

MODERN SPIRITUAL MASTERS

Robert Ellsberg, Series Editor

This series introduces the writing and vision of some of the great spiritual masters of our time. Some of these authors found a wide audience in their lifetimes. In other cases recognition has come long after their deaths. Some are rooted in long-established traditions of spirituality. Others charted new, untested paths. In each case, however, the authors in this series have engaged in a spiritual journey shaped by the influences and concerns of our age. At the dawn of a new millennium this series commends these modern spiritual masters, along with the saints and witnesses of previous centuries, as guides and companions to a new generation of seekers.

Already published:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (edited by Robert Coles)
Simone Weil (edited by Eric O. Springsted)
Henri Nouwen (edited by Robert A. Jonas)
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (edited by Ursula King)
Anthony de Mello (edited by William Dych, S.J.)
Charles de Foucauld (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Oscar Romero (by Marie Dennis, Rennie Golden,
and Scott Wright)
Eberhard Arnold (edited by Johann Christoph Arnold)
Thomas Merton (edited by Christine M. Bochen)
Thich Nhat Hanh (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Rufus Jones (edited by Kerry Walters)
Mother Teresa (edited by Jean Maalouf)
Edith Stein (edited by John Sullivan, O.C.D.)
John Main (edited by Laurence Freeman)
Mohandas Gandhi (edited by John Dear)
Mother Maria Skobtsova (introduction by Jim Forest)
Evelyn Underhill (edited by Emilie Griffin)
St. Thérèse of Lisieux (edited by Mary Frohlich)
Flannery O'Connor (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Clarence Jordan (edited by Joyce Hollyday)
Alfred Delp, SJ (introduction by Thomas Merton)
Karl Rahner (edited by Philip Endean)

MODERN SPIRITUAL MASTERS SERIES

PEDRO
ARRUPE

Essential Writings



Selected with an Introduction by

KEVIN F. BURKE, S.J.

ORBIS  BOOKS

Maryknoll, New York 10545

Founded in 1970, Orbis Books endeavors to publish works that enlighten the mind, nourish the spirit, and challenge the conscience. The publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Orbis seeks to explore the global dimensions of the Christian faith and mission, to invite dialogue with diverse cultures and religious traditions, and to serve the cause of reconciliation and peace. The books published reflect the views of their authors and do not represent the official position of the Maryknoll Society. To learn more about Maryknoll and Orbis Books, please visit our website at www.maryknoll.org.

Copyright © 2004 by Kevin Burke, S.J.

Published by Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308.

All rights reserved.

Excerpts from *Challenge to Religious Life Today* (1979); *Other Apostolates Today* (1981); *Justice with Faith Today* (1980); *In Him Alone Is Our Hope* (1984); and *One Jesuit's Spiritual Journey* (1986) used with permission: © Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, Mo. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Queries regarding rights and permissions should be addressed to:
Orbis Books, P.O. Box 308, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Arrupe, Pedro, 1907-

[Selections. English. 2004]

Pedro Arrupe : essential writings / selected with an introduction by
Kevin F. Burke.

p. cm. — (Modern spiritual masters series)

ISBN 1-57075-546-9 (pbk.)

1. Jesuits. 2. Monastic and religious life. 3. Catholic Church.

4. Theology. I. Burke, Kevin F. II. Title. III. Series.

BX3702.3.A77 2004

271'.5302—dc22

2004009874

His Own Life



I have the impression that my life is written in a single sentence: “It has unfolded according to the will of God.”

— Pedro Arrupe

SURVIVING THE ATOMIC BOMB

On the Feast of the Transfiguration, August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima. Pedro Arrupe saw the blinding flash of light. Moments later he heard its roar and felt its seismic power throw him across the room and to the floor, showering him in bits of broken glass and falling plaster. He was thirty-seven, the master of novices and superior of a community of thirty-five men located in the town of Nagatsuka on the outskirts of Hiroshima. In 1950 Arrupe traveled around the world and spoke about his recollections of that experience. This selection, which dates from that year, was first published as part of a longer memoir in 1965. The companion piece located at the end of chapter 4 was written in 1970, twenty-five years after the atomic bomb destroyed Hiroshima.

