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Ignatian Spirituality and Ecology: Entering into Conversation with the Earth

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Editor's note: A version of this paper was presented at the International Seminar on Ignatian Pedagogy and Spirituality on November 7, 2014 in Manresa/Barcelona. The author was recently interviewed at Regis University about Pope Francis' latest encyclical: *Laudato Si*. <https://youtu.be/hi3VUYfyGsY>

The Earth, in all its wonder and diversity of creatures, is in crisis, and responding to this crisis will require every ounce of our willingness, skill, creativity and commitment. Any contemporary theology that claims to address the ecological crisis will need to be a theology that understands the human person as part of the natural world. My assertion is that committed Christians have a particular role in the environmental movement because of our understanding of both the Incarnation and communion. A communal theology, which takes seriously the incarnational grounding of our human identity, transforms humanity's relationship to the natural world and inspires an enriched approach to the ecological movement. I would argue that the sacramental tradition of Catholicism, and especially Ignatian spirituality, offers unique points of entry into ecological spirituality and thus the restoration of creation. When the great themes of Christian theology, such as covenant and incarnation, are brought to our contemporary understanding of ecology, with an attitude that is critical yet respects the beauty and depth of both disciplines, they raise our ecological vision from one of mere materialism to one of reconciliation, re-creation, and ultimately resurrection.

In what follows, I do not pretend to offer the full realization of what will come from this meeting of Ignatian Spirituality and an ecological imagination, but I hope to offer a few initial approaches. The tradition of Ignatius provides a foundational dimension to the spirituality of the contemporary Church. In examining aspects of this spirituality, I hope to show how both its incarnational grounding and the character of kinship (communion of subjects) may act as means to understand and encounter God as Creator,¹ thus allowing our 'kinship' with the Earth and all of creation to inform our encounter with the

Incarnate Christ. Ignatian spirituality demands a critical awareness of the environment in our daily lives, moving us from a sense of mere stewardship of the Earth to a deeper committed covenant of membership in the order of creation. One manifestation of this deeper covenant is found in a Eucharistic Ecology that both emerges from the tradition and is imaged in Ignatian spirituality. This view is not simply instrumental, but rather sacramental: the very relational quality of God as actualized in creation. Such a perspective recognizes that we are engaged in a relationship with the Incarnate God, and, therefore, must see ourselves as kin with all creation, both biologically and spiritually. The model and movements of the Ignatian Examen, serve as a tool for persons to enter into the conversation through this transformative practice. The world can no longer sustain the dichotomies of spirit and matter or ecology and spirituality. The responsibility is ours—perhaps especially those of us graced by the gift of Ignatian spirituality—to reconcile these opposites for the life of the world. This demands an ecological conversion and commitment, by which we address the current environmental crisis with a fresh recognition of our kinship with the created order. A new-found communion can enable us to overcome abstraction and to know the bonds of Heaven to Earth, of Spirit to Matter.

Applying the Spiritual Exercises: A Way of Commitment

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, we find a basis for both a creation-centered and resurrection-centered approach to Ecological Spirituality. The fullest expression of this approach is found in the *Contemplation to Attain Divine Love*. However, there are several key mediations that assist in sensitizing us to the ecological issues of our time. Ignatius' view of Christ as "Eternal Lord of All things"²² -- a

resurrection centered approach -- addresses the polarization of human transformation over against the redemption of creation. To argue that Ignatius was focused on the transformation of the natural world would be anachronistic; however, it is clear that for him creation is the place for salvation. Indeed, it is within the wonder of creation that we begin to comprehend Ignatius' mystical principle of "finding God in All things." At the beginning of the Exercises, we experience God through creation around us and we are moved spontaneously "to praise, reverence, and serve." In the third rule of discernment, Ignatius indicates that we cannot know God apart from creation. He presents consolation as "an interior movement...aroused in the soul, by which it is inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord, as a consequence, can love no created thing for its own sake, but only the Creator of them all" (SpEx #316). The movement toward indifference (i.e., relating freely) in the Principle and Foundation, the Meditation on the Incarnation, and the Meditation on the Two Standards assist in increasing our ecological awareness.

