum.* The *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu,* or "Method and system of the studies of the Society of Jesus", was published in 1599 as the Jesuit's educational

---

[137] Francesco C. Cesareo's "Quest for Identity: The Ideals of Jesuit Education in the Sixteenth Century" in the work: Chapple, Christopher ed. *The Jesuit Tradition in Education and Missions.* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1993), 17-33.
[138] Ganss, George E., transl. *The Constitutions*
[139] O'Malley, John W. *The First Jesuits.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 51-90.

program to be practiced in their schools. This outlined the subjects that were to be taught, the order in which they were to be taught, how they were to be taught; it was a very meticulous description for teachers and administrators of schools. Greek and Latin were the main subjects. Classes in rhetoric and theology were also a central part of the curriculum. Regarding theology, Hebrew, the Scriptures, church history, dogmatic precepts, moral theology, and canon law were to be taught. Mathematics, sciences, and philosophy were included as well.[140] By 1579 the Jesuits were in control of 144 colleges and the number continued to mushroom. And so, the systematization offered in the *Ratio Studiorum* played a pivotal role in creating a standard of education for those in charge of the widely spread Jesuit schools.

The active and adaptive spirit of the Society guided all of the Society's endeavors, not the least of which was their willingness to travel according to the needs of the church and the people. This guiding principle, clearly articulated throughout Jesuit formative documents, rendered them attractive to the propagation and renewal of Catholicism. Thus, not only were they sent to foreign countries, they were also sent all over Western Europe, either to reinvigorate Catholics in a given realm, or to win back the souls of those who had turned to Protestantism. The immense influence of the Jesuit ministry was evident by the time of their founding. So, it is not surprising that Rome, with its proximity to the papal office, was among the first places where the Jesuits' ministry was refined and flourished. Ignatius outlines his aspirations for a college to be built in Rome in the following letter:

---

[140] Sources for *Ratio Studiorum*: The Catholic Encyclopedia; Hubert Jedin and John Dolan, *History of the Church: Reformation and Counter Reformation,* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 553-569.; Robert Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education: Its History and Principles,* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1903), 107-199.

> If he is zealous for the common good and help of souls and the spread and increase of the Catholic faith, this is a work which is especially destined to such an end. For not only will the youth of Rome be taught and trained in learning and good morals, but in time the students can come from all parts of Italy and beyond for the same purpose... Likewise, a large number of apostolic workers of our own Society will be educated there, with their studies directed solely to the same end of the common good... Thus this college will be a never failing nursery of ministers of the Apostolic See for the service of the holy Church and the good of souls.[141]

In 1551 the *Collegio Romano* was founded to fulfill the purpose expressed by Ignatius. In a further act of noteworthy significance to the revival of Catholicism was Ignatius' proposed *Collegio Germanicum*, which was also to be founded in Rome. Ignatius explained his aim for this college: to provide a Jesuit education to young men from Germany who seemed to be suited to such an education and the ministry that it taught. Upon obtaining this education, the men would be sent back to Germany to enlighten the souls of their peers; In his 1552 letter to Claude Le Jay, he wrote of his hope for these young men:

> By the example of a life of study and the influence of their solid learning will preach the word of God, and by their lectures, or at least by their personal influence, will be able to open the eyes of their fellow countrymen to the light of the true faith and tear down the veil of ignorance and vice.[142]

---

[141] Cesareo, "Quest for Identity: The Ideals of Jesuit Education in the Sixteenth Century", 17-33.
[142] Cesareo, "Quest for Identity: The Ideals of Jesuit Education in the Sixteenth Century", 17-33.

The Jesuits founded this *Collegio Germanicum* in 1553. The vision of the leaders of the Society led the Jesuits to engage in such active and ambitious pursuits as that of the *Collegio Germanicum* and its aim. Throughout their ministry, the Jesuits adapted to the conditions that surrounded them, as evidenced by their move into the educational sphere, while retaining their spirituality and devotion to an active ministry based thereupon.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Jesuits as an order and as an historical presence have sparked immense interest. They immediately garnered such notoriety and privilege as an orthodox order, which has spawned intrigue into the reason for their status and treatment. The amount of attention accorded them, particularly by pope Paul III at their founding suggests that their order possessed an unparalleled identity that appealed to the needs of the Church. In actuality, the professed ideals of the order were not radical by any means. Given the sixteenth century setting, the journey of Ignatius and his original companions to the order's establishment and privileged status beginning under Paul III is fascinating. Influences upon Jesuit spirituality from persecuted groups and ideologies are apparent, yet the Jesuits incorporated such components into their version of spiritual understanding without incurring persecution. Further, they adopted many of the prevalent tenets of reform, such as rigorous pastoral efforts and ecclesiastical reform and still emerged as a highly valued mechanism of the Catholic Church's fight to dominate and suppress clergy. A detailed analysis of the intricacies of the Jesuits' development uncovers how they came to occupy this status within the Church organization. In their specific approach to spirituality and religion amidst the surfeit of ideas and practices, the Jesuits found a path to follow that led to an efficacious order of orthodox Catholicism.