On the morning of August 6 something happened to break the monotony of the previous months. At about 7:55 in the morning a B-29 appeared. The air-raid alarm did not cause us any undue worry since we had grown accustomed to seeing squadrons of a hundred planes flying over our heads. There seemed to be no reason to be concerned. Ten minutes after the alarm began to sound we were sure the enemy had left the city. We then resumed our usual activities in peace.

I was in my room with another priest at 8:15 when suddenly we saw a blinding light, like a flash of magnesium. Naturally we were surprised and jumped up to see what was happening. As I opened the door which faced the city, we heard a formidable explosion similar to the blast of a hurricane. At the same time doors, windows, and walls fell upon us in smithereens.

We threw ourselves or were thrown to the floor. I say we were thrown because a German priest, who weighed over two hundred pounds and had been resting against the window sill of his room, found himself sitting in the hall several yards away with a book in his hand. The shower of roof tiles, bricks, and glass rained upon us. Three or four seconds seemed an eternity because when one fears that a beam is about to crash down and flatten one's skull, time is incredibly prolonged.

When we were able to stand, we went running through the house. I had the responsibility for thirty-five young men who were under my direction. I found none of them had even a scratch. We went out into the garden to see where the bomb had fallen since none of us doubted that that is what had happened. But when we got there, we looked at one another in surprise: there was no hole in the ground, nor any sign of an explosion. The trees and flowers all seemed quite normal. We searched the rice fields surrounding our house, looking for the site of the blast, but to no avail. After about fifteen minutes, we

noticed that in the direction of the city dense smoke arose. Soon we could see enormous flames.

We climbed a hill to get a better view. From there we could see a ruined city: before us was a decimated Hiroshima.

Since the houses were made of wood, paper, and straw, and it was at a time when the first meal of the day was being prepared in all the kitchens, the flames contacting the electric current turned the entire city into one enormous lake of fire within two and one half hours. . . .

I shall never forget my first sight of what was the result of the atomic bomb: a group of young women, eighteen or twenty years old, clinging to one another as they dragged themselves along the road. One had a blister that almost covered her chest; she had burns across half of her face, and a cut in her scalp caused probably by a falling tile, while great quantities of blood coursed freely down her face. On and on they came, a steady procession numbering some 150,000. This gives some idea of the scene of horror that was Hiroshima.

We continued looking for some way of entering the city, but it was impossible. We did the only thing that could be done in the presence of such mass slaughter: we fell on our knees and prayed for guidance, as we were destitute of all human help.

I had studied medicine many years earlier, and I ran back to the house to find medical supplies. I found the medicine chest under some ruins with the door off its hinges. I retrieved some iodine, aspirins, and bicarbonate of soda. Those were the only supplies at a time when 200,000 victims needed help. What could I do? Where to begin? Again I fell on my knees and implored God's help.

It was then that he helped me in a very special way, not with medications but with a simple and essential idea. We quickly decided to clean the house as best we could and tried

to accommodate as many of the sick and wounded as we could possibly fit inside. We were able to take only 150.

The first thing that had to be done was to gather up extra food to provide those patients with sufficient energy to react against hemorrhages, fever, and infection caused by burns. Our young people, on foot or on bicycles, rushed about the outskirts of Hiroshima. Without thinking how or from where, they came dashing back with more fish, meat, eggs, and butter than we had seen in four years. With these we were able to care for our patients.

Some success crowned our efforts because, almost without realizing it, we were attacking from the outset the anemia and leukemia that would develop in the majority of the wounded who had been exposed to atomic radiation. We can rejoice that none of those hospitalized in our house died, except one child who suffered an attack of meningitis as a result of the accumulation of fluid on the brain and died the following day. All the rest survived.