The Principle and Foundation: An Invitation to Relationship

Ignatian indifference in the Principle and Foundation does not imply a lack of concern for the natural world, in fact it is meant to cultivate understanding of "the end for which we are created" (i.e. compassionate awareness and gratitude for life with God.) As the retreatant acknowledges her own creaturehood before God, there is an increase in knowledge of her role in that self-same creation. The language and instrumental focus on creation can certainly be read in an anthropocentric manner; however, throughout the Exercises, Ignatius makes it clear that creation is both a resource from God as well as an avenue to God. Indeed, he emphasizes that God is both dwelling in all creation, and co-laboring with us in creation. We must remember that the Principle and Foundation exists as a starting point, set within the larger dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises – the goal of which is always greater interior freedom.³ Thus, Ignatian indifference is not a matter of not caring for the things of creation, but rather relating freely to them. The goal of the Exercises is a spiritual journey toward ever-greater freedom. It is no

accident that Ignatius asks retreatants to begin to clarify the relationship between themselves and creation. The theological anthropology operative in the Exercises emphasizes humanity's ability to discern both God's ongoing labor in and through creation, as well as God's invitation for persons to cooperate in His divine work.

Ignatius specifically invites retreatants to marvel at the heavens, the sun and moon and all the stars, the earth with its plants and animals, and to consider how these created things sustain, nourish, and protect us. They keep us alive even when we ignore God and refuse to praise the Divine Majesty; when we shut ourselves off in isolation and refuse to serve God; when we abuse and misuse creation. (SpEx #23) It becomes clear to retreatants that God's plan for creation requires specifically discerned choices and delicate precision. The other beings within creation are companions helping us to attain the fullness of relationship with God. In fact, humans are given a share in God's authority, a real part in establishing, maintaining, healing, and restoring creation. Other beings of creation are companions to us, helping us to attain the fullness of relationship with God. "For human beings there is no authentic search for God without an insertion into the life of Creation, and, on the other hand, all solidarity with human beings and every engagement with the created world cannot be authentic without a discovery of God."⁴ Throughout the First Week of the Spiritual Exercises, retreatants become intimately aware that they are involved in the processes of sin at work in the world. The possibility of participation in the social and structural sins of consumption and greed mentioned in the introduction, though at first distant and impersonal, becomes all too real. It is incumbent upon the retreatants, therefore, to discern their own complicity with such structures and thus to increase their ecological awareness and sensitivity.

The Nativity and the Incarnation: A Way to Intimacy with Creation

In the second week of the Exercises, the meditations on the Incarnation and the Nativity, like the Principle and Foundation, offer us an opportunity to raise our ecological sensitivity. Ignatius presents the contemplations on the

Incarnation and Birth of Jesus as “models for all the other contemplations.”⁵ He directs retreatants to directly enter into the life of Jesus. “With the inner eyes of the soul” retreatants imagine the road from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the size of the cave, and the persons they encounter. (Note: Although Ignatius invites an encounter with the ‘holy persons,’ there is also an opportunity to encounter the road or to ‘become’ other parts of creation as the scene is composed – never is a retreatant limited to only human roles in the contemplations.) Each contemplation, like the Eucharist, becomes an encounter with both creation and the divine. The encounter becomes thereby a sharing in the transformation of the elements of creation, and indeed the universe as well.

While the Nativity Meditation focuses retreatants’ attention on the historical events *within* creation, the Meditation on the Incarnation focuses *on the divinity* of Christ and the mystery of the Trinity. Ignatius does not intend to present a theological formulation for the unity of creation in God, as his focus is always human salvation. However, it is clear that his vision encompasses the whole of creation in all its concreteness. In fact, it is precisely through the Incarnation Meditation that Christ participates in and draws creation “back to God.” Creation is therefore the place to experience God’s redemptive love. At this point, it is difficult to overlook the resonances with Paul’s letter to the Colossians. “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers, or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him” (Col. 1:15-16). Because Jesus shares identity with God, He shares the same relationship to creation as God. Therefore, it is clearly appropriate to say the Earth is Jesus’ and everything in it belongs to Jesus. Thus our failure to care for and protect creation is an affront to God. Creation clearly shares in the effects of the sinfulness of humanity, but it also shares in Jesus’ divinity. Jesus became human, a carbon-based life form, participating in creation, exchanging food and cells, and sanctifying life, blood, and even the very air we continue to breathe.

