ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE
(Eph 3,17)

1. This is the third time that I accept the invitation of the Centre of Ignatian Spirituality to give the closing address at the annual Ignatian Course. In 1979 I dealt with «Our Way of Proceeding» ('Nuestro Modo de Proceder'), and last year I spoke on «The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism ». In both cases I sought to contribute to the study of the inspirational sources of our charism: this is the path that the Second Vatican Council indicates to Religious Institutes to work at their ‘accomodata renovatio’¹. The first address on «Our Way of Proceeding » took its starting point from the ignatian charism and worked its way down through various levels of application to the changed conditions of the times², whereas the second on « The Trinitarian Inspiration », while also starting from the charism of Ignatius, moved upwards even to its peak-point: its trinitarian intimacy. Today I propose to penetrate to the very core of this supreme ignatian experience: the reality that God is love³. For, in my opinion, this is the final summing-up and synthesis of all that Ignatius learned in that privileged trinitarian intimacy to which he was graciously called: The divine unity between the Father and the Son culminates, as a society of love, in the relationship that both have with the one Spirit⁴. This is, therefore, the very last root, the ultimate foundation of the ignatian charism, the soul of the Society.

2. As far as one can deal with these matters in human terms, one could say that love at its purest — love in itself — is, on the one hand, the formal constitutive element of the divine essence and, on the other, the explanation and cause of the operations 'ad extra': the creation of man, lord of the universe, and the return of all things to God in a history of redemption and sanctification. This double formal aspect of love finds in Ignatius the echo of a double response: a sublime theocentric love, that is compatible with a marked presence of Christ even as man; and a boundless love of charity for his fellow men in whom God's love, as he sees it, is patently present, and who must be led back to God. If then we want this ' renovatio accommodata ' to work itself out in us with the Ignatian depth of the Exercises, which start from the deepest level of man's heart, we shall have to let ourselves be invaded by that love that is the peak-point of the Ignatian charism. Created as we are in the image and likeness of God who is love, we shall thus become more like Him. This love will be the dynamis of our apostolic character; this love it is that will enable us to collaborate

---

¹ Published as nos. 42 and 45 in the collection 'Documentation', of the Press and Information Office of the Society. They have been republished since then in many books and reviews. Cf. AR XVII, 691 ss.; XVIII, 115 ss.
² Perfectae Caritatis 2.
³ 1 Jn 4:8.
⁴ The Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism 99.

References to the writings of St. Ignatius and other early Jesuits are to their works as contained in the collection Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu (MHSI). Those regarding Ignatius are found in the subseries of that collection, Monumenta Ignatiana (MI).
in the solution of the tremendous problems so characteristic of our world which is in the throes of radical change to a new age.

3. Any renewal that does not somehow reach up to this point, any renewal that leaves the heart of man untouched and unpurified, is a renewal that is incomplete and doomed to failure. If, however, our inmost faculties are purified and transformed, we shall have been given a completely new orientation: the renewal will not give rise to traumas, we shall be placed on a higher plane on which the various dichotomies and tensions fade away — between faith and justice, for instance, when both are vivified by love — and we shall act out of mercy that is the sublimation of justice. With this spirit, rooted and grounded in love, the Society will continue to be the shock-troops in the confrontation between wickedness and love — between anomia and agapé, to use the terms in which St. Matthew couches the Lord’s apocalyptic discourse, terms so terribly applicable to our age.  

I  

LOVE AND CHARITY IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS  

4. Love is the weighty power of the soul. This is what Ignatius wrote to a former companion and fellow-student of his Paris days, without knowing perhaps that he was quoting St. Augustine. And certainly, without intending to do so, he was bequeathing to us the most incisive formulation possible of his own spiritual journey, and of the charism of the Society.

1. The Exercises

When Ignatius concludes the Exercises, his «to praise, reverence and serve God» of the Principle and Foundation has become a «Contemplation to Attain Love». A love which ought to manifest itself in deeds rather than in words and in giving and sharing. These two qualities of the love of the exercitant, who has put order into his life, correspond to identical qualities that Ignatius has contemplated in the love of God: God not only so loved the world that He gave us His only Son, but and we must ponder this with great affection — He desires to give Himself to me, as far as He can, according to His divine decrees. This love is to lead the exercitant to the point where, filled with gratitude, that is, in a return of love for love, he may in all things love and serve the Divine Majesty. To serve is to give oneself.

5. This conclusion is not surprising. The role of the director is to lead the exercitant to discover this love. His mission is not to urge the exercitant more to poverty ... than to the contrary, ... but ... it is much

5 Mt 24:12.
7 Ex Sp 23.
8 Ibid 230.
9 Ibid 231.
10 Jn 3:16.
11 Ex Sp 234.
12 Ibid 233.
better that the Creator and Lord in person communicate Himself to the devout soul, that He inflame it with His love and praise, and dispose it for the way in which it could better serve God in the future. Once again there appears the relationship between love and service, for with Ignatius service, or the gift of oneself, is a necessary expression of love. In other words; one cannot love without serving. Service is love in return for love, it is the way in which one gives oneself. The exercitant is to consider, according to all reason and justice, what I ought to offer the Divine Majesty, that is, all I possess and myself with it. To attain this love is the highest grace one seeks: Take and receive... Thou hast given all to me. To Thee I return it... Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is sufficient for me.

6. It is interesting to note that the pedagogy of love in the Exercises seems to follow the exact lines of the pedagogy of love in Old Testament revelation. It is not a theory of love that is propounded, but an experiential pedagogy that is practised. Love is presented as the constant agent of all that leads to salvation; from creation — the other things... are created for man — to the barricade set up between man and hell, even unto the plan of redemption, the call to reciprocal love and to the service of cooperation. One might say that Ignatius puts his exercitant under a sort of irresistible pressure of proofs of the love of God, a love that is made manifest more in deeds than in words through repeated acts of self-giving that culminate in the surrender and gift of His only Son. In this way Ignatius means to set in motion a process of complete transformation in the exercitant: the purification of his heart and the right ordering of his affective faculty. In a word, his objective is to get the exercitant to live the truth of God’s own love and his love for God by giving himself in service.

7. From the ‘first week’ on, love is a definite criterion. Consolation and desolation — which, as we know, are the precision tools in the whole process of change — have precisely the presence or absence of love for their determinant difference (rules 3,4,9). In the ‘second week’ it is love that is the axis of the great decisions. In the first meditation (the Earthly King) there will still be mention of giving greater proof of love and distinguishing self in whatever concerns service, precisely as a reaction against carnal and worldly love, because the whole attractiveness of the love of God has not yet been explicitly proposed. In fact, the preliminary phase of purification has barely been concluded with the first week. The contemplation of the mysteries of Christ, which then begin almost unexpectedly, are already a strategy of love: the love of God in action, and the response of man who is now capable of lifting on high his gaze of love. This is to ask for what I desire: an intimate knowledge of the Lord, who has become man for me, that I may love Him more and follow Him more closely. In these exercises, termed very significantly the contemplation of the ‘mysteries’, the pace of the transference of self-love to the love of Christ gains momentum; it is the gift of the love of God. There is an ascent towards perfect love, which keeps moving up by means of the colloquy of the meditation of

13 Ibid 15.
14 Ibid 234.
15 Ibid 316, 317, 322.
16 Ibid 97.
17 Ibid 104.
the Two Standards and of the Three Classes of Men, where there is still attachment or repugnance\textsuperscript{18} with respect to the consequences of the love of God. It is the surrender of self-love, self-will and self-interest\textsuperscript{19}.

8. Of deep psychological and theological interest are two important moments in the exercitant’s journey in which Ignatius instructs him to reflect on his self-love. The parallelism of both passages shows how clear this idea was in the mind of Ignatius, who had come close to almost stereotyping his phrases. The two passages deal, one with the ‘election’ made according to the second way of the third time — a way that is more affective and less cerebral than the first — and the other with the norms for the distribution of ecclesiastical goods. In an effort at introspection and almost cold objective observation of oneself, that is so genuinely Ignatian, the exercitant must make sure that the love, that moves one and causes one to choose a particular thing, descends from above, that is, from the love of God\textsuperscript{20}. It is the guarantee document that the exercitant must demand of, and grant to, himself: the identity of love with God.

The same precaution is highlighted before one can set about distributing ecclesiastical goods. Of the four things that the exercitant should observe, the first is that the love that moves me... must be from above, that is, from the love of God our Lord... that God is manifestly the cause of my loving them more\textsuperscript{21} — that is, such persons, be they relatives or friends. What stands out clearly here is the understanding of the close link of causality and reciprocity between the love of God and the love of men.

9. Naturally, one reaches this goal only through a process which originates in one’s own ability to love. For, despite the gratuitous accusation made against St. Ignatius with almost mechanical repetition, he by no means ignores nor kills natural love. Ignatius acknowledges and accepts it, indeed he requires it; for only with it, purified and put in order, can one respond to the love of God. Full of meaning is the correction in his own hand and writing in the manuscript of the Exercises, one more example of those ‘second thoughts’ of his, so significant for the exact grasp of his mind. The manuscript read in its title: « to order one’s life without any attachment that might be inordinate ». Ignatius corrected it as follows: « without any decision being made under the influence of any inordinate attachment ». In other words, Ignatius knows very well that attachments, even inordinate attachments (= attractions inclining one to persons or things because of the love one has for them), will continue to exist. What matters is that one masters the situation in giving the right direction to that love. Ignatius expresses it marvelously in two phrases that have become proverbial: ‘conquest of self’ and ‘ordering one’s life’.

10. To conquer oneself, as Ignatius himself explains, is to make our sensual nature obey reason\textsuperscript{22}, to master the domain of those attachments and repugnances proper to our fallen nature that obscure the goal of true love. As he says in another part, we have to overcome the inordinate attachment\textsuperscript{23}. This is one of the objectives — the main one — of the

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid 157.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid 189.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid 184.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid 338.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid 87.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid 157.
stage of purification that culminates in the meditation on hell. It is a logical process in three steps characterized by three verbs: to feel (interiorly) the disorder of my actions, that filled with horror of them, I may amend my life and put it in order. Amendment of life is to put order in the disorder of one’s actions; it is to prepare the way for love.