While the young people were busy gathering food, I was trying to prepare the patients in a more scientific manner to react favorably. First of all, it was necessary to clean the three kinds of wounds we saw:

1. There were contusions caused by the collapse of buildings. These included fractures and cuts produced by jagged pieces of tile from falling roofs. Dirt and sawdust were encrusted in torn muscles and wounds. Those raw wounds had to be cleansed without anesthetic as we had neither chloroform nor ether nor morphine to assuage the terrible pain.
2. Other wounds were produced by fragments of wood or glass imbedded in the body without tearing the muscles.

3. The third group included all kinds of burns, some very serious. When asked how they were burned, the answer was often the same: they had been trapped under a collapsed smoldering building and as they tried to extricate themselves from under it, they were burned in the process. But there was another kind of burn whose cause no one could explain.

I asked one victim: "How were you burnt?"

I recall his answer, "I wasn't burnt, Father."

"Then, what happened to you?"

"I don't know. I saw a flash of light followed by a terrible explosion but nothing happened to me. Then, in a half hour I saw small, superficial blisters forming on my skin, and in four to five hours, there were large burnt areas on the skin which soon became infected. But there was no fire."

It was disconcerting. Today we know that it was the effects of infrared radiation which attacks the tissues and produces not only the destruction of the epidermis and the endodermis, but also of muscular tissue. The infections that followed resulted in the death of many and confused those treating the victims.

To cleanse the wounds it was necessary to puncture and open the blisters. We had in the house 150 people of whom one-third or one-half had open wounds. The work was painful because when one pierced a small blister, a tiny drop of water spilled out; but when one had to lance a blister that extended over half of a person's body, the discharge measured 150 cc [over half a cup]. At first we used nickel-plated pails, but after the third patient, seeing all there was ahead of us, we began to use all the kettles and basins we could find in the house.

The suffering was frightful, the pain excruciating, and it made bodies writhe like snakes, yet there was not a word of complaint. They all suffered in silence. In this respect the

Japanese manifest a certain superiority over occidentals: their self-control and stoicism are all the more admirable in the face of overwhelming provocation.

After twelve hours we were able to enter the city. As usually happens after great fires, an enormous amount of water vapor condenses and descends in torrential showers. In this way, at least, the burning embers were extinguished.

It was five in the afternoon. An indescribable spectacle met our gaze: a macabre vision which staggered the imagination. Before us lay a city completely destroyed. Through its streets we walked, stepping on ruins under which embers still felt warm. Any carelessness on our part could be fatal.

Much more terrible, however, was the tragic sight of those thousands of injured people begging for help. One such was a child who had a piece of glass imbedded in the pupil of his left eye, and another who had a large wooden splinter protruding like a dagger from between his ribs. Sobbing, he called out: "Father, save me!" Another victim was caught between two beams with his legs calcified up to the knees.

Moving along, we saw a young man running toward us half-crazed and calling for help. For twenty minutes he had been hearing his mother's voice as she lay buried under the rubble of what had been their home. The flames were already enveloping her body, and his efforts to lift the large wooden beams that held her captive had been in vain.

More heartbreaking, perhaps, were the cries of the children calling to their parents. Some two hundred children had perished in one school when the roof had collapsed on them.

At about ten o'clock in the evening we were able, at last, to locate the residence of our Fathers. All five were injured. Father Schiffer was in critical condition. He had suffered a head wound, which — in an effort to stop the bleeding and having nothing better at hand — they had wrapped in newspapers and

a shirt somewhat like a turban. But they had overlooked another wound in the outer ear: a piece of glass had penetrated a small artery and he was slowly bleeding to death.

Using some wooden and bamboo planks, we improvised a stretcher on which we might carry him to Nagatsuka. Groaning in pain, but still smiling in true Japanese fashion, he said to me: "Father Arrupe, would you look at my back? I think there's something there." We turned him face down and, by the light of the torch, saw that his back was completely covered with wounds made by small pieces of glass.