The Two Standards: A Way to Awareness

The meditation on the Two Standards (SpEx #136) leads retreatants into an understanding of both Christ’s identity and virtue, as well as the deceits and strategies of Satan leading us to “riches, honor, and pride.” As noted above, it is not difficult to see the implications of our greed and consumptive pattern related to the Earth’s natural resources. Whether we examine water, food consumption (beef in particular), oil, building materials, land use, waste production, or energy – an unsustainable pattern emerges. However, when we apply the interconnectedness revealed in an ecological worldview to the Meditation on the Two Standards, the issues of greed and consumption become frighteningly clear:

- As many as 3.1 billion people on the planet struggle to survive on less than 2 dollars a day, and more than one billion people lack reasonable access to safe drinking water.
- Americans constitute 5% of the world's population but consume 24% of the world's energy. On average, one American consumes as much energy as 2 Japanese, 6 Mexicans, 13 Chinese, 31 Indians, 128 Bangladeshis, 307 Tanzanians, or 370 Ethiopians.
- Americans eat 200 billion more calories per day than necessary -- enough to feed 80 million people, and Americans spend \$30 billion a year on diet programs, while millions of people around the world starve to death.
- Producing 1 pound of wheat requires 25 gallons of water with modern Western farming techniques. Producing 1 pound of beef requires 5,214 gallons of water.
- In matters of commercial energy consumption: 1 person in the industrialized world = 10 people in the developing world.
- Worldwide, 1.2 billion people do not have access to clean water. Americans flush 6.8 billion gallons of water down their toilets every day. Each day, nearly 10,000 children under the age of 5 in Third World countries die as a result of illnesses contracted by use of impure water.⁶

In choosing the Standard of Christ, we are reminded of His simplicity, humility, and way of

finding God in the natural world. Knowledge of this Standard leads to awareness, to love, and to worship. Following the Standard of Christ reminds us that God “labors and works for us in all creatures on the face of the earth.” A retreatant finds the Creator “in all things” and “not in spite of created things as if they were hiding from him as behind a veil, or even with their help, as if they had only instrumental value. He is one with them in relationship with God which God lovingly established for us in union with our environment.”⁷

Contemplation to Attain Divine Love

In the fourth week, Ignatius calls us to a new life in Christ, and no matter how many times I read the words above, I cannot help but be consoled by God laboring on my behalf. As with the Principle and Foundation, Ignatius asks retreatants to consider how God dwells in creation. Spending time praying in and with creation fosters a communal consciousness, and a growth in kinship and responsible action. Just as it is clear that we can harm creation from great distances, whether through the worldwide impact of coal-fired plants in China, or destructive oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico; so too we can heal and restore creation from great distances. As we grow in our awareness of our interconnectedness, we become more sensitive to the impacts of our consumerist behaviors and their global effects. If we drive less, eat lower on the food chain, use toxic materials sparingly or not at all, watch for signs of stress on ecosystems, use renewables, and do nothing that will degrade the water supply, then we are part of the Earth protecting itself. All of these opportunities have a cumulative effect in a closed earth system – allowing us to participate in the resurrection of the planet.⁸

Thirty years ago, on May 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens erupted and destroyed over 200 square miles of mature forest. A massive landslide reduced the mountain’s summit by 1,300 feet, and in less than three minutes, ecosystems were obliterated. I recall walking through the visitors’ center, and viewing a screen to see thousands of downed trees, scattered like matchsticks over an area that looked as though it had been strip-mined. Now, three decades later, the blast zone is

once again teeming with life, amazing visitors and scientists alike. Resurrection!