11. To order one’s life is to apply an ordered love to the great choices in a person’s life: it is to let the love of God find the proper response in the life of a man, cutting off all escape-routes or deviations. This is clearly proved by another of Ignatius’s manuscript corrections. The text read thus: Three Classes of Men. Each of them has acquired ten thousand ducats not merely for the love of God, but not exclusively, for the love of God. And this leaves Ignatius dissatisfied, so that he corrects the text: not purely, or as they should have, for the love of God. The three classes want to rid themselves of the inordinate attachment, but only the third place themselves in the hypothesis as if every attachment to the sum acquired had been set aside, making efforts neither to want that nor anything else unless the service of God our Lord alone move them to do so. Ignatius lets them know a few lines lower down what they are to do in order to overcome such an inordinate attachment or repugnance, as would be with respect to actual poverty: the ‘agere contra’, begging insistently, even though corrupt nature rebel against it, for actual poverty — a point that had already been the key issue of the Two Standards. It is the love of man launched forward to encounter the love of God. The place of encounter is the person of Christ, of whom the exercitant insistently asks for an interior knowledge of the Lord, that I may love Him more and follow Him more closely. This core group of exercises — the Earthly King, the Two Standards, the Three Classes, the Three Kinds of Humility — purify one’s love to the point of a total reversal of values and standards. The exercitant comes to pray for something that is not merely not born of an inordinate attachment, but even goes beyond just having judgment and reason: Those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves ... will act against their sensuality and carnal and worldly love, ... The greater service and praise — indeed, in the last analysis, greater love — can call forth this kind of determined decision from the depths of one who has discovered the love of Christ. And it would seem that greater love than this could not be possible. But St. Ignatius finds it, and invites his exercitant to it, in the Third Kind of Humility, the most perfect kind. It is the total reversal of ‘disorder’ and of ‘carnal and worldly love’, something that surpasses human logic and shares somehow in that disdain for the purely reasonable which is at the heart of all passionate love. It is no longer necessary that there be greater service and praise; it is enough that whenever the praise and glory of the Divine Majesty be equally served, in order to imitate and be in reality more like Christ our lord, I desire and choose ... Are we surprised that so qualified a person as Dr. Ortiz, to whom Ignatius gave the Exercises in Montecassino in the Lent of 1548, should write in his notes

24 Ibid 63.
25 Ibid 150.
26 Ibid 157.
27 Ibid 104, 113, 117, 126.
28 Ibid 97, 98.
29 Ibid 167.

12. The Exercises are, in the last analysis, a method in the pedagogy of love — the pedagogy, that is, of the most pure charity towards God and towards one's neighbour. They root out of the heart of man carnal and worldly love, thus opening it to the beams of God's love. A demanding love it is, calling forth in man a response of love and of service. Service, which is itself love. This is the message of the very last paragraph of the book of the Exercises: The zealus service of God our Lord out of pure love should be esteemed above all 31. In the Exercises we find terms and concepts which are logically reducible to one another: the ‘ glory of God ’, for example, can be replaced by the ‘ service of God ’. The same may be said of ‘ praise ’ and ‘ reverence ’. Only one term is final and irreducible to any other: love.

2. The Constitutions

13. Since the Society, when all is said and done, is no more than the institutional expression of the Exercises, love that is the keypoint in the Exercises must find its parallel in the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. This is so in fact, but with one difference: while the Exercises look to conversion and a life-decision on a personal level, the Constitutions have a very definite corporate dimension. But the spirit is the same. Moreover, the principal value of the Constitutions does not lie in the logical precision of their build-up, nor in the prudence and wisdom of their juridical prescriptions, nor even in their masterly accommodation of the means employed to the ends sought. The principal value of the Constitutions lies in the spirit of the Exercises which runs through them and gives life to all their significant elements. Further: the Constitutions, that govern the life of each individual Jesuit and that of the whole body of the Society, presuppose men who have made the Exercises in depth and have opted for the most radical expression of the following of Christ: men who are motivated by love. The Exercises are the first ‘ experience ’ of the Jesuit at his entrance into the Society — understanding this word ‘ entrance ’ in its technical sense, that is, the real verification that his personal call from the Spirit is in accord with the charism of the Society. Hence it is the inner force of the Exercises that motivates all his later life, as this is set forth organically in the Constitutions; hence, too, all renewal of the Society must necessarily entail an effective realization of the vital elements of the Exercises.

14. I hold, however, that two things must be noted when tracing a parallel between the Exercises and the Constitutions.

a) - The individual context in which the Exercises are conceived (and which must be preserved when they are made in groups) gives rise to an understanding of love prevalently as a personal relationship between God/Christ the Lord and the exercitant. The love and service of men is implicit — true, as a fundamental and constitutive element — in the love and service of God. But the Constitutions, which begin where the Exercises leave off, are obviously conceived in a communal and institutionalized form; they are geared to the implementation of that service — ‘ the greater service ’ — and to the support of men dedicated to that

30 MI Exerc., 2nd ed., 635.
31 Ex Sp 370.
service. As such, they make more explicit the fraternal dimension of charity and love, and the commitment to helping other men — that is, 'our fellowmen' or 'souls' in the vocabulary of Ignatius. The Constitu­tions, or the Society, make effective that trait that the Exercises demand of love: self-giving. What in the Exercises was a promise of surrender and close following, is in the Constitutions reality and action. And all this is brought about by a sharing of ideals and of life with other friends in the Lord, who are joined together by love and a common mission. There is no other law but love. The Constitutions, as Ignatius himself terms them in the first paragraph of their Preamble, are no more than the prop and support of reason for the interior law of charity and love which the Holy Spirit writes and engraves upon hearts.

Every Jesuit can in reality and with deep interior joy echo the jubilant words of Paul:

God has qualified me to be minister of a new convenant, not in a written code but in the Spirit; for the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life. This is what Ignatius wants for his Constitutions: No Constitutions, Declarations or regime of living are to oblige under mortal or venial sin... in place of the fear of giving offence, there should arise a love and desire of all perfection, and a desire that greater glory and praise of Christ, our Creator and Lord, may follow. In a word, in the Society, one proceeds in a spirit of love and not troubled by fear.

15 b) - On the personal level, too, for the Jesuit, the Constitutions begin where the Exercises leave off. The ordering of one's life so that no decision is taken under the influence of any inordinate attachment — that is, the goal of the Exercises — is presupposed as a starting-point in the Constitutions. Hence the Society cannot be built up except of men who live by the spirit of the Exercises. In these Exercises, the one who prepares himself to be a Jesuit is brought face to face with himself and with God, and finishes by enlisting under his standard. Once in the Society, he must face the needs of the world and the factual situation of each day, making effective in them his service and his love. But there is a continuity without a break between both stages: God, His love and love for Him are the initial and final cause, the alpha and the omega, of a Jesuit's life-story in the Society. Because of this, for the preservation of its spirit, and for the attainment of the objective it seeks... the means which unite the human instrument to God... are more effective than those which equip it in relation to men. Such means are, for example, goodness and virtue, and especially charity.

16. Characteristics of Ignatian charity

1. Dynamic love. Charity, like every other virtue, aims at growth. But in Ignatius, man of the 'magis', this growth is an insatiable thirst. 'To grow', 'to increase', 'to move ahead' are terms which recur once and again in his writings. 'To grow in His service' is a favourite expression. 'To move ahead' appears again and again in his letters of direction, with the pressing exhortation that it be 'more every day',

---

32 Const [134].
33 2 Cor 3:6.
34 Const [547].
35 Const [813].
36 MI Epp I 150.
His eagerness for the progress of his sons is such that, in the Constitutions, he goes so far as to suggest to Superiors the pedagogy of provocation to encourage the progress of those who are in probation by testing them (as he himself might have seen in his youth at Arevalo the bulls for the contest being 'tested' to make sure they were of quality breed) that they may give an example of their virtue and grow in it. But in Ignatius love is dynamic principally because, as love of God and of men, it leads him to intense activity. All the drive of apostolic service in the Society can be reduced to this concept: love. I shall deal with this later on.

17. 2. Ordered love: that is to say, love purified of all inordinate attachment to oneself, to persons (relatives, friends) or to things. On this point the Constitutions echo exactly the Exercises. Ordered love has a negative aspect, to begin with: a refining of love, cleansing it of the dross of inordinate attachment to things for their own sake, in order to love God alone purely, and all other persons and things only in Him and for His sake. In practice, for Ignatius, the purity of love is the purity of intention. He is quite explicit about this when in the Exercises he deals with the motives for election: Let it be noted if the choice has not been made as it should have been, and with due order, that is, if it was not made without inordinate attachments... Since such a choice was inordinate and awry, it does not seem to be a vocation from God. For every vocation that comes from God is always pure and undefiled, uninfluenced by the flesh or any other inordinate attachment. Two paragraphs lower down, he will equate a choice made sincerely with a choice made with due order. The concept is clear, and its motivation too: that a choice be not 'inordinate and awry' but 'pure and undefiled', the love that moves and causes one to choose must descend from above, that is, from the love of God.  

18. The passage in the Constitutions that is parallel to this one concerning choice which we have just considered in the Exercises, is that regarding the renunciation of goods, which one who enters the Society should be ready to make. The 'ordering' of one's affections is here required with special emphasis. One should put aside all merely natural affection for his relatives and convert it into spiritual, by loving them only with that love which rightly ordered charity requires. At the moment of relinquishing these goods, one should divest oneself of disordered love of relatives, to avoid the disadvantage of a disordered distribution which proceeds from that aforementioned love. This renunciation could be required of one even at the end of the first year of novitiate, if it is judged that putting it off might be the occasion in a particular novice for disorder arising from his placing some love and confidence in it (his property). For poverty is a specially critical area, a genuine test-case for the 'purity' and 'ordered' character of our love. In the

---

39 Const [285].
40 Const [288].
41 Ex Sp 172.
42 Ibid 184.
43 Const [61].
44 Const [54].
45 Const [254].
Society, therefore, we must come to a total contempt of temporal things, in regard to which self-love frequently induces disorder.46

19. Another area that is open to 'disorder', and therefore deserves special watchfulness, is that of 'sensuality' or self-love. Hence, when dealing with it, Ignatius is once again especially explicit. When the Jesuit, at the end of his studies, is about to be admitted to profession, a final check must be carried out on this point. He is made to pass from the school of the intellect to the school of the heart, by exercising himself in spiritual and corporal pursuits which can engender in him greater humility, abnegation of all sensual love and will and judgement of his own, and also greater knowledge and love of God our Lord.47. It is the final ordering of love, the definitive clarification needed for the apostolic mission given by the Society. He will thus realize in himself that ideal regarding love which was held out to him at his entrance into the Society: to abhor in its totality and not in part whatever the world loves and embraces ... to accept and desire with all possible energy whatever Christ our Lord loved and embraced ... Those, who are truly following Christ our Lord, love and intensely desire everything opposite to that which men of the world love and seek with such great diligence.48. This is the golden rule of 'ordered love'. The Constitutions are written in this perspective and for men who live this ideal, or desire to live it, or at least wish to have holy desires of this kind.49.