With a razor blade I removed more than fifty fragments. After his operation, we moved slowly across the city, in the dark, toward our novitiate. Every hundred yards we had to stop so that both we and he might rest. During one of these pauses, we heard painful cries like those of someone near death. We could not find their source but someone, listening carefully, said: "It's underneath here somewhere." Sure enough, we had stepped on the ruins of a roof. Pushing some tiles to one side, we found an old lady half of whose body was burnt. She had been buried there all day and had barely a spark of life left. We removed her from under the rubble just as she was breathing her last.

We were to witness more horrible scenes that night. As we approached the river, the spectacle was awful beyond words. Fleeing the flames and availing themselves of low tide, the people lay across both shores, but in the middle of the night the tide began to rise, and the wounded, exhausted now and half buried in mud, could not move. The cries of those drowning are something I shall never forget.

At five in the morning, we finally arrived at our destination and began our first treatments on the Fathers. In spite of the urgency of our work, we had first stopped to celebrate our masses. Assuredly, it was in such moments of tragedy that we felt God

most near to us. It is at such moments one feels in need of supernatural assistance.

The external surroundings in which the Holy Sacrifice was being offered were not such as might promote sensible devotion. In turning around to say "Dominus Vobiscum," I saw before my eyes many wounded, suffering terribly. While reading the Epistle and the Gospel, I had to be careful not to touch with my feet the children that lay so close to me. They wanted to see closely this stranger who was wearing such odd clothing and performing those ceremonies they had never seen before. In spite of it all, I do not think I have ever said mass with such devotion.

After mass, when we began to think what more we could do, since natural healing with the help of a good diet was not enough, the Lord came to our aid once again.

At eight in the morning, one of our employees came to me with a sack in his hand, and said: "Father, I wanted to help these poor people, too, and, looking here and there to see what I might find, I came upon this sack filled with little bottles that look like medicine. See if they are any good."

The contents were over thirty pounds of boric acid. There lay the solution to our problem. Using our underwear and sheets we made many bandages and began our work which, though primitive, gave us fine results.

We would place bandages on the wounds, keeping them moist all day with an antiseptic solution of boric acid. In this way, the pain was somewhat relieved and the lesion was kept relatively clean and in contact with the air. The discharge from the wounds would adhere to the dressing, and by changing it four or five times a day we were able to assure asepsis. Continuing this curative process, we could see, in less than a week, the gradual formation of granulations of scar tissue which brought,

slowly but surely, a total cure to all. We had no cases of malignant degeneration of the scars. . . .

Much could be written of individual cases that we encountered in that holocaust. We shall briefly describe a few.

I was in Nagatsuka treating some wounded when a young couple came to me. The woman was very well since she had been out of the city at the moment of the explosion. Her husband, a young man of twenty-two, was in a lamentable state. He could hardly move. Assisted by his wife who was dragging him along, he came into the house. A trail of pus followed his entrance. Half of his body was one big wound.

It was the most serious case I had yet seen, and I thought to myself that the poor man had come to die in our midst. But he, when he realized I was hesitating, took hold of my hand and said in anguish:

“Father, help me!”

And his wife, taking my other hand, explained:

“Father, we’re married just one month. Save my husband!”

I didn’t know what to say. At a moment like that a thousand thoughts pass through one’s mind all at once. Finally, I answered, almost meditatively: “Very well, let’s see what we can do, but it’s going to hurt a lot.”

Fixing his eyes on me, he said: “Hurt me all you want, I can bear it.”

Accordingly, we put him on the operating table, which was my office desk, and began to clean the wounds. The poor man, how he twisted and turned! It had to be done in cold blood because the pus had hardened underneath the burns, yet, in the midst of his pain, he kept repeating: “Father, don’t hesitate to hurt me; I can take it, but just save me.”

Someone whispered in my ear: “Would it be possible to cause him less anguish?”

But this was impossible. I had to become like an executioner to this man if I was to save his life. And this I was for two and a half hours. At the end he was prostrate with suffering and I, exhausted with the tension I felt while crucifying him with so much pain.

In Japan, since the walls are so thin, one can hear every word spoken on the other side; but the young man, forgetting this, as soon as we were out of sight, let go with a volley of verbal abuse against his poor wife using every epithet in the dictionary, thus venting the accumulated anger caused by those hours of torment.