The eruption of Mount St. Helens destroyed so much, that often overlooked is that so much has resurrected - an entirely new ecosystem. What was a fifteen-story wall of mud and volcanic material, travelling at more than 300 miles per hour down a mountainside, is now 130 new ponds, two new lakes and thousands of creatures. The ash and debris unleashed by the eruption clogged streams, seeps, and hollows, trapping rain and groundwater. The result? Ponds replete with algae for tadpoles and aquatic salamanders to eat - stoking populations. The fern and lupine lush in flower and leaf have helped build the soil quickly. Gophers that survived the blast underground have proven surprisingly important, forcing up nutrient-rich soil from below the ash, with the added benefit of providing migratory tunnels for toads. Alder have returned, hosting scores of blackbirds with their tuneful songs. Some animals, such as the Northwestern salamander, continue to adapt, keeping their gills and living their entire lives as aquatic animals, rather than moving into the rich undergrowth and soil of a mature forest they would normally inhabit as adults.

Thirty years later, hiking over Windy Ridge, as Spirit Lake comes into full view, one encounters an ecosystem teeming with croaking, blooming, singing, soaring, darting, swimming, and chewing life. What began 40,000 years ago on an eroded surface of still older volcanic and sedimentary rocks, the youngest of the major Cascade volcanoes has been transformed in thirty short years. It is not restoration, renewal, or recovery. It is something new – an entirely new ecosystem.

Lessons from Giving the Exercises

It is not surprising that when retreatants are asked where they “find God,” they most often respond, “in nature.” Never have I heard: “in a clear-cut forest,” “a polluted river” or “an over-crowded city.” We are drawn to God in creation – just as we are drawn to healthy community. As a retreat director, understanding how individuals pray in creation is a great help toward understanding their relationship with God and offers insights into where and how consolation is working in their prayer.

On the Oregon coast a short time ago, as I sat with a retreatant, it was clear to me that he was spinning. He was immersed in day six of the third week of the Exercises, preoccupied not with Christ, but with the intensity of His suffering, speaking again and again of the gruesomeness of the contemplations. As we came to the end of our session, I invited him to place Christ in the tomb by the end the day. He agreed. Though rarely so directive in accompanying a retreatant, holding on to my piece of gneiss - I felt compelled by the Spirit. I invited him to consider imagining himself as the tomb in the contemplation. Again, he agreed. When we met late the next day, he tearfully said four words: "*Christ rose within me.*" Deeply consoled and joyful, he went on to recount the powerful contemplation he had experienced as Christ's tomb.

A resurrection-centered approach to the environment begins with God moving us toward the realization of his love in all created things. The paradox of love resides at the very center of the gospel and at the core of the Exercises. The center of Ignatius' spiritual experiences is the awareness of Christ's divine love present and at work in the world. Therefore, finding God at work in creation for Ignatius does not begin with that creation and then ascend by some form of purification of the senses, but rather begins in God and moves into and through creation. Developments since the era of high scholasticism have not fundamentally changed such an understanding of the basic mystery of God's relationship to creation. Teilhard de Chardin, for example, thought it his life work to reintegrate spirituality with the Earth. He accomplished much toward that end, however, his thinking concludes by subsuming all material creation within human transformation. As he writes: "In a convergent universe, every element finds its fulfillment, not directly in its own perfection, but in its incorporation into the unity of a superior pole of consciousness in which it can enter into communion with all others. Its worth culminates in a transmutation into the other, in a self-giving excentration."⁹ Or again, he reflects on "the end of the world; the overthrow of equilibrium, detaching the mind, fulfilled at last, from its material matrix, so that it will henceforth rest with all its weight in God's Omega."¹⁰ These and other passages indicate that Teilhard saw the

universe as being subsumed into human fulfillment in Christ.