20. 3. Discerning love ('Discreta Caritas'). Discretion adds to ordered love an important and typically Ignatian trait: sound judgment. It does away with excess, the hubris of the Greeks; it excludes wild and rash haste, the exaggerations of ardent apostolic zeal, those secondary effects that make love itself counter-productive. But discretion does not mean putting limits to love. The love of God is infinite, and man's response to it is to be with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength.50. Discretion in love is a complement to 'order', and hence a condition for growth. Ignatius is temperamentally a secondary type, a reflexive type. His education at court and military training have endowed him with remarkable self-control and with a sense of the limits of his own resources. Discretion in love is the rational counter-poise that balances off the affective and makes it fully human. It is that measure of supernatural prudence, of the proportion between means and ends, of respect for the person with his or her circumstances, that makes it possible for ordered love to achieve its objectives while having due regard for a well-graded scale of values.

21. Here are some examples. Ignatius requires of us special care and caution at the moment of admitting someone to the Society. The one who admits should be vigilant that charity for an individual does not impair the charity for all, which should always be preferred.51. The same discretion must prevent us from keeping in the Society one who is not suitable; we should not retain someone ... contrary to the good of the Society. Since this is a universal good, it ought to be preferred to the good of one individual ... To tolerate this would be attributable not to

46 Const [671].
47 Const [516].
48 Const [101].
49 Const [102].
50 Lk 10:27.
51 Const [189].
charity but to its very opposite. It would be indiscreet charity in retaining him who is useless or harmful to the Society. If a cause suffices or not for dismissal, it is the discreet charity of the Superior... that ought to ponder it before God our Lord. When dealing with the Professed, discretion is even more clearly emphasized, for in their case the charity and discretion of the Holy Spirit will indicate the manner which ought to be used. Well-ordered and discreet charity will dictate the manner of dealing with those who abandon the Society and take the habit in another religious institute, dictate too the penances that may be imposed, and the amount of time which the Professed and Formed Coadjutors are to give to prayer or to study. Discerning love, finally, is that prudent charity with which Ignatius supposes the General of the Society to be endowed.

22. 4. Love that permeates all. Every single page of the Constitutions is written in terms of charity or love, be this explicitly so, or in the equivalent terms of the service of God or the glory of God. These are different formal aspects of one and the same reality: the surrender, in a return of love for love, to the Father's work — to which Ignatius was admitted at La Storta — with Christ, by the grace of the Spirit. The mental discipline with which the Constitutions are conceived, the power of effectiveness that they embody, the juridical precision — exceptional for their day — with which they are formulated, do not conceal from those who read or study them with an open mind what lies much deeper: an absolute loyalty, born of whole-hearted love, to the mission received and towards the giver of that mission. And, in order to fulfil that mission, a wondrous harmonizing of two apparently contrary elements: a strong system of monarchical authority exercised through a government which is, above all, fatherly, or based on love.

23. The entire life of a Jesuit should be inspired by charity and love: from the moment when, soon after his entrance into the Society, he finds himself deliberately put in conditions in which he must with genuine faith and intense love place his reliance entirely in his Creator and Lord until he dies, striving to give an example of... living faith, hope, and love of the eternal goods... with help from fraternal charity. Towards God, his life will be love and reverence; towards his brothers, fraternal charity. As regards Superiors, from their hearts they should warmly love them as fathers in Jesus Christ. Thus in everything they should proceed in a spirit of charity. And, portraying himself without intending to do so, Ignatius exhorts the General never to cease to have proper sympathy for his sons.

52 Const [212].
53 Const [217].
54 Const [209].
55 Const [219].
56 Const [237].
57 Const [269].
58 Const [582].
59 Const [754].
60 Const [671].
61 Const [595].
62 Const [273, 280, 595].
63 Const [551].
64 Const [727].
24. Love-charity is, for Ignatius, a basic component of all the virtues. Poverty is not merely accepted; it is chosen out of love for the poor Christ. The same with humility. Love is the soul of obedience; it is present in all the various degrees of the correction which the Superior is to give with discerning love: the first time, with love and sweetness; the second time, with love and also in such a way that they feel humiliating shame; the third time, with love but in such a way that they have fear. Love, together with reverence, is the profound justification for the indifference towards the grades with which one enters the Society. It is out of love that studies are taken up. Finally it is love and charity that are highlighted in that great probity and love of the Society which should not be wanting in the General even if he should lack other qualities, leading him even so far as to receive death, if necessary, for the good of the Society in the service of Jesus Christ, God and our Lord.

We have here one of the most solemn formulas employed by Ignatius.

25. Love, source of union. Speaking to Jesuits, I am obliged to dwell on an effect of mutual love that is fundamental for Ignatius: union. Union is a primordial value in the Society, the condition for its survival, because it is union that makes the Society’s being a ‘body’ compatible with our mission for dispersal. So important is this for Ignatius that to it he dedicates one whole part of the ten parts of the Constitutions, viz., VIII: « Helps towards uniting the dispersed members... » The first section of this eighth part deals precisely with «The union of minds and hearts ». On the exterior level, the first measure — together with obedience and authority — is selection in admissions. This is precisely the topic which in the 2nd part of the Constitutions evokes the greatest number of references to discretion in charity. But then, this is not the point which most concerns us now. Nevertheless, it is curious to remark that in the ‘autograph’ copy of the Constitutions, paragraph 667b — in which the exercise of authority is tempered with graciousness and gentleness — is a manuscript addition made by Ignatius: having his method of commanding well thought out and organized... that the Superior on his part uses all the love and modesty and charity possible in our Lord, so that the subjects can dispose themselves to have always towards their Superiors greater love than fear...

26. However, it is not juridical means that will provide the type of union that the Society needs. For there is question, in the first place, of ‘uniting minds and hearts’ in order to unite the body, and for this the chief bond to cement the union of the members among themselves and with their head is, on both sides, the love of God our Lord. For when the Superior and the subjects are closely united to His Divine and Supreme Goodness, they will very easily be united among themselves, through that same love which will descend from the Divine Goodness and spread to all other men, and particularly into the body of the Society. Once again, Ignatius returns to his favourite conception: the descent of the love of God and its diffusion, through us, to all our fellow-

65 Const [547, 551].
66 Const [270].
67 Const [111, 130].
68 Const [361].
69 Const [735].
70 Const [728].
71 Const [671].
men, first among whom are the very members of the Society. Ignatius is not afraid of repeating himself, and so he adds: *Thus from both sides charity will come to further this union, and in general all goodness and virtues through which one proceeds in conformity with the spirit.* Ignatius is convinced that if we respond to the love of Christ with the love for Christ, there will necessarily spring up among us mutual love. To preserve its union the Society does not rely on other means which the monastic orders can freely use, such as work and prayer in common and a strict living together in community. In the Society union must have bonds which somehow go beyond all this, because they must be compatible with dispersion and, in fact, give meaning to this dispersion. Such bonds ‘ad intra’ are charity and mutual love, intimately felt and deeply at work; ‘ad extra’, the sharing in a worldwide mission through personal mission. All this will be further helped by the possible uniformity of views and by frequent communication among the scattered members. For Ignatius this union of minds and hearts is of such value that he reserves some of the harshest words of all the Constitutions for those who cause it harm, urging that such persons *ought with great diligence to be separated from that community as a pestilence*\(^{72}\), even perhaps expelled from the Society.

27. Ignatius led the way by his own example of love and charity towards all. The anecdotal history of Ignatian charity is vast, spread over the pages of the volumes of Monumenta: charity, true love of a father, towards the novices, the sick and ailing, those undergoing trials. I need hardly dwell on what is sufficiently known to all. But I do think it helpful to mention what he wrote to Fr. Melchior Carneiro who had been appointed Bishop for the Ethiopian mission, since it gives us the Ignatian formulation of the theory of union: *Hold it for certain that... we will always keep you close to our hearts, drawing you all the more closely in an interior union as you are farther removed from our exterior presence*\(^{73}\). In the case of Fr. Godinho, who was having a difficult time, he offers this assurance: *I hold you very close to my heart*\(^{74}\). Fr. Luis González de Cámara, Ignatius’s confidant for the Autobiography, left this portrait of him in the ‘Memoriale’ which he wrote during the lifetime of Ignatius: *He is always more inclined to love, so much so indeed, that everything in him appears to be love*\(^{75}\).

28. The ideal of remaining ‘united in love while being scattered’ is exemplified in a singular manner by him who was the farthest of the scattered brethren, Francis Xavier. This impetuous Navarrese, lost in the remoteness of another world, feels himself united with the whole Society by a love which he expresses in such affectively-charged phrases, which recur so often, that they seem unlikely in a man of his capacity for action. Xavier insists he is *absent only bodily, but present in spirit*\(^{76}\). All of the teaching on union and dispersal is contained in this phrase of Xavier’s: *God who in His mercy joined us together, and for His service separated us...*\(^{77}\). Of the letters which he receives, Xavier cuts pieces with the signatures of his companions and carries them with him; he writes

---

\(^{72}\) Const [664].  
\(^{73}\) Rome, February 26, 1555. MI Epp VIII 489-490.  
\(^{74}\) Rome, January 31, 1552. MI Epp IV 126.  
\(^{75}\) Luis González de Cámara. Memoriale 86, MI FN I 579.  
\(^{76}\) Lisbon, March 18, 1541. MHSI Epp Xav I 78.  
\(^{77}\) Cochin, January 15, 1544. MHSI Epp Xav I 176.
to St. Ignatius kneeling on the floor, as if I had you present before me. He writes to my Father Ignatius, and to the rest of my brothers in this most beloved Society of Jesus, who live in Rome or in any other part of the world... who in this life go about so cut off from one another for the sake of His love. Xavier was so conscious of the distance that separated him from Ignatius that he used to sign his letters calling himself the youngest son in the farthest exile. This Xavier it is who felt himself intimately united with all the brethren by the bonds of love and affection. He writes to Ignatius: When I read the last consoling words of your letter, that is, «All yours, without ever being able to forget you, Ignatius,» as I read them with tears, so now with tears do I write, calling to mind... how much you have always loved me and still do love me... Not in Rome, but from a post far away on mission, was written that incomparable phrase: It seems to me that Society of Jesus really means society of love and harmony of minds and hearts. Its author, Xavier, had not read the Constitutions, which then had not yet been written. But he had lived with Ignatius.