She remained passive. As a good Japanese woman, she listened to him smilingly, lighting his cigarette, wiping away perspiration, and giving him something cool to drink. And there she remained by his side day and night. We could never find out when she slept.

After eight months this couple left our house. On an April morning, I saw them walking down the hill by the garden, smiling, happy, and baptized. I felt a deep joy at that moment which fully compensated for all the pain of the past eight months. If we had not treated that young man he most certainly would have died.

Among all the cases we treated, perhaps those that caused us the most suffering were the children. Everyone knows that in Japan children are adored. They take extreme care with their education to such a degree that there is no illiteracy in Japan: all go to primary and secondary schools; all know how to read and write. At the time of the atomic bomb most of the children were in their respective schools. For that reason, during the explosion thousands of children were separated from their parents; many were wounded and cast into the streets without being able to fend for themselves. We brought all we could to Nagatsuka

and began treating them immediately so as to prevent infection and fever.

We had absolutely no anesthetics, and some of the children were horribly wounded. One had a cut from ear to ear as a result of a beam that fell on his head. The edge of the wound was over half an inch wide; the injured region of the scalp was filled with clay and pieces of glass. The screams of the poor child during his treatment so upset the entire house that we had no choice but to tie him into a cart with sheets and take him to the top of a hillock near the house. That spot was converted into an amphitheater where we could work, and the child could scream all he wanted without making everyone else a nervous wreck.

Our hearts were torn apart during these treatments, but greater was the consolation at being able to restore the children to their parents. Through the Japanese police, who were well organized, we were able to contact all the families whose children we had in the house. Memorable are those scenes of reunion with children that were thought dead in the explosion, and now were found alive and well, or at least in the process of healing. Those mothers and fathers, overcome with joy, did not know how to express their gratitude, and throwing themselves at our feet, reminded us of the Acts of the Apostles when pagans, falling on their knees, adored the disciples of Christ as gods.

Apart from all these understandable events, there was one that disconcerted us greatly. Many who were in the city at the moment of the explosion and had suffered no apparent injuries whatsoever, but who, nevertheless, after a few days felt weak and came to us saying they felt a terrible interior heat, that perhaps they had inhaled a poisonous gas, and in a short time they were dead.

The first case occurred for me when I was treating an elderly man for two deep wounds on his back. A man came to me and

said: "Please, Father, come to my house because my son tells me he has a very bad sore throat."

Since the man I was treating was gravely ill, I answered: "It's probably a cold. Give him some aspirin and make him perspire; you'll see he'll get well." Within two hours the boy died.

Later a girl of thirteen came weeping and said: "Father, look what's happening to me."

And opening her mouth, she showed me bleeding gums, small sores on the lining of the mouth and an acute pharyngitis. She showed me too how her hair was falling out in her hands in bunches. In two days she was dead. . . .

Of the dead, fifty thousand died the moment of the explosion itself, another two hundred thousand during the following weeks, and others much later as a result of wounds or radiation. Until the day after the explosion, we did not know that we were dealing with the first atomic bomb to explode in our world.

At first, without electricity or radio, we were cut off from the rest of the world. The following day cars and trains began arriving from Tokyo and Osaka with help for Hiroshima. They stayed in the outskirts of the city, and when we questioned them as to what had happened, they answered very mysteriously: "The first atomic bomb has exploded."

"But what is the atomic bomb?"

They would answer: "The atom bomb is a terrible thing."

"We have seen how terrible it is; but what is it?"

And they would repeat: "It's the atomic bomb . . . the atomic bomb."

They knew nothing but the name. It was a new word that was coming for the first time into the vocabulary. Besides, the knowledge that it was the atomic bomb that had exploded was no help to us at all from a medical standpoint, as no one in the world knew its full effects on the human organism. We were, in effect, the first guinea pigs in such experimentation.

But from a missionary standpoint, they did challenge us when they said: “Do not enter the city because there is a gas in the air that kills for seventy years.” It is at such times that one feels most a priest, when one knows that in the city there are 50,000 bodies which, unless they are cremated, will cause a terrible plague. There were besides some 120,000 wounded to care for. In light of these facts, a priest cannot remain outside the city just to preserve his life. Of course, when one is told that in the city there is a gas that kills, one must be very determined to ignore that fact and go in. And we did. And we soon began to raise pyramids of bodies and pour fuel on them to set them afire. — “Surviving the Atomic Bomb” in RR 22–39

RECOGNIZING THE “HAND OF THE LORD” AT EUCHARIST

*One cannot comment on the faith of Father Arrupe without reference to the Eucharist. It was the center of his life of prayer, which he called “the most important act of the entire daily routine.” Arrupe frequently wrote about the importance of the Eucharist for St. Ignatius, for the work of the Society of Jesus, and for the ongoing life and mission of the church. In the selections that follow, he speaks about the importance of the Eucharist in his own life and the implications of a genuine eucharistic faith and piety for all Christians today. The first four selections presented here are taken from his talk to the Youth Eucharistic Movement, a gathering of some fourteen hundred high school boys, which met in Assisi on September 6, 1979. The fifth, **Eucharist and Hunger**, is the opening section of his address to the Worldwide Eucharistic Congress that met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1976. The sixth selection, **The***

Mass in "My Cathedral," comes from a personal memoir first published in his collection of writings on the Sacred Heart, Him Alone).

Miracle at Lourdes

I shall relate some of my own experiences which were connected with the Eucharist and in which I recognize the hand of the Lord who led me and still leads me in my way of life. But I am sure that you also can reflect on your own experience up till now and on the way in which the Lord is guiding you on the path of your life.

The first of my Eucharist experiences was closely connected with my vocation as a Jesuit. . . . The experience was that of a miracle which I saw at Lourdes during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament on the esplanade that lies in front of the basilica. Some weeks after the death of my father I had gone to Lourdes with my family, since we wished to spend the summer in quiet, peaceful, and spiritual surroundings. It was the middle of August. I stayed at Lourdes for a whole month. And since I was a medical student, I was able to obtain a special permission to study closely the sick who came seeking a cure.

One day I was in the esplanade with my sisters a little before the procession of the Blessed Sacrament. A cart pushed by a woman of middle age passed in front of us. One of my sisters exclaimed: "Look at that poor boy in the cart." It was a young man of around twenty, all twisted and contorted by polio. His mother was reciting the rosary in a loud voice and from time to time she would say with a sigh: "María Santísima, help us." It was a truly moving sight, and I remembered the plea which the sick turned toward Jesus: "Lord, cleanse me from this leprosy!" She hastened to take her place in the row which the bishop was to pass carrying the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance.

The moment came when the bishop was to bless the young man with the host. He looked at the monstrance with the same faith with which the paralytic mentioned in the Gospel must have looked at Jesus. After the bishop had made the sign of the cross with the Blessed Sacrament, the young man rose cured from the cart, as the crowd filled with joy cried out: “Miracle! Miracle!”

Thanks to the special permission which I had, I was later able to assist at the medical examinations. The Lord had truly cured him. There is no need to tell you of what I felt and my state of mind at that moment. I had come from the School of Medicine in Madrid, where I had had so many professors (some truly renowned) and so many companions who had no faith and who always ridiculed miracles. But I had been an eyewitness of a true miracle worked by Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, by that same Jesus Christ who had during the course of his life cured so many who were ill and paralytic. I was filled with an immense joy. I seemed to be standing by the side of Jesus. And as I sensed his almighty power, the world that stood around me began to appear extremely small. I returned to Madrid. My books fell from my hands. The lessons, the experiments which had so thrilled me before now seemed so very empty. My comrades asked me: “What’s happening to you this year? You are like one who has been stunned!” Yes, I was like one stunned by that impression which every day grew more disconcerting. The one thing that remained fixed in my mind and in my heart was the image of the host as it was raised in benediction and of the paralyzed boy who had leapt from his cart. Three months later I entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus in Loyola, Spain.