The Spiritual Exercises are written entirely from the point of view of Christ as "Eternal Lord of All Things," as well as the humble self-emptying servant. The split between human transformation and the redemption of creation seems to result from a separation of humans from the world or an overly rationalized approach to the final transformation (as in Origen's and Teilhard de Chardin's view). If transformation is accomplished by God's self-emptying and resurrecting love, and love preserves the 'otherness' of the other and does not simply subsume it, there would be no reason to deny the self-emptying and resurrecting of the universe as the place where humans (and Christ as human) can contemplate the immensity and diversity of God's creativity, beauty, and harmony.

Just as Teilhard de Chardin's "Mass on the World" was shaped into the mountains and hills which burst into song, and trees which clap their hands — so all creation will come to sit at table in the Kingdom of God. Theologian Catherine La Cugna writes:

God is so thoroughly involved in every last detail of creation that if we could truly grasp this it would altogether change how we approach each moment of our lives. For everything that exists — insect, agate, galaxy — manifests the mystery of the living God.¹¹

The Constitutions of the Society recognize that the activity of God in creation is "co-operating with Him and glorifying Him... that which he gives as Creator, nature."¹² Thus Ignatius offers a supernatural view of creation so that we might be led to render to God greater glory and service. This view leads us to be passionately concerned about healing the Earth and human healing, since humans and Earth are seen as united in God's primary and communal act of love. This relational view provides the bridge between creation and redemption.

Ignatian Imagination and the Examen:

The daily Examen and Ignatian Imaginative Prayer are two clear ways to cultivate an ecological

sensitivity in our interior lives. We are well aware that God continually draws each one of us to Himself in and through Christ. We experience God's activity in our feelings, moods, actions, and desires. We believe that God reveals Himself in our feelings as much as He does in our clear and distinct ideas. Allowing God to draw us more intimately, we must first let Him draw us at the core of our being, which means becoming more aware of our feelings. Here we recognize God's ceaseless invitation to come closer, to be more like God, to be one with God. Additionally, we become conscious of our resistance to God, which arises from sin in ourselves and in the world about us. Using the technique of the Examen with an ecological lens allows us to prayerfully reflect on the events of the day. We are able to witness our relationship with creation, and to detect God's presence and discern God's direction for us. The goal of the Examen is a discerning heart. The purpose of the ecological Examen is discerning how God is inviting us individually to see how we are responding with greater sensitivity.

The five movements in the Ecological Examen parallel the traditional Examen. We begin with thanksgiving and gratitude for the covenant God offers in the gift of God's self in all creation. Second, we make a specific request to have our eyes opened by the Spirit to the ways we might care for creation. Third, we undertake a review of the challenges and joy experienced in this care. We ask God how we were drawn into the divine presence today by creation, and how we were being invited to respond to God's action in that same creation. Is there some part of our relationship with creation that is in need of change? Fourth, we ask for a true and clear awareness of our sinfulness, whether found in our sense of superiority or in a failure to respond to the needs of other creatures. Finally, we ask for hope in the future, seeking greater sensitivity to trust in God's living presence in all creation.

Ecological Examen

All creation reflects the beauty and blessing of God's image. Where was I most aware of this today?

Can I identify specifically how I made a conscious effort to care for God's creation during this day?

What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation?

How can I repair breaks in my relationship with creation, in my unspoken sense of superiority?

As I imagine tomorrow, I ask for the grace to see the Incarnate Christ in the dynamic interconnections of all Creation.

Conclude with the prayer of Jesus: *The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (Jn 17:22-23)*

Conclusion: Reconciliation: A Sacrament for the Society

The more I listen in the confessional, and in spiritual direction, the clearer it becomes that the oil that has ravaged the Gulf of Mexico abides in many of us deeply – forcing each of us to ask the question: “What is my part?” As we look on this “pierced side” of the earth, we feel a desire to act, to reconcile, to change habits, whether in our patterns of driving, or in our use of plastics. Many I have encountered have spoken at length about how the crisis weighs heavily on their psyches, and how they are longing for a spiritual response.