29. To foster this mutual knowledge and love among the scattered brethren was one of Ignatius's constant preoccupations, as the Society kept spreading out over the continents of Europe and Asia. Nadal knew that part of his own mission was to collaborate in this task, for in it was involved the whole sense of belonging and union itself. Love makes us know the Society in a practical way, he said to the young scholastics of Alcalá. To this end what helps is love for the Institute itself, that you love the whole Society, those in the Indies, in Germany, in Italy and all those who belong to this Society, and that there be union and brotherhood among all as among the members of one and the same body. It is this love that makes all that exists in the Society pleasant and easy.

30. 6. Love that preserves the Society and makes it grow. The union of minds and hearts, born of love, is the condition for the preservation and growth of the Society, not only of the body or exterior of the Society, but also of its spirit, and for the attainment of the objective it seeks. The whole of the Tenth Part of the Constitutions is dedicated to this subject. Among the means that will ensure the preservation and growth of the Society is mentioned especially charity. This idea, in the very last pages of the Constitutions, ties up perfectly with the very first number of their Preamble, in which it is acknowledged that it is the Supreme Goodness of God that will preserve, direct and carry forward the Society, and that our cooperation with it is to be through the interior law of charity and love. Thus is closed the circle of the Constitutions with an exaltation of charity and love. It could not be otherwise. As Nadal wrote in his «Commentary on the Institute»: This law of love, engraved on our hearts, helps beyond measure in the preservation and growth of the So-

78 Cochin, January 12, 1549. MHSI Epp Xav II 16.
79 Cochin, January 20 1548. MHSI Epp Xav I 395.
80 Cochin, January, 29, 1552. MHSI Epp Xav II 293.
81 Ibid II 287.
82 Cochin, January 12, 1549. MHSI Epp Xav II 8.
84 Const [813].
85 Ibid.
ciety. No other spirit, but this one of charity and love, inspired the birth of the Society.

31. 7. Apostolic love. If, when treating of Ignatius's intimacy with the Trinity, we saw that his was a mysticism which led him to apostolic action, we must now say the same regarding his charity. The charity and love of Ignatius translates itself into apostolic zeal. But it is not of this zeal as such that I wish to speak, but of the basis of this zeal: namely, of the explicit and precise reality of love felt for men, of a love directed to 'one's fellowmen'. Ignatius's love takes its starting-point from his desire that all men should know the infinite love of God and respond to it. In this consists the spread of the Kingdom and the return of all things to the Father. Ignatius loves God in men, and men in God. The Society which he founds on these bases has no other motive force than that which it can get from an ardent charity.

32. 8. Love, the objective of the Society. Love in action, universal love, love without limits, whether in space or in kind or in the means it employs, is, we might say, what specifies the Society among the Religious Institutes of contemplative or mixed life, with which it has in common the desire for the salvation and perfection of 'our own souls' and of the neighbour. Elsewhere I have emphasized that Nadal was keen that Jesuits should be quite clear on this point. Without this apostolic extension of our charity and love, the foundation of the Society would not be justified. We do not place the perfection of our state in contemplation or in prayer as if they were the only means with which to help our fellowmen, while we remain closed up in our rooms or cells. The perfection of the monastic orders does certainly consist in this; as for us, charity urges us on. And even more explicitly: The heavenly Father has given to the Society as its goal and objective the fullness and perfection of charity.

33. Nadal gets enthusiastic when he deals with this subject, notably wherever and to whomsoever he explains the Constitutions. To have clearly fixed in the minds and hearts of Jesuits the sublimity of the Society's goal was fundamental, if they were to identify themselves with its authentic spirit. Nadal's sheer delight is evident when he affirms over and over again that the objective of the Society is the same as that of Christ. The goal given us is the most perfect possible, that is, the very same which the heavenly Father assigned to His only Son in His incarnation, in His life, death and resurrection... the salvation and perfection of souls achieved through full and perfect charity. Nadal's enthusiasm knows no limits: What do you think is the perfection we seek? It is not poverty, nor chastity, nor obedience. He said the same to the Jesuit students of Cologne: Our aim is not poverty, chastity or obedience, but charity and its perfection or, in other words, the greater glory of God and the love of our fellowmen. Poverty, etc., are no more than means. Finally, sober Majorcan though Nadal is, he gets carried

87 Trinitarian Inspiration of the Ignatian Charism 77.
89 Ibid n. 17.
away, as it were, into literary flights that are not his usual style: This referring all to the love of God or the greater glory of God is a most perfect goal. This is absolutely clear in all the Constitutions. Others do all for the glory of God; we, for His greater glory. It is like being on fire! 94. What a splendid literary phrase! This should not, however, surprise us: Ignatius himself, about whose literary style everybody feels competent to express a sort of superior smile, does achieve a happy turn of phrase at least on one occasion when, seeking to encourage an administrator who was hankering after priestly ministries, he assures him that that work, accepted in obedience, could be as valuable as contemplation and even more acceptable to Him, proceeding as it does from a more powerful and vigorous charity 95.

34. Love that assists even materially. Love for our fellowmen is exercised primarily in procuring their spiritual good through means that are specifically spiritual. The Formula of the Institute, n. 3, and the Constitutions are diaphanously clear on this point. It is a consequence of the essentially priestly character of the Society. But the corporal works of mercy are also included to the extent that the more important spiritual ones permit 96. It is the General's 'discretion' that should regulate the distribution of the 'forces' of the Society; he should always keep the greater service of God and the more universal good before his eyes. Such a balance should take into account the three pairs of values that Ignatius highlights when he lists his criteria for the selection of ministries: benefits for the soul — benefits for the body; matters pertaining to their greater perfection — to their lesser perfection; things which are in themselves of more good — of less good. In all these cases, the first should be preferred to the second 97.

35. Nadal, when explaining the Institute, developed this point in the following way. To sum up: nothing that charity can do to help the neighbour is excluded from our Institute, provided that all our service (omnia ministeria) is seen to be spiritual, and that we are quite clear on the point that the service proper to us is the more perfect one, namely, the purely spiritual ministries. We should not take up others that are in themselves lower except through necessity, after having given much thought to the question, with much hope and great fruit, and with the permission of Superiors; and, finally, when service in the purely spiritual field is not feasible 98.

36. But the fact that a particular ministry is spiritual is not an absolute criterion to make it capable of being exercised out of charity. Ignatius excludes some such ministries explicitly when he treats of the occupations which those in the Society should or should not undertake 99. However, we must never forget the reservation globally embracing the priorities of choice that is presumed by the clause caeteris paribus (= other considerations being equal) repeated twice over (nn. 622 and 623), with the addition in one case that it applies to everything that follows. Nor must we overlook the importance given in these criteria for the choice of ministries to the urgency and emergency of a situation, which

94 Ibid 785, n. 13.
96 Const [650].
97 Const [623].
99 Const [582].
would then demand priority of attention. Natural calamities and disasters—like outbreaks of famine, epidemics, catastrophes—make demands on our charity for assistance and help that can brook no delay.

37. The example of Ignatius.

The practical conduct of Ignatius in this matter is of a decisively instructive value for us. His action as General is the irreplaceable 'practical implementation' of the Constitutions that we must make our own. Ignatius teaches us by his deeds the primacy that charity—even initiatives of material assistance—can and must have, in given circumstances, in the totality of the Society's apostolic activity.

Aid to famine stricken. The winter of 1538—the second winter for the first companions in Rome—has gone down in history as «the winter of famine». People were living in a situation of emergency. The harvest had all but failed. Ignatius's own problems were gigantic: the campaign of defamation let loose by his slanderers threatened to ruin his whole work of founding the Society, so that he had to spend entire days in the official lobbies and the courts until he obtained a sentence of acquittal on 18th November. He had yet another problem to face: precisely at this time there elapsed the year of waiting to which Ignatius and his companions had bound themselves by the vow of making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, with the result that they were all deeply taken up with concern for their future. It is during this week, running from 18th to 23rd November, that they take the decisive step of presenting themselves to Paul III. As if all this were not enough, Ignatius was busy, on a personal level, with a matter of the greatest importance: the celebration of his First Mass, since the reason for its delay had disappeared with the cancellation of the voyage to Jerusalem. Can we really imagine the spiritual earnestness with which Ignatius prepared himself for this fresh encounter with Christ? These, then, were the circumstances in which he and his nine companions gave themselves totally to the assistance of the famine-stricken of Rome. So intense and profound was this experience that all the early historical sources of the Society dwell on its details when reporting it. Ignatius and his companions would set out at early dawn from their new residence—the house of Antonio Frangipani, next to the Tower of Melangolo—to beg for bread, wood, and straw to lie on; then they would carry it all on their shoulders to their poor apartments. Going out again, they would gather the beggars and starving people, who literally lay in the slush of the streets of Rome, bring them together and make them comfortable as best they could—some 400 of them at a time—or offer them some ration of food. Thus they were able to help more than 3,000 persons in a city which then counted scarcely 40,000 inhabitants.

38. The oppressed and exploited groups. Ignatius is not satisfied with a charity that offers material assistance merely on an individual basis. His inner vision leads him to discover the collective sad plight of very definite social groups. His charity drives him to make every effort to obtain for them a more just treatment at the hands of social structures.

---

100 Lainez, Polanco, Simon Rodriguez et al. (cf MI FN I, 126, 199 etc.) and Ignatius himself (MI Epp I 218).
101 Tacchi Venturi, Storia della Compagnia II/I 166.
a) The Jews were numerous in Rome; its Jewish quarter was full of both wealthy and miserable Jews. Not a few of them got themselves baptized through conviction, convenience or pressure. They were subjected to injustice inasmuch as, at the moment of baptism, they were required to renounce all their goods and turn them over to the official treasury as a sign of their total break with the past. Such exploitation not only made conversions difficult or altogether prevented them; it was legalized robbery. Ignatius worked, appealed, moved influential persons and succeeded in getting Paul III in March 1542 to issue the Brief ‘Cupientes Judaeos’, which allowed baptized Jews to retain their possessions.

But for Ignatius, this was not sufficient. Overcoming all the prejudices of the times, he protected and helped these Jews personally as much as he could. He started gathering them together in his own Curia adjoining the Chapel of Santa Maria della Strada, and later obtained from a person he was directing spiritually — ‘Madama Margarita’, daughter of the Emperor Charles — the foundation of separate asylums for converted Jews and Jewesses. Ignatius gives an account of this to Xavier in a letter that is full of joy, and adds: ‘we distributed among the new converts all the beds and furniture we had in the house, and the alms too we set aside and stored up for the same purpose. Seeing that this work is so well ordered, and confirmed by apostolic authority, we hope in our Lord to move on to others’. Such was the charity of Ignatius. He and his companions, living in the overcrowded house of la Strada, could not have had an excess of household furniture in it; yet he gave it all. When a field that he has tilled begins to bear abundant fruit, Ignatius hands it over to others, so he can dedicate himself to breaking new ground. Such was his system, such his conception of assistance and help.