Ignatius' spiritual experiences determined the essence of the Society, which led the Jesuits vital role in the 'Catholic Reformation'. His conversion was prompted by a great deal of contemplation on his life versus the lives of the saints, and of Christ, which he found in works of late medieval devotion. He examined the effect of each upon the

way he felt; he decided to fashion his life after those of holy saints described in the *Legenda Aurea.* Over time, and in the midst of various spiritual ideas and works, he arrived upon a spirituality that afforded him a new inner life and peace, which he set out to impart to others. He formulated the *Spiritual Exercises*, which was designed to guide individuals to a more spiritual faith for the glory of God and the betterment of Society. These *Exercises* advocated an in depth examination of one's life, followed by a general confession. This mirrored his experience, whereby he had turned from his former life. Like Kempis' *Imitatio Christi*, he emphasized meditation, examination of the conscience, frequent reception of the sacraments, and prayer, as the keys to living a Christian life of continual renewal. However, he specifically organized these spiritual practices into a distinct methodology. The *Exercises* were to be led by an experienced guide, and were structured in a process designed to extract a change in the life of the individual. This became the primary tool of the first Jesuit ministries. Ignatius had codified his conversion experience, spiritual influences, and mystical infusions of knowledge, to create an effective tool of ministry for the renewal of Catholicism.

The whole of Jesuit spirituality existed as an intricately developed balance of the inner life of the soul and the outer manifestations thereof. The training and rigorous examination required of members of the order functioned well according to its design. This design was to produce a certain spirit in individuals: one with a knowledge of himself, his soul; one who saw the importance of constant confession in search of the will of God; one with a dedication to the love of God and his neighbor- to be carried out in all endeavors; one to guide the masses in the proper practice of their Catholic faith and salvation- particularly in the meaning and administration of the sacraments; one who

recognized the importance of purity of the soul- achieved by confession as prompted by the conscience- as the vehicle through which God's saving grace propels the individual to works of charity and mercy, and eventually to salvation. The Jesuits spread throughout familiar and foreign lands, to wherever their services would benefit. They adapted to the needs of individuals and of the times. They retained their essence even as they adapted to different ministries, largely due to the spirituality that the order's seminal works engendered, the vigorous selection process, and their monarchical design.

Works Cited:

Boehmer, H. *The Jesuits: An Historical Study.* (Philadelphia: The Castle Press, 1928).

Brady, Thomas A. ed. *Handbook of European History 1400-1600.* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

Broderick, James. *The Origin of the Jesuits.* (New York: Image Books, 1960).

Chapple, Christopher ed. *The Jesuit Tradition in Education and Missions.* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1993).

Christian, William A. *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

Clancy, Thomas H. *An Introduction to Jesuit Life: The Constitutions and History Through 435 Years.* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976).

Conwell, Joseph F. *Impelling Spirit: Revisiting a Founding Experience- 1539 Ignatius of Loyola and His Companions.* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997).

De Guibert, Joseph. *The Jesuits Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice.* (Chicago: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964).

Elliott, J.H. *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716.* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers LTD., 1963).

Elton, G.R. *Reformation Europe 1517- 1559.* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1963, 1999).

Elliott, J.H. *Europe Divided: 1559-1598, 2nd Edition.* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1968, 2000).

Ferguson, Wallace K. *Europe in Transition: 1300-1520.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company).

Foss, Michael. *The Founding of the Jesuits.* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1969).

Ganss, George E. transl. *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus [by] Saint Ignatius Loyola.* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970).

Gleason, Elizabeth. "Catholic Reformation" *Handbook of European History 1400-1600* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

Haemmerlein, Thomas. *Of the Imitation of Christ.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Hamilton, Alistair. *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The Alumbrados.* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 1992).

Hillgarth, J. N. *The Spanish Kingdoms 1250-1516: Volume II 1410- 1516 Castilian Hegemony.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

Hsia, R. Po-Chia. *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Janelle, Pierre. *The Catholic Reformation.* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1963).

Jedin, Herbert. *A History of the Council of Trent: Volume I.* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1949).

Jedin, Hubert and John Dolan. *History of the Church: Reformation and Counter Reformation.* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

Leff, Gordon. *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c. 1250-c. 1450.* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1967).

MacKay, Angus. *Spain in the Middle Ages: From Frontier to Empire, 1000-1500.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977).

McGinn, Bernard. *The Flowering of Mysticism.* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998).

Moorman, John. *A History of the Franciscan Order From its Origins to the Year 1517.* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968).

Oberman, Heiko A. *Studies in the History of Christian Thought: The Reforms of the Council of Constance 1414-1418.* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993).

O'Callaghan, Joseph F. transl. *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola.* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974).

O'Callaghan, Joseph F. *A History of Medieval Spain.* (Ithica and London: Cornell University Press, 1975).

Olin, John C. *Catholic Reform: From Cardinal Ximenes to the Council of Trent 1495-1563.* (New York: Fordham University Press,1990).

O'Malley, John. *Jesuit Spirituality: A Now and Future Resource.* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1990).

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

Post, R.R. *The Modern Devotion* in *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought Volume III.* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968).

Prescott, William H. *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic: Volume II.* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1871).

Rawlings, Helen. *European Studies Series: Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain.* (London: Palgrave, 2002).

Rickaby, Joseph. *The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola: Spanish and English With Commentary.* (London: Burnes & Oates, Limited, 1915).

Rose, Stewart. *Ignatius Loyola and the Early Jesuits.* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1871).

Rummel, Erika. "Voices of Reform From Hus to Erasmus" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation.* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

Schwickerath, Robert. *Jesuit Education: Its History and Principles.* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1903).

Smith, Preserved. *The Age of the Reformation.* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920).

Webster, Jill R. *Els Menorets: The Franciscans in the Realms of Aragon From St. Francis to the Black Death.* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993).

Witt, Ronald G. "The Humanist Movement" in *Handbook of European History 1400 1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation.* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html

www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/stfran-lives.html