As noted above in reflections on the ecological implications of the Spiritual Exercises, when the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus sought to articulate the mission of the Society today, it spoke of our need to create right relationships, especially in three areas: first, reconciliation with God; second, reconciliation with one another; and third, reconciliation with creation. (I am reminded of Pope Paul III's charge to Ignatius to include the hearing of confessions when he sought approval of the founding documents of the Society.¹³) Reconciliation with God and neighbor has a long history in the Church. However, a reconciliation with creation has often been forgotten, emerging today in a time of grave ecological challenge and profound new insight into the richness of our incarnational heritage. The Congregation, realizing this new reality, challenged Jesuits and all those inspired by the spirituality of Ignatius to “move beyond doubts and indifference to take responsibility for

our home, the Earth.”¹⁴ This investigation is my attempt to take the call of the Congregation seriously; but it is also a call to a Eucharistic ecology that emerges from—and has often been overlooked within—the long sacramental tradition of the Church and the incarnational spirituality of Ignatius, especially as seen in the Spiritual Exercises.


When Teilhard de Chardin –inspired by his encounter with the Ignatian charism—looks at the breadth and depth of unfolding creation, he sees Christ, the Incarnate One, as not only the spiritual, but also the physical center of the universe. Because the Word becomes flesh, no part of the physical universe is separable from the Spirit of God. All such dichotomies are overcome. Indeed, as Teilhard sings in the poetry of his Hymn of the Universe:

All the things in the world to which this day will bring increase; all those that will diminish; all those too that will die: all of them, Lord, I try to gather into my arms, so as to hold them out to you in offering. This is the material of my sacrifice; the only material you desire...Over every living thing which is to spring up, to grow, to flower, to ripen during this day say again the words: This is my Body. And over every death-force which waits in readiness to corrode, to wither, to cut down, speak again your commanding words which express the supreme mystery of faith: This is my Blood.¹⁵

For Teilhard, the Eucharist is an iconic prayer of the transformation of the universe in Christ, because it acknowledges and anticipates the divinization of the universe. The One we encounter sacramentally in the Eucharist is the One in whom all things are created and in whom all things are transfigured in an on-going process. Our Eucharistic communion is always a sharing in the transformation of the universe, as well as a sacramental expression of the already existent union with God in creation. Because the world is already “charged with the grandeur of God”¹⁶ through the covenant of creation and the indwelling of the Incarnation, the Eucharist reveals what *is* even while moving the world toward what is coming to be. Thus, the most intimate communion with God in Eucharist is at

the same time an intense moment of intimacy with the evolving Earth.

This Eucharistic covenant shapes our imaginations, minds, and hearts toward an ecological sensibility and spirituality, in which communion and love of creation is an essential dimension of communion and love of the Resurrected Christ. An authentic Eucharistic covenant leads to an ecological ethos, culture, and praxis – every Eucharistic experience, therefore, calls us to ecological conversion and action to advance the salvation of all the world. As the source and summit of the whole life of the Church, the Eucharist relates us to Christ, connects us with one another, and re-members us with creation. It is the image of the covenant fully realized, where “God will be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28).

In his letter promulgating the Decrees of General Congregation 35, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Adolfo Nicolás, wrote: “The task now at hand lies with the whole Society. It is our responsibility to ‘receive’ the decrees and to give them life in our ministries, communities and personal lives. Our experience has taught us that the success or failure of a General Congregation does not lie in documents but in the quality of lives, which are inspired by them. Because of this, I earnestly exhort all Jesuits to read, study, meditate on and appropriate these decrees. Likewise, I encourage you to enrich them with the depth of your own faith and insight.”¹⁷ In this investigation, I have attempted to respond to the call of Father General and to engage the mission offered by the most recent Congregation.¹⁸ Today, since the world can no longer sustain the dichotomies of spirit versus matter or ecology versus spirituality, it is up to us—perhaps most especially those of us graced by the gift of Ignatian spirituality—to reconcile these historical ‘opposites’ for the life of the world. Adhering to the encouragement expressed in the letter of promulgation for the General Congregation, I have attempted to set forth a variety of inspirations found in our tradition, and to “give them life” anew through my own “faith and insight.” 

Notes

¹ We live in a broken world (the 1999 Jesuit document on ecology states that Ignatius affirms a “three-fold relationship of subjects” between God, humans, and the rest of Creation) *Promotio Justitiae* 70 (1999), 21. In his address to Arrupe College in Harare, Father Kolvenbach insists that these three relationships are “so closely united that a person cannot find God unless he finds him through the environment and, conversely that his relationship to the environment will be out of balance unless he also relates to God.” “Our Responsibility for God’s Creation,” August 22, 1998, address at the opening of Arrupe College.

² This phrasing is drawn from the Kingdom Meditation.

³ Roger Haight’s recent article (“Expanding the Spiritual Exercises,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 1-43) expands on this and other points of Creation Spirituality.

⁴ Peter Hans Kolvenbach SJ, Discourse to GC 34, 6 January 1995.

⁵ See Adolf Haas, “The Mysticism of St. Ignatius,” in *Ignatius of Loyola: His Personality and Spiritual Heritage*, ed. Friedrich Wulf (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1997), 188.

⁶ Worldwatch Institute, “Annual Report 2014: Vision for a Sustainable World,” http://www.worldwatch.org/system/files/Annual_Report_2013-14_PDF_FINAL.pdf.

⁷ Kolvenbach, “Our Responsibility.”

⁸ The insights shared in this section were inspired by conversations with Dr. Janet Ruffing and Dr. Trileigh Tucker expanded upon in “Ecology and the Spiritual Exercises,” *The Way* 43, no. 1 (2004): 7-18, <http://www.theway.org.uk/Tucker.pdf>.

⁹ See Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man & The Hymn of the Universe*, trans. N. Denny (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 76.

¹⁰ See Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, trans. Bernard Wall (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 287f.

¹¹ Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1991), 304.

¹² Constitutions P.X, n.3.

¹³ The text from the September 27 approval of the Society reads: “...that he is a part of a society founded for the especial purpose of providing for the advancement of souls in Christian life and doctrine and for the propagation of the faith through public preaching and the ministry of the word of God, spiritual exercises and deeds of charity, and in particular through the training of the young and ignorant in Christianity and through the spiritual consolation of the faithful of Christ in hearing confessions.”

¹⁴ Documents of the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Decree 3: Challenges to our Mission Today, “Reconciliation with Creation,” accessed March 1, 2009, <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/GC35/prmlgtn>:

Following the directive 30 of GC 34, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach commissioned a study and invited all “Jesuits and those who share our mission to show ever more effective ecological solidarity in our spiritual, communal, and apostolic lives.” This invitation calls us to move beyond doubts and indifference to take responsibility for our home, the earth. Care for the environment affects the quality of our relationships with God, with other human beings, and with creation itself. It touches the core of our faith in, and love for, God, “from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying.” It might be said that St. Ignatius teaches us this care of the environment in the Principle and Foundation when speaking of the goodness of creation, as well as in the *Contemplatio ad Amorem* when describing the active presence of God within creation. The drive to access and exploit sources of energy and other natural resources is very rapidly widening the damage to earth, air, water, and our whole environment, to the point that the future of our planet is threatened. Poisoned water, polluted air, massive deforestation, deposits of atomic and toxic waste are causing death and untold suffering, particularly to the poor. Many poor communities have been displaced, and indigenous peoples have been the most affected. In heeding the call to restore right relationships with creation, we have been moved anew by the cry of those suffering the consequences of environmental destruction, by the many postulates received, and by the recent teaching of the Holy Father and many episcopal conferences on this issue.

¹⁵ *Hymn of the Universe* was published in 1961 by Harper & Row, accessed March 1, 2013 <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1621&C=1535>.

¹⁶ “God’s Grandeur,” accessed March 1, 2013, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerard_Manley_Hopkins.

¹⁷ “Letter of Promulgation,” accessed March 1, 2013, <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/GC35/prmlgtn>.

¹⁸ This mission is succinctly presented in the opening quotation and initial paragraphs of Part II (page 24).

Further Reading

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