39. b) The Beggars. Beggary had been banned in Rome. There as in other places, then as now, it was a social scourge in which authentic need got mixed up with shrewd swindling. But an indiscriminate ban had succeeded in further aggravating the sorry plight of the truly poor of those days when there was no social security, unemployment subsidy or old-age pension. The poor and the sick, the old and the crippled filled the streets of Rome. Ignatius assisted those that he could; for all, he obtained from the Pope the Brief ‘Dudum per Nos’ (1542), which mitigated the ban and established the Society of Orphans, which was to be charged with the task of sifting the poor who were sick or crippled in any way from those able-bodied others that were capable of doing work.

40. c) The courtesans. A class that was at once exploited, maintained and despised by a hypocritical society. To them, too, Ignatius directs his charity, to free them as a group from the unjust structure that oppressed them. There were already other institutions that were helping them. But it was unjust that such institutions accepted only those who agreed to spend the rest of their lives as penitents in a religious order. Ignatius rejected this as making it difficult and painful for these women to change their lives; he contended that this was in effect coercion, against the freedom of the person. He founded his own work, that of St. Martha, to which he admitted not only those who wished to enter religion as

102 MI Epp I 269.
penitents, but also others, married women and spinsters, particularly those who were known in Rome as «reputable courtesans», frequented by the nobility. All these were helped by Ignatius until some definitive solution was found for them: either rejoining their husbands, or marriage for the spinsters, or religious life, or some decent position. *A charming sight* — writes Ribadeneira — *to see this holy old man walking ahead of one of those unfortunate women, still young and good-looking, as it were making way and opening a path for her*. In keeping with his way of doing things, Ignatius also established a pious association — the Society of Grace — to see that that work of St. Martha was carried on, and obtained its canonical erection by means of the Bull of 16th. February 1543. From his own poor resources Ignatius drew money to finance the new institution, but at what great cost and with what trouble! His house of Santa Maria della Strada was full to overflowing with Jesuits, and money was scarce. And yet, when his administrator Codacio discovered in the wooded clearing of Sant’Andrea de la Fracta huge blocks of stone and marble, remains of Roman monuments, Ignatius had yet another burst and impulse of charity: *Sell those stones that you have removed, and from them obtain for me a sum amounting to one hundred ducats!* That considerable amount was all for the house of St. Martha — and this, let us never forget, in the financial circumstances in which Ignatius then was! 

41. d) *Young women in danger.* Scarcely had he handed over to others the work of St. Martha, Ignatius, in his characteristic way, embarked on another: the ‘Compagnia delle Vergini miserabili’ (= Association of hapless young women) — a work of prevention, of social protection of women, we might say today. Ignatius encouraged wealthy and charitable persons to enrol in it, and obtained pontifical approval for it. Similarly he established a group of twelve trustworthy men through whose good offices he distributed help to those ashamed to identify themselves as poor. With it was born the Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament, under the supervision of the General of the Society of Jesus.

42. I ask myself what would have been Ignatius’s attitude today in the face of the calamities of our times: the boat-people, the starving thousands in the Sahara belt, the refugees and forced migrants of today. What would have been his attitude in the face of the suffering of such clearly defined groups of victims of criminal exploitation, as are, for example, the drug-addicts? Would we be mistaken in thinking that Ignatius, in our times, would have done more than we are doing, that he would have acted in a way different from us?

43. *Ignatius’s own experience of charity.* Ignatius had arrived at this intelligent practice of charity by two routes: by the road of personal experience and by that of spiritual choice. Ignatius had been poor, voluntarily poor, painfully poor, a real beggar. He had learned to value charity in his own personal experience of need. He walked the streets of Manresa, Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca and Paris; he wandered through the ports of Barcelona, Haifa and Gaeta; he traversed the routes of Flanders and England, begging only to eat poorly. He gave up the remnants of his alms when he felt the need to surrender more completely into the provident hands of God. If at times during his studies he kept

---

103 Ribadeneira. *De actis P. N. Ignatii.* MI FN II 346.
the donations given him, it was out of a firm conviction of an 'ordered
and discerning love' directed towards himself. But, already in 1536, he
wrote that his desire was to remain always in such a condition as to
preach as a poor man, and certainly not with the embarrassing abundance
I now enjoy by reason of my studies. However that may be, as a pledge
of what I here say, I am going to send you, when my studies are finished,
the few books I now have, or may have then. Ignatius had experienced
the value of the charity of others in his own poverty. When General of
the Society, he poured out his own love and charity most generously
onto the poverty of others.

44. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that charity is a constant
point of reference in Ignatius's spiritual teaching. I shall say nothing
here of charity as a spiritual option, such as it is presented in the
Exercises or institutionalized in the Constitutions. But I must refer,
even if only in passing, to the place occupied by charity in Ignatius's
letters. In the letters addressed to his relatives in Loyola or to his bene­
factors in Barcelona, to his protectors or simply to those whom he
directed spiritually — persons of great rank or of lowly condition — to
the Jesuits scattered over Europe or Asia, in all these letters a prominent
place is repeatedly given to almsgiving, visits to hospitals and prisons,
assistance to those in need. This type of recommendation is, of course,
ever missing in the instructions with which Ignatius sends someone on
a 'mission' — be that to Trent, Germany, England or Sicily — or for the
founding of houses or of colleges. Indeed, it would seem that for Ignatius
no ministry or service, be it ever so spiritual in itself, could be deemed
complete were it not complemented by the charitable works of material
assistance. And vice versa. For it is clear that, for Ignatius, the true
exercise of love for one's fellowman is apostolic zeal, the ardent desire
to procure his salvation and perfection; but it is no less evident that
Ignatius loves man whole and entire, as did the Lord for whose sake
alone he loves.

II

THE ROOT AND FOUNDATION

45. One single object of charity

Ignatius succeeded in perfectly unifying his love of God, a most
intense love directed totally to loving the Most Holy Trinity, with love
for his fellow men. This is the model of charity that the Exercises and
the Constitutions ask of us, the integration of charity that Paul, the
apostle of service to the neighbour, and John, the apostle of love of God,
proclaimed and lived.

Paul, like Ignatius, was a convert, passionately dedicated to Christ,
to whom he showed his love by an intense service in the defence and
spread of the faith. Very few are the times, though, when he mentions
that love explicitly in his letters. He uses other expressions instead:
living for Christ, walking towards Christ, anathema on anyone who does
not love Christ, etc. Yet his love impelled him to serve his brothers,

106 Spir Diary 106.
whom he loved as intensely as he loved Christ. This tension becomes evident in one of his most beautiful texts: *I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake*™. Paul is sure that he will continue to live with them. For if, as he tells the Corinthians, he feels the overwhelming drive of the love of Christ, it is precisely because he realizes that Christ has died for all, so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them™. Moreover, his love for Christ contains an apostolic thrust, and thus the best way Paul knows to satisfy his thirst for identification with Christ is by devoting himself to the service of men, concretely of the ‘gentiles’. This service is owed to all men, inasmuch as in every man, notably in the weaker ones, there is a brother for whom Christ died™.

46. John’s teaching is identical, but in a more explicitly trinitarian framework, because for him the relationship among the Father, the Word and men is more explicit: *God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life*. This insertion of men into the heart of divine love takes place radically in the very bosom of the Trinity: *The Father loves me because I lay down my life*™ and *the Father himself loves you for loving me*. John keeps coming back to this idea: *Anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father*™; he comes to it from many different angles: *As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you*™. Moreover, this same John who so clearly states the love relationship among the Father, the Son and every man adds to it our charity-love for our brothers, which is the commandment that Jesus calls «mine» and «new». Christ, who set the commandment of brotherly love alongside the first commandment of loving God™, seems to invert the terms: we must love our brothers so that we can say that we love God. We love our neighbour, not only as Christ loved us, but because Christ loved us; and it is by loving our neighbour that we love Christ and the Father. John explains this in the words of Jesus: he leaves the world, but yet remains in each one of us. Hence we must remain united, since his presence links us together. We must be ‘one’ as he and the Father are one™. This union through love will be the witness by which the world will come to believe that the Son has been sent™. Reading this text of John, a Jesuit cannot fail to be reminded of the Society’s urgent call to mutual love so that it can remain united and fulfill its mission. There is no better comment on that text than n. 671 of our Constitutions.

47. In the first of his letters John dwells on the inseparableness of love of God from love of neighbour, understanding love-charity in its

---

™ Phil 1:23.
™ 2 Cor 5:14.
™ 1 Cor 8:11.
™ Jn 3:16; cf also 10:15 and 17:30.
™ Jn 10:17.
™ Jn 16:27.
™ Jn 14:21.
™ Jn 15:9.
™ Mt 22:39.
™ Jn 17:11.
™ Jn 17:21-23.
operative aspect as gift of self and sharing. The theological root — the *root and foundation*, in Paul's metaphor — is the very divine essence: God *is love*\(^{118}\). So absolutely is he love that *love comes from God and... anyone who fails to love can never have known God*. A love that consists in the giving of self, the supreme evidence of which was given when the Father sent *his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away*. Immediately John draws the consequences of this: *Since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another*. And then his final conclusion: *As long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us*\(^{119}\). God the Father wanted it this way because so it had to be. Neither the love that is in him, nor the love that he has put into man, can be broken up into separate parts. It is a drive that is total and indivisible in man just as it is one in God. We love God because he gave us his Son, we love our brothers because the Son gave himself for them and is in them. Responding to the Father's love with our love for our brothers, we share in the divine life that is love.

48. This brotherly communion of mutual love in Christ is 'koinonia', that shared attitude of brotherly service which shows itself in deeds. In the Society, this 'koinonia' issuing from fraternal love constitutes the totality of our mission to help men to 'believe' — in the Johannine sense of a proclamation of the faith and a dedication to Christ — by spreading the faith, and to help them to love one another by promoting justice among them. Brotherly love is an expression of our divine sonship: *Whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets*. We can be sure that we love God's children if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us\(^{120}\). We cannot love God cut off from others, nor in the abstract. It is a trilateral love. To love our brothers, and to show this love in our actions, is not something adventitious, something added to our love of God to complete it. It is a constitutive element demanded by the very notion of the love of God.