— “Eucharist and Youth” in OA 289–90

Mass on Mount Fujiyama

Every mass is a mass for the world and in the world. I remember the mass which I celebrated at the top of the famous Mount Fujiyama, at a height of more than eleven thousand feet. I had climbed it with one of my religious brothers. At that time the climb was made almost entirely on foot. One could go on horseback only to a height of about thirty-three hundred feet. It was necessary to reach the summit by four in the morning to be able to see the marvelous panorama since by six the peak was covered with clouds and could no longer be seen.

We arrived on time and celebrated mass in the most complete solitude. It was shortly after I arrived in Japan. I was living through the first impressions of a new environment, and my mind was bubbling with a great number of projects for the conversion of the whole of Japan. We had climbed Fujiyama so that we might be able to offer to the Eternal Father the Sacrifice of the Immaculate Lamb for the salvation of all Japan at the highest point in all that country. The climb had been most tiring since we had to hasten in order to arrive on time. Several times we thought of Abraham and Isaac as they climbed a mountain to offer their sacrifice. Once we had reached the top, the sight of the rising sun was stupendous. It raised our spirits and disposed them for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. Till then I had never celebrated mass in such conditions. Above us the blue sky expanded like the cupola on an immense temple — brilliant and majestic. Before us were all the people of Japan, at that time some eighty million who did not know God. My mind ranged out beyond the lofty vaulting of the sky to the throne of the divine majesty, the seat of the Blessed Trinity. I seemed to see the holy city of the heavenly Jerusalem. I seemed to see Jesus Christ and with him St. Francis Xavier, the first apostle of Japan, whose hair had become white in the course of

a few months because of the sufferings he had to endure. I also was being confronted by that same Japan as Xavier had been. The future was entirely unknown. If I had then known how much I would have to suffer, my hands would have trembled as I raised the sacred host. On that summit so near to heaven it seemed to me that I understood better the mission which God had entrusted to me. I descended from it with a renewed enthusiasm. That Eucharist had made me feel the grandeur of the everlasting God and universal Lord. At the same time I had felt that I was an “assistant,” a sharer in the labor of Jesus Christ in the great redemptive mission entrusted to him by his Father. I could repeat with more sincerity and conviction the words of Isaiah — “Here I am, send me” (Isa. 6:8) — or those of St. Francis Xavier — “I am! Behold me.”

— “Eucharist and Youth” in OA 292–93

Eucharist and Solitary Confinement

Another type of eucharistic experience is that which shows us the value that the most Blessed Sacrament has for us when we have been in intimate and prolonged contact with him during our life and we sense the lack of this sacrament when we are not able to receive it. At such a time we appreciate the great role which Jesus, our friend, companion, and consoler, has in our life if we have been and are habitually nourished by the Eucharist. . . .

I myself personally experienced this deep sense of pain for the lack of the Eucharist during the thirty-three days that I was imprisoned in Japan, but there was also at the same time a feeling of the faithful and consoling presence of Our Lord. The enemies of Christianity had made a thousand accusations against me. They were angry, since they saw that while they were trying to put obstacles in the way to conversions, a good number

of young people were turning to the church and were receiving baptism. The war broke out in Japan on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1941, with the attack of Pearl Harbor. The military police immediately put me in jail, in a cell with an area of four square meters. I did not know why they had put me there, and I was not told why for a long time, and only at the end of my confinement.

I passed the days and nights in the cold of December entirely alone and without a bed, or table, or anything else but a mat on which to sleep. I was tormented by my uncertainty on why I had been imprisoned. This provoked a kind of self-torture because of the presumptions, suspicions, and fears that I had done something that could have been a source of harm to others. But I was above all tortured by not being able to say mass, at not being able to receive the Eucharist. What loneliness there was! I then appreciated what the Eucharist means to a priest, to a Jesuit, for whom the mass and the tabernacle are the very center of his life. I saw myself dirty, unshaven, famished, and chilled to the bone without being able to talk with anyