

International Scientific Conference

**IGNATIUS' AUTOBIOGRAPHY
– KEY IGNATIAN TOPICS**



Ljubljana, November 27th 2021

Organization

SLOVENIAN PROVINCE OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

and

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA, FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

(Institute of Moral Theology and Spiritual Questions of Modern Culture;

Research program P6—0269 Ethical-Religious Grounds and Perspectives of the Society and the Religious Studies in Context of Education and Violence)

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Program and abstracts

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Editor:

Ivan Platovnjak

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Cover image: Marko Rupnik (Centro Aletti), Mosaics in the Sanctuary the Sanctuary of the Cave of St. Ignatius, in Manresa, Spain. Photo: ZSI archive.

CONTENT

PROGRAM	5
INTRODUCTION	6
ABSTRACTS	8
– Prof. PhD. José García de Castro Valdés SJ, Pontifical Comillas University in Madrid, Spain, josegc@comillas.edu	
<i>Fr. Câmara on the Life of Ignatius of Loyola (1553-1555): Questions and Remarks</i>	8
– Prof. PhD. Pavulraj Michael SJ, Institute of Spirituality, Gregorian University in Rome, Italy, michael@unigre.it	
<i>Manresa – Conversion of Ignatius From a Hermit to an Apostle</i>8
– Assoc. Prof. PhD. Maciej Tomaszewski SJ, Catholic Academy in Warsaw, Collegium Bobolanum, Poland, m.tomaszewski@jezuici.pl	
<i>Some Remarks About Sin in St Ignatius's Autobiography Based on St Thomas Aquinas's Concept of Prudence</i>	... 9
– Assist. Prof. PhD. Ivan Platovnjak SJ, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology, Slovenia, Ivan.Platovnjak@teof.uni-lj.si	
<i>Ignatian Mysticism – Letting God Teach and Guide us</i>9
– Assoc. Prof. PhD. Javier Melloni SJ, Institute of Fundamental Theology in Sant Cugat, Centre Cristianisme i Justícia of ours in Barcelona, Centre d'Espiritualitat Cova Sant Ignasi (Manresa), Spain, jmelloni@covamanresa.cat	
<i>The External and Internal Origins of the Spiritual Exercises</i>9
– Prof. PhD. Philip Endean SJ, Centre Sèvres, Jesuit Faculties in Paris, France, philip.endean@jesuites.com	
<i>Ignatius, the Pilgrim, and Spiritual Conversation</i>10
– Assist. Mag. Damjan Ristić SJ, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology, Slovenia, damjanristic@gmail.com	
<i>Autobiography: Spiritual Direction in the Context Student Work</i>10
– Assist. Prof. PhD. Michel Kirwan SJ, Loyola Institute, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, kirwanm6@tcd.ie	
<i>“Taking the Stone”: Ignatius and the Call to Intellectual Empowerment</i>	10

PROGRAM

Saturday, November 27th, On-line: <https://uni-lj-si.zoom.us/j/93938898012>; Meeting ID: 939 3889 8012

14.00-14.15 Welcome speeches

Provincial of the Slovenian Province of the Society of Jesus Mag. Miran Žvanut SJ

Dean of the Faculty of Theology Prof. PhD. Janez Vodičar

President of the Program Committee Assist. Prof. PhD. Ivan Platovnjak SJ

President of the Organizing committee Assist. Mag. Damjan Ristić SJ

(Chair: Damjan Ristić SJ)

Lectures

14.15-14.45 José García de Castro Valdés SJ (Spain): *Fr. Câmara on the Life of Ignatius of Loyola (1553-1555): Questions and Remarks*

14.45-15.15 Pavulraj Michael SJ (Italy): *Conversion of Ignatius From a Hermit to an Apostle*

15.15-15.45 Discussion (20 minutes) and Break (10 minutes)

(Chair: Damjan Ristić SJ)

Lectures

15.45-16.05 Maciej Tomaszewski SJ (Poland): *Some Remarks About Sin in St Ignatius's Autobiography Based on St Thomas Aquinas's Concept of Prudence*

16.05-16.25 Ivan Platovnjak SJ (Slovenia): *Ignatian Mysticism – Letting God Teach and Guide us*

16.25-16.45 Javier Melloni SJ (Spain): *The External and Internal Origins of the Spiritual Exercises*

16.45-17.15 Discussion (20 minutes) and Break (10 minutes)

(Chair: Miran Žvanut SJ)

Lectures

17.15-17.35 Philip Endean SJ (France): *Ignatius, the Pilgrim, and Spiritual Conversation*

17.50-18.05 Damjan Ristić SJ (Slovenia): *Autobiography: Spiritual Direction in the Context Student Work*

18.05-18.25 Michel Kirwan SJ (Ireland): *“Taking the Stone”: Ignatius and the Call to Intellectual Empowerment*

18.25-18.45 Discussion

18.45 Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

This year, on May 20, we will begin celebrating the 500th anniversary of the conversion of Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556). In his letter to the whole Society, Fr. General wrote, among other things:

“According to its origin, the Society of Jesus was born from the experience of Ignatius, which we will remember during Ignatius’ year 2021-2022. Let us take this opportunity to acquaint people with the spiritual foundation that nourishes our fertility and our presence in many and varied places. Deepening our inner freedom and renewing the tension that carries us to seek magis will open us to new and rich perspectives.”

Based on this encouragement, we have organized this international scientific conference in English on the topic "Ignatius' Autobiography – Key Ignatian Themes".

We will explore and discuss eight themes that are relevant to the life and mission of Jesuits, as well as to all those who wish to deepen their understanding of our way of life and ministry, and to mature alongside us in their following Christ in today's Church and world.

ABSTRACTS

Prof. PhD. José García de Castro Valdés SJ, Pontifical Comillas University in Madrid, Spain, josegc@comillas.edu

Fr. Câmara on the Life of Ignatius of Loyola (1553-1555): Questions and Remarks

The text known in Ignatian Literature as Autobiography (1553-1555) has been understood by the Jesuit – Ignatian Tradition as the closest one to Ignatius, and therefore, the most relevant and significant story to approach the life of the Founder of the Society of Jesus. The more we read the text and its two prologues (Câmara and Nadal) in its own historical and literary context and compare it with other contemporary biographies around, the more some important questions emerge inviting us to keep open new research perspectives. The lecture will offer some critical points from the “disciplines of the text” trying to enter into an “interior knowledge” of a classical text of the Western Spiritual Tradition (Autobiography) which still remains in many aspects (author, structure, language, intention...) as an enigmatic story.

Key Words: Autobiography, Câmara, Hagiography, Life of Ignatius

Prof. PhD. Pavulraj Michael SJ, Institute of Spirituality, Gregorian University in Rome, **Italy**, michael@unigre.it

Manresa – Conversion of Ignatius From a Hermit to an Apostle

We shall analyze the five moments of grace at Manresa that transformed Ignatius into an Apostle.

- Manresa is the city where the *Exercises* was born. “In Manresa he wrote the First Week, Kingdom, Two Standards”.
- Manresa is fundamental for spiritual and human growth: “Ignatius became aware of the principle of discernment; human existence is a vocation; and the ‘method’ of the *Exercises* is ‘an itinerary whose goal is a response to one’s vocation’”.
- In Manresa, Ignatius received some exceptional graces that opened his intelligence to shape his spirituality. For Ignatius, Jesus was the way to God, transforming the recluse into an Apostle.
- In Manresa his apostolic vocation was born. For Ignatius the whole created universe is the arena in which God continues to be creator.
- There are three main areas where Ignatius engaged in collaborative ministry: patronage, advocacy, collaboration.

From the days in Manresa onward, Ignatius the Apostle began to guide others in the ‘conquest of self and others for the greater glory of God’.

Key Words: Ignatius, Manresa, Spiritual Exercises, Autobiography, Conversion, Apostle

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Some Remarks About Sin in St Ignatius's Autobiography Based on St Thomas Aquinas's Concept of Prudence

The phenomenon of sin in Autobiography is described with reference to the concept of the cardinal virtue of prudence in St. Thomas's *Theological Summa*. Two types of statements concerning sin were distinguished: 1) direct mention; 2) descriptions of acts, with reports describing feelings and thoughts. The second source is more frequent. The application of the concept of prudence enables us to interpretate coherently some phenomena (emotions, feelings, thoughts, desires, deeds) and notions (grace, intention, circumstance, tool, act, decision) – both interesting for various theological disciplines. An application of tools strictly limited to only one discipline would exclude the possibility of a comprehensive description and knowledge of the mystery of sin affecting the human being in his entirety.

Key Words: Sin, Prudence, Virtue, Circumstances, Ignatius, Thomas Aquinas

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Ignatian Mysticism – Letting God Teach and Guide us

In this lecture, the author shows how important it is to follow the key Ignatius gives for reading his mystical experiences from Manresa: "At that time God treated him in the same way as a teacher treats a child in class." (Autobiography 27) He puts forward the thesis that Ignatius wants to show how God himself taught and guided him, and that this experience led him to compose the Spiritual Exercises in such a way that others would also share in this way of teaching and guiding. As a mysticism of everyday life Ignatian mysticism enables every member of the Church to be a disciple of God. The more the Church is a disciple of God, the more she can be a Teacher to others about Him and the life with Him.

Key Words: St Ignatius, Ignatian mysticism, Spiritual Exercises, Autobiography, Disciple

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The External and Internal Origins of the Spiritual Exercises

At the origins of the *Spiritual Exercises* we have to consider two different sources: the external ones (the books saint Ignatius read in Loyola –*Vita Christi*- and in Manresa –*Brief Compendium of Spiritual Exercises* of the Abbot of Montserrat Garcia Jiménez de Cisneros), and the internal sources: his personal mystical experiences. The *Spiritual Exercises* are a fertile encounter of both: receiving the wisdom of these books, he transformed the medieval tradition is something new according his personal experiences at Loyola and Manresa. The process of the four weeks is a condensation of the eleven months he passed in Manresa, even if for twenty more years he will precise and enrich the text.

Key Words: Spiritual Exercises, Origins, Manresa, Montserrat, Mystical Experience; External Sources

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Ignatius, the Pilgrim, and Spiritual Conversation

Ignatius zealously visited the reputed spiritual authorities in Manresa and Barcelona, but finds them wanting. It's the woman who prays that Christ one day appear to him that seemed more insightful. This paper explores the tension between these two models of spiritual authority as they play out in the Autobiography and more broadly in the Ignatian tradition.

Key Words: Ignatius Loyola, Spiritual Conversation, Spiritual Authority, Autobiography

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Autobiography: Spiritual Direction in the Context Student Work

The Autobiography describes Ignatius as a late student; however, it also describes his life and the impact that he had on his fellow students. The main influence on them seems to have had *Spiritual Exercises*. This gives space for reflection how some of those facts may inform our work with students today.

Key Words: Autobiography, Student Life, Spiritual Exercises, Community, Mission

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“Taking the Stone”: Ignatius and the Call to Intellectual Empowerment

In chapter 8 of the Autobiography, Ignatius tells of his hesitation about 'taking the stone', the qualification which would allow him to obtain his bachelor's degree from the University of Paris. The cost of the 'Petra' was a gold crown, and beyond the reach of very poor students, hence his hesitation. However, Ignatius yielded to advice that he should receive it. This presentation will use this incident as the basis for a reflection upon Ignatius' attitude toward academic and intellectual empowerment, and its role in the mission of the Jesuits.

Key Words: Ignatius Autobiography; Jesuits and the University; Jesuit Intellectual Apostolate



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