49. But we must make the converse statement too; by the very fact that we are Christians, we cannot genuinely love men unless we love God. What is asked of us is not a love of 'philanthropy', but a 'philadelphia', a love of brotherhood. In every man, with all his concrete circumstances, there is a value that does not depend on me, but that makes him like me. God is within him, with his love, waiting for me, and this is a call that I cannot neglect. To refuse love — and the service that goes with love — even to a single person is to refuse to recognize his dignity and, at the same time, to abdicate my own, which has no better foundation than his. It is most important to keep clearly in mind this equality of dignity between each of us and our fellow men, if we are to grasp the viciousness there is in hatred, abuse of the freedom of others, exploitation, in a word, in lack of mercy. 'Anomía' — contempt for and generalized violation of law, the predominance of selfishness — has its clearest condemnation in 'agapé', that disinterested and active love which should reign among men. In the unavoidable clash of interests at the heart of our complex human relations, only the values that unify us all can resolve the conflict; we have to accept that even the most solidly founded rights of some must at times yield to the needs of others. God receives in others the love we have for him, and he accepts and cherishes

\(^{118}\) 1 Jn 4:8.

\(^{119}\) 1 Jn 4:12.

\(^{120}\) 1 Jn 5:1.
as a service the sacrifice of what we have been given as his sons, but yield in the name of brotherhood. The presence of each man in my life becomes, transcendently, a form of the presence of God, and my acceptance of my brother becomes my implicit acceptance of God. This is what someone has called the « sacrament of our neighbour » 121.

50. Charity and faith

God's love for man precedes our faith and does not depend on it. What proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners 122. In us, on the other hand, theological charity presupposes faith, and only in charity does faith reach its fullness. In Christ Jesus whether you are circumcised or not makes no difference — what matters is faith that makes its power felt through love 123. Faith gives meaning to our charity, while charity activates and animates our faith. When Christ stimulates our faith in him and in the Father so that we will 'know', he is asking of us not merely a witness-statement or an acknowledgment, but an acceptance of his identity as the One Sent and as the Son, an acceptance of his message of conversion; he is asking us to keep his commandments 124, especially the new commandment, his own commandment. To us Jesuits, once again, this is all quite familiar; doesn't it remind us of the Ignatian rhythm in three movements: « an interior knowledge of the Lord — in order to love him more — and to follow him »? Ignatius's 'interior knowledge' is no different from the 'faith', the 'believing', the 'knowing' that John speaks of; and it leads inexorably to action and to service, as it does in John. This is the real meaning of the assertion that the Jesuit has to be 'a homo serviens ', a man given to the service of God and to the service of his brothers.

51. Let me go back to the similarity between all this and Paul's spiritual experience. Paul said: The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake 125. It is a faith that, as Paul goes on to say, is shown in action by charity. Paul would have felt himself a traitor to the faith he received along the road to Damascus, had he not put it at the service of his mission. For faith bears within itself the seed of mission. Such was the case of Abraham. And, in its own way, the case of Ignatius. For them, works born of faith are part of a divine purpose issuing from on high. To the extent of the grace that is given to each individual, they are also the purpose of the faith that is given him. This is how Paul understood it: We pray continually that God will... by his power fulfill all your desires for goodness and complete all that you have been doing through faith 126. The vitality of faith, its power for good when animated by charity, is one of the arguments he uses most frequently and vigorously for carrying out the designs of God which are revealed in faith. The only purpose of this instruction is that there should be love, coming out of a pure heart, a clear conscience and a sincere faith 127. We find the same juxtaposition of faith and charity in the letter to Philemon: I hear of the

122 Rom 5:8.
124 1 Jn 5:2-3.
125 Gal 2:20.
126 2 Thes 1:11.
127 1 Tim 1:5.
love and the faith which you have for the Lord Jesus and for all the saints. I pray that this faith will give rise to a sense of fellowship 128.

52. John’s teaching is no different. The two loves, which for him are inseparable — the love of God and the love of our brothers — are born of faith. Faith is an integral part of the Father’s ‘commandments’: His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another, as he told us to 129. For John, believing means knowing; it means entering into Christ and sharing in his life, his action and his message. At the same time it means letting oneself be penetrated by Christ. Thus faith, according to John, necessarily calls for love and the works of love, the works of charity: Everybody who loves is begotten by God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God 130. John is convinced that faith and charity are inseparable.

We can say the same about the apostle James too. In a style more dramatic than epistolary, he succeeds in devising a dialogue between one who has only faith and one who translates his faith into works. We all know the final sentence of that dialogue, which is made up of a series of arguments and rebuttals: A body dies when it is separated from the spirit; and in the same way faith, if it is separated from good deeds, is dead. Or, as an earlier verse says, quite dead 131.

53. Obviously, the works that John, Paul and James refer to are very different: they include piety, rectitude, patience, courage in giving witness, use of the gifts of the Spirit. But they also refer very explicitly to charity: Anyone who says, « I love God », and hates his brothers, is a liar, since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen... Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets 132. Included too — many unfortunately forget this! — is the observance of God’s commandments, as John himself reminds us in a complementary text: We can be sure that we love God’s children if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us 133. So unshakable is his conviction that he adds immediately: This is the victory over the world—our faith. A faith that works through charity. For if faith without works is not real faith, the converse is also true: charity without faith is not charity, either. For Paul this is incontestable. His entire argumentation against Israel is based precisely on the insufficiency of works founded on the law, now that the hour of faith has come. What gives them value is faith: The pagans who were not looking for righteousness found it all the same, a righteousness that comes of faith, while Israel, looking for a righteousness derived from law failed to do what that law required. Why did they fail? Because they relied on good deeds instead of trusting in faith 134.

54. This Pauline criterion and analysis are still profoundly applicable today. I know very well that in this text Paul is referring to justification. But it still has all its value inasmuch as it condemns a salvation

128 Phil 5:6.
129 1 Jn 3:23.
130 1 Jn 4:7-8.
131 Jm 2:17 and 26.
132 1 Jn 4:19 to 5:1.
133 1 Jn 5:2-4.
134 Rom 9:30-32.
that we human beings strive to obtain — and to impose on others — on the basis of works, the assertion of rights and the imposition of obligations. We forget that it is faith that justifies, that makes us free, that blossoms into charity and gives meaning to our works. Faith without works is a dead faith. But works without faith, and without charity vitalizing it, are no more than well-meaning humanitarianism, philanthropy.

To try to resolve the staggering problems of today with economic, technological or political solutions that lack a faith infused with charity, is to accumulate works upon works, but not 'sicut oportet'. At best, such solutions settle or mitigate only superficial levels and material facets of the problem. But they leave the nucleus of the problem untouched, they do not reach the depths of man nor recognize his most profound values, the stifling or denial of which is the origin of the problem.

55. Charity and justice

The universal cry for justice is a 'sign of the times': hundreds of millions of men and women of every continent and race, living in the most varied situations, are crying out for justice. If we listen to the other camp, the one that enacts the laws and defines what is just, it would seem that everything, or almost everything, has been done in the best possible way that circumstances permit. And yet, never has it been so clear as today that juridical edicts are inadequate to satisfy this hunger and thirst for justice. When law is divorced from morality, justice loses its ethical dimension and is fragmented into partial and subjective 'justices'. The conception of law held by quite a few modern states is not far from « ius, quia iussum », thus sanctioning the divorce between what is legal and what is just. Of itself, statutory law alone cannot be the source of rights, for there are rights antecedent to all laws, and there is justice wherever even a single such right exists. When a God-given right is disregarded or repressed by a 'legal' injustice, it provokes the reaction of an illegal 'justice'. Not every legal justice is objectively just. To reduce the distance that separates justice from law is one of the prime objectives of any social and authentically human progress. But that can never be achieved as long as law and justice are not infused with charity.

56. There is an apparent charity, though, that is a mere cloak for injustice, when people are given, apart from the law and as if by benevolence, what is their due in justice. It is almsgiving as a subterfuge. We see many instances of these two aberrations today: spurious justice and spurious charity. Tyrannical regimes that impose laws violating rights, and paternalistic systems that offer 'charitable' aid programs instead of a clear policy of justice, are evils that make impossible the establishment of brotherhood and peace among men. Law, rights and justice cannot be separated. Nor can they prescind from charity. The document issued by the Synod of 1971, entitled Justice in the World, says: Love of neighbour and justice are inseparable. Love is above all a requirement of justice, that is, an acknowledgment of the dignity and of the rights of one's neighbour. One cannot act justly without love. Even when we resist injustice we cannot prescind from love, since the universality of love is, by the express desire of Christ, a commandment that admits of no exceptions.

57. Well then, what is the precise relationship between charity and justice? John Paul II has explained this in his encyclical « Dives in Mise-
Love conditions justice, so to speak, and ultimately justice is the servant of charity. Obviously, the promotion of justice is indispensable, because it is the first step to charity. To claim justice sometimes seems revolutionary, a subversive claim. And yet, it is so small a request: we really ought to ask for more, we should go beyond justice, to crown it with charity. Justice is necessary, but it is not enough. Charity adds its transcendent, inner dimension to justice and, when it has reached the limit of the realm of justice, can keep going even further. Because justice has its limits, and stops where rights terminate; but love has no boundaries because it reproduces, on our human scale, the infiniteness of the divine essence and gives to each of our human brothers a claim to our unlimited service.

That is why anyone who has assimilated Christ's teaching and lives it radically cannot be satisfied with resisting injustice and promoting justice on an immanent human plane, but must of necessity be moved to do this out of love. The Church has made enormous progress in its understanding of the relationship between the exercise of justice and the practice of charity, and more and more it sees them as inseparable. Because justice is not measured only by one's obligation, but has to take cognizance of others' rights and needs; moreover, our concept of man, his values and his rights has progressed considerably. The Church's teachings on religious freedom and on the relations between Church, state and society, are but one example of this evolution. The Church fixes its gaze ever more deeply on man, for in him it meets Christ. Man is indivisible: the rights that flow from his human nature, which are the object of justice, blend with his right to charity in virtue of his being image and son of God. Working for the re-establishment of justice where it is lacking is a Christian duty. If we failed to meet this challenge, our charity would be essentially and radically deficient — in hibernation, so to speak. The wounds that our brothers suffer by being deprived of basic rights would in such a case not make us feel their pain, nor evoke in us a 'brotherly' response. We would be accomplices in the 'sin of the world' and we would have failed to follow Paul's bidding: Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do. That 'sin of the world' is injustice, and the 'great commandment of the world' is the love that Christ proclaimed.

There is a difference — though we are sometimes hard put to define it exactly — between justice and charity. The task of justice is to carry out clearly-defined works which can be the object of a contract, and the execution of which can be verified: these are obligations that do not require a man's dedication, but only his concrete acts. There is only one virtue that requires a man's whole being, that involves him in his entirety: love. Love is not the object of a contract, nor a task to be accomplished within a fixed time; it is not an added quality, but a vital force that is nourished by the very fact of being put into action. Love for one's neighbour gives not only this or that — as justice does — but one's whole self, and is expressed in concrete acts of the other virtues:

135 Dives in Misericordia 4.
136 Rom 12:2.
beneficence (which gives to another of one’s own), or justice (which gives him what is his own), or charity (by which one gives oneself).

60. Anyone who wants a listing — even if not exhaustive — of the human rights in whose enforcement or promotion charity ought to assist justice, and even go beyond it, need do no more than page through the document ‘The Promotion of Human Rights: An Evangelical Requirement in the Ministry’, issued by the Synod of 1974. Dignity and human rights find their fullest expression in the gospel, say the Synod Bishops. And we may add that our knowledge of the extent of human rights is far from being complete. Just as we still do not know the limit of man’s physical capacities, as seemingly unbeatable records keep falling, so we cannot determine what a thoroughly developed moral conscience and a sense of Christian brotherhood and equality will some day affirm to be the full scope of human rights. The history of labour and social movements shows this only too clearly. Respect for man’s rights and duties is, Vatican II tells us, what constitutes the common good\textsuperscript{137}. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights gives a long list of basic rights, and subsequent international pacts apply those rights to particular areas. The scope of justice is clear, then. But does not our increasingly clear knowledge of what are the rights to which justice is correlative, when contrasted with the extremely bitter reality we see around us, reveal a disillusioning contradiction between our hopes and that reality? Only charity can, by seeing to it that justice is applied in all its amplitude, keep injustice from erupting in the tragic violence that we must constantly deplore.

61. Charity, a higher form of justice

Justice, then, even justice based on law and on rights, is not everywhere and always enough. There are versions of justice that take no account of the concrete existential situation of the persons and conditions to which it is applied. There are kinds of justice that are a cover-up for vested interests. A justice, a law that demands too little, leaves the helpless or oppressed man defenceless. So too, a violent law, a violent justice that demands too much, can become a hangman’s noose for everyone. And even a justice with all the guarantees of equity can, if mercilessly applied, be inhuman. \textit{The experience of the past and of our own time demonstrates that justice alone is not enough, that it can even lead to the negation and destruction of itself, if that deeper power, which is love, is not allowed to shape human life in its various dimensions. It has been precisely historical experience that, among other things, has led to the formulation of the saying: \textit{summum ius, summa iniuria}}\textsuperscript{138}. This sort of justice is not what Christ came to bring to the world. By the law, we were all condemned. But the justice of Christ went beyond the law, motivated as it was by charity. This is the charity that among men must complement justice, making it a higher sort of justice. It is the only one that can go on, beyond mere justice, to the point of meeting the needs of men. For its scope, going beyond the slogans of «equality for all» and «to each according to his merits», reaches out «to each according to his needs», which is the only truly human and Christian norm. That higher form of justice, which is charity, will have

\textsuperscript{137} Dignitatis Humanae 6; Gaudium et Spes 26 and 73.
\textsuperscript{138} Dives in Misericordia 12.
a preferential care for the poor, the weak and the oppressed in the name of a strict right that, without charity, could turn out to be a *summa iniuria* 139.

62. The equity of justice has nothing to fear from charity, on condition that justice protect and defend all of man's rights, because its equity not only does not lessen its impartiality, but makes it even more perceptive and clear-sighted, enabling it to appreciate the human and vital depths of every situation and to act accordingly. That is what we mean by asserting that charity is a higher form of justice, with a far loftier perspective, one that soars up to the heights of the divine justice itself, which is all charity and mercy. And with a more penetrating scope too, since it plunges down to the innermost depths of man, to his pain, his need, his helplessness, which are realities that are lost sight of when he is treated impersonally, as a mere subject of the law.

63. This is that higher form of justice which Christ promulgated in his Good News. John Paul II has given clear prominence to this concept in his 'Dives in Misericordia', when commenting on the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke's gospel. We all know what the gospel of John tells us in this regard. And it is significant that another evangelist, Matthew, in the three passages where he uses the word 'eleos', compassionate charity, always contrasts it with legal prescriptions. *Alas for you, scribes and pharisees, you hypocrites! You who pay your tithe of mint and dill and cummin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, good faith!* 140 Against the reproach of breaking the law by eating with publicans and sinners, Jesus defends himself by citing a text of Hosea: *Go and learn the meaning of the words: What I want is mercy, not sacrifice* 141. When the pharisees accuse his disciples of violating the law of the sabbath, Jesus replies that this law can conflict with another, even higher law: that of mercy 142. So clear is this that in extreme cases, necessity has gained entrance into the law by the door of *epikeia*. The duty of helping someone who has suffered disaster, say by offering our services, can in fact oblige us even though it may involve a violation of lesser laws. Charity at times becomes a matter of strict justice.

64. The social dimension of charity

Charity has a social dimension, deriving not only from the universality of charity but also from man's social condition. Charity on a merely personal basis is not enough. In a world like today's, which is growing more and more socialized, where man finds himself caught in the mesh of socio-economic and political structures of every sort, charity has to be understood and put into practice on a social scale as well. On this social level charity is of less immediate effects and perhaps less rewarding; it is more anonymous and more long-range before its results become apparent. But, except in emergency cases, it is more effective. It aims precisely at improving those structures on which depends the welfare of groups of our fellow men who have particular needs and wants. This

---

140 Mt 23:23.
141 Mt 9:12.
142 Mt 12:7.
is a charity that must almost of necessity look for help from institutions and organizations that, by their action on structures, can modify the complex factors that affect the common good. No juridical order is beyond improvement: in all of them there is room for betterment, so that social charity, working through social justice and going beyond it, becomes operative. The danger in even the best designed human structures is their rigidity. The stability that we strive to give them is both their strength and their weakness, for their inflexibility and immutability can make them oppressive. Charity, with its dynamism that impels it to go beyond the law and with its independence of all political ties, is the best corrective against the rigid hardening to which all systems and structures are doomed. Charity is the vanguard of justice.

65. Let us not exaggerate, however. Not every structure is necessarily unjust. Indeed, structures are necessary, and each new conquest in charity has to be integrated into a structure, modifying it and making it flexible and progressive. Such charity, social in its purpose, must be social in its agents too. That is, it must arise from a social group, which for us means from the people of God, embracing all of us. It is a duty arising from our common faith, from our sharing in divine sonship and from the fact that we are brothers. We are bound by our solidarity and co-responsibility. The Lord, who praises the individual charity of the Good Samaritan, has made it quite clear that he refuses to let personal charity be an excuse for omitting charity towards the group, and that he does not accept a merely individualistic statement of the problem, as in When did we see you [in the singular] hungry or thirsty, etc.? Christ focuses on the need of the group as such when he uses the category: the ‘little ones’. And he gives his reason in these two words: «my brothers» 143. Precisely because man integrates his individual personality in the social reality of the Kingdom, and because all men are called to it 144, the law of charity, which Christ typified as the law of his Kingdom, has to bear in mind our social condition; there has to be a social charity. This social charity is the peak expression of ‘agapé’, that disinterested, anonymous, long-range love, for its own sake as well as for the love of God, that has been placed in our hearts.

66. When the 32nd General Congregation, with its supreme authority, defined in a decree how the «defensio et propagatio fidei» of our Formula is to be translated to apply to the concrete situation of today’s world, it was aware that countless men and women everywhere on earth are being denied justice. It therefore interpreted the «defensio et propagatio fidei» — or «being a Jesuit today», which is the same thing — as meaning to engage, under the standard of the cross, in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes 145. The process by which the Society arrived at that formulation was much like the conversion process of the Exercises and followed the same dynamic of total, loving and distinguished surrender to Christ’s cause. The Society acknowledged its past deficiencies in the service of faith and the promotion of justice, and asked itself before Christ crucified out of love, it chose participation in this struggle for faith and justice as the focal point that identifies what Jesuits today are and do.

143 Mt 25:31-46.
144 Rom 11:25.
145 GC 32, 2:2.
67. That decision seemed a great step forward, and the Society has been striving since then to carry it out. We still need perspective to evaluate the current balance of well-meant failures and undeniable successes which that option has produced in the Church through the Society. In the light of the most recent encyclical, 'Dives in Misericordia', we may say that, with all the imperfections of any human choice, it was an option in the right direction. However, this is not sufficient, it is not the last step. The Congregation realized that charity is the 'final step' and basis of everything, and that true justice starts from and is crowned in charity. There is no genuine conversion to the love of God without conversion to the love of neighbour and, therefore, to the demands of justice. Hence, fidelity to our apostolic mission requires that we propose the whole of Christian salvation and lead others to embrace it. Christian salvation consists in an undivided love of the Father and of the neighbour and of justice. Since evangelization is proclamation of that faith which is made operative in love of others, the promotion of justice is indispensable to it. Further on in that same Decree 4, the Congregation affirmed: If the promotion of justice is to attain its ultimate end, it should be carried out in such a way as to bring men and women to desire and to welcome the eschatological freedom and salvation offered to us by God in Christ. The methods we employ and the activities we undertake should express the spirit of the Beatitudes and bring people to a real reconciliation. We should keep these paragraphs of Decree 4 well in mind, so that our reading of it will not be incomplete, slanted and unbalanced. The Society still has to advance in its understanding of, and search for, that justice which it has pledged itself to promote. I am sure the effort will lead us to discover an even wider field — that of charity.

68. 'Agape' against 'anomia'

Yes, justice is not enough. The world needs a stronger cure, a more effective witness and more effective deeds: those of love. When we glance over the newspaper headlines and seek somehow for the real reason why human relations are at such a low ebb — within the family, the state, the world of work, the economic order, and internationally — every explanation in terms of justice and injustice seems inadequate. Never have people talked so much about justice, and yet never has justice been so flagrantly disregarded. This reminds me of the scene with which Matthew begins the apocalyptic section of his gospel: it is a short literary sketch, drawn with strong and expressive strokes. It contains one verse that is worth its weight in gold, a deep, stark and accurate explanation of what is happening today: such will be the spread of wickedness, that love in most men will grow cold. Wickedness and love are expressed in the original Greek by the two words: 'anomia' and 'agape'. The two grow in inverse proportion one to the other. It is important to dwell a while on these two concepts.

69. 'Anomia' is, as many versions translate it, wickedness. Literally, it is the total absence of law, or the violation and scorn of law.

---

146 GC 32, 4:28.
147 GC 32, 4:33.
148 Mt 24:4-14.
149 Mt 24:12.
It is the exaltation of selfishness with no regard at all for the norm, the flouting of law: in a word, injustice. It is the repetition of that primeval pride which led to man's fall—the first sin—and which keeps sin in the world even today. In the gospel text just quoted, 'anomía' is related to the chaos described in preceding lines: wars, famines, calamities, false rumours. Men, who are at once promoters and victims of this anomalía, compound the evils: false redeemers, treachery, desertion, widespread hatred. These are the disastrous consequences of the disregard for justice, of the protection of one's own interests to the detriment of others' rights and needs, and the detriment of the common good. The right of might replaces the might of right: it nullifies God's command, revealed in Jesus, that love and brotherhood should rule the relationships among men. It is, in the technical sense, the rule of immorality, ethical degeneration. Anomía is the absence of justice, iniquity in its etymological sense: the absence of equity, injustice.

70. 'Agapé' (a favourite word with John, but one that in Matthew appears only in this text is disinterested love, the urge to self-giving that our benevolence towards others prompts us to. It is the word that aptly expresses God's love for us. It is the sort of love among human beings that Christ termed his commandment, the new commandment. It is the sign that we have 'known' the Father. For those who do not believe, it is the guarantee and test of the faith that is alive in us. Agapé-love, in contradistinction to 'eros', is the center around which history is unified, just as anomalía is its divisive factor. Because, we must remember, although 'agapé' is the term for both man's love of God and his love for his brothers, we are using it here in the second sense. This is clear by the fact that it is contrasted with anomalía, and evident from the content of this entire eschatological section of Matthew, which ends precisely by exalting love and charity towards our brothers as the criterion of sifting at the Last Judgment.

71. Agapé and anomalía are antithetical. Matthew centers the cosmic distress of the final age on this duel between anomalía-wickedness-injustice and agapé-love. Anomía: we seem to be reading the chronicle of contemporary history. An assault on man, an arbitrary and violent imposition of authority over persons, indifference towards people's needs, a merciless and blind justice: injustice. Agapé: a disinterested impulse that leads us to understand, to empathize, to share, to help and to heal, born of faith in the love that God has for us and that we see revealed in our brothers. That love is still being given in today's world. As Nadal used to say, it is a flame that has always been lit, and still is, in the Church and in our least Society, and that we strive to keep alive and quicken. A flame that is a beacon, a sign of hope, a light for our way, and warmth for our hearts. Love unites, anomalía divides. Matthew shows these two forces in a permanent state of combat, in an apocalyptic crescendo. Anomía is the substantial, historical and cosmic injustice that undermines the gospel-inspired basis of human relations. Agapé is the evangelical message of love and of peace, all that gives meaning to the life that is born of faith, both personal and communitarian or social.

72. The message of Matthew leaves the door open to hope: He who perseveres to the end will be saved. Persevering despite adverse forces, despite others' incomprehension, despite our own discouragement. In

150 Mt 25:31-46.
order to overcome, we must persevere in the love of charity that is linked to our faith and calls for the promotion of justice. This charity is the world's only real hope for salvation. To persevere: that is the watchword in Mark's gospel too⁴¹ and in Luke's: *You will be saved if you persevere*⁴².

73. I am firmly convinced that the Society, in virtue of the trinitarian inspiration of its Ignatian charism, rooted and grounded in love, is providentially prepared to enter the struggle and be engaged effectively in curbing the spread of anomia and working for the victory of love. The plight of the world, I can confidently assert, so deeply wounds our sensibilities as Jesuits that it sets the inmost fibres of our apostolic zeal a-tingling. Our historical mission is involved in all this, for the purpose of our Society is the defence and propagation of the faith, and we know that faith moves and is moved by charity, and that charity brings about and goes beyond justice. The struggle for faith, the promotion of justice, the commitment to charity, all these are our objective, and in it lies our 'raison d'être'. Our 'accommodata renovatio' consists in letting ourselves be imbued by this idea and in living it with all the intensity of the Ignatian 'magis'. In this way we shall have reached the ultimate source of Ignatius's trinitarian charism: the divine essence, which is love.

* * *

Let me end now greeting you all, as well as every Jesuit who will read these pages, with that wonderful Pauline formula: *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying*⁴³.

THE HEART OF JESUS, RÉSUMÉ AND SYMBOL OF LOVE

Having reached this point, when we see that love is the very core of Christian — and therefore Ignatian — spirituality, I feel somewhat obliged to add a final consideration.

What I have said so far may be synthesized as follows:

1. Love (service) for our brothers, for Christ, for the Father, is the single and indivisible object of our charity.

2. Love resolves the dichotomies and tensions that can arise in an imperfectly understood Ignatian spirituality. For instance:

   - The tension between faith and justice is resolved in charity. Faith has to be informed by charity, 'fides informata caritate', and so too must justice, which thus becomes a higher form of justice: it is charity that calls for justice.

   - The tension between one's own and one's neighbour's perfection. Both should be the perfection of one and the same charity, which tends to keep growing, as well intensively in itself, as extensively in the spread to and perfection of our fellow men.

⁴² Lk 21:19.
The tension between prayer and active apostolic work is resolved in the 'contemplativus in actione', in seeking God in all things (the Contemplation for Attaining Love).

The tension among the three religious vows disappears when their motivation and observance are inspired and impelled by charity (the same can be said of the fourth vow).

The tension between discernment and obedience. Charity should be present both at the origin and in the final goal of discernment: the presence of this 'agapé' enables us to discern God's will (Rom 12:2), it is an intuition of charity (Eph 3:18-19; Col 2:2). Obedience similarly is an expression of that same divine will. Both superior and subject ought to be animated by charity, with the intuitiveness that is proper to love (Therrien: Le discernement dans les écrits pauliniens, p. 179).

3. Love is the solution to the apostolic problems created by the wickedness (anomía) of today's world.

4. Love is the very depth of the personality and work of Jesus Christ, that which gives unity to it all.

5. Love is also the deepest element of our life and activity, since with Jesus Christ we share one common Spirit (the Person, who is love), who makes us cry out like Christ: Abba, Father!

Love, then, understood in all its depth and breadth (both charity and mercy), is the synthesis of the whole life of Jesus Christ, and should be that of the Jesuit's whole life too.

Now, the natural symbol of love is the heart. The heart of Christ, therefore, is the natural symbol for representing and inspiring our personal and institutional spirituality, leading us to the very source and abyss of the human-divine love of Jesus Christ.

And so, at the close of this address, I would like to tell the Society something that I believe I should not pass over in silence.

From my noviceship on, I have always been convinced that in the so-called «Devotion to the Sacred Heart» there is summed up a symbolic expression of the very core of the Ignatian spirit and an extraordinary power — 'ultra quam speraverint' — both for personal perfection and for apostolic fruitfulness. This conviction is still mine today. It may have surprised some that during my generalate I have said relatively little on this topic. There was a reason for it, which we might call pastoral. In recent decades the very phrase 'the Sacred Heart' has not failed to provoke emotional and allergic reactions in some, partly perhaps as a reaction to forms of presentation and terminology linked with tastes of a bygone age. So I thought it advisable to let some time go by, in the certainty that that attitude, more emotional than rational, would gradually change.

I cherished, and still do cherish, the conviction that the immense value of so deep a spirituality — which the Popes have termed excellent 154, which employs so universal and so human a biblical symbol 155, and a word, 'heart', that is a genuine source-word (Urwort) — would before long come back into usage.

For this reason, much to my regret, I have spoken and written relatively little on this subject, although I have often mentioned it in

154 Cf Leo XIII, Annum Sacrum, 1899; Pius XI, Miserentissimus Redemptor, 1928; Pius XII, Haereticis Aquas, 1956; Paul VI, Investigabiles Divitias, 1965.
155 Eph 1:18.
private conversation with individuals and find in this devotion one of the most profound affective source of my interior life.

As I bring to an end this series of conferences on the Ignatian charism, I could not but give the Society an explanation for this silence of mine, which I trust will be understood. And at the same time, I did not wish to draw the pall of silence over my deep conviction that all of us, as the Society of Jesus, should reflect and discern before Christ crucified what this devotion has meant for the Society, and what it should mean even today. In today's circumstances, the world offers us challenges and opportunities that can be fully met only with the power of this love of the Heart of Christ.

This is the message that I wanted to communicate to you. There is no question of seeking to force or impose anything in an area where love precisely is involved. But I do wish to say: Give thought to this message, and **ponder on what presents itself to your mind**\(^{156}\). It would be sad if, having so great a treasure in our spirituality, even our institutional spirituality, we were to leave it aside for largely specious reasons.

If you want my advice, I would say to you, after 53 years of living in the Society and almost 16 of being its General, that there is a tremendous power latent in this devotion to the Heart of Christ. Each of us should discover it for himself—if he has not already done so—and then, entering deeply into it, apply it to his personal life in whatever way the Lord may suggest and grant. There is here an extraordinary grace that God offers us.

The Society needs the 'dynamis' contained in this symbol and in the reality that it proclaims: the love of the Heart of Christ. Perhaps what we need is an act of ecclesial humility, to accept what the Supreme Pontiffs, the General Congregations and the Generals of the Society have incessantly repeated. And yet, I am convinced that there could be few proofs of the spiritual renewal of the Society so clear as a widespread and vigorous devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Our apostolate would receive new strength and we would see its effects very soon, both in our personal lives and in our apostolic activities.

Let us not fall into the presumptuous temptation of considering ourselves superior to a devotion that is expressed in a symbol or in a graphic representation of it. Let us not join the wise and prudent of this world from whom the Father keeps hidden his truths and mysteries, while he reveals them to those who are or make themselves little ones\(^ {157}\). Let us have that simplicity of heart which is the first condition for a profound conversion: **Unless you change and make yourselves like little children** ...\(^ {158}\). Those are Christ's words, and we might translate them in this way: « If you want, as individuals and as a Society, to enter into the treasures of the Kingdom and to help build it up with an extraordinary effectiveness, make yourselves like the poor whom you wish to serve. You keep on saying so often that the poor have taught you more than many books; learn from them, then, this very simple lesson: acknowledge my love in my Heart.»

---

\(^{156}\) Ex Sp 53.
\(^{157}\) Lk 11:21; Mt 11:25.
\(^{158}\) Mt 18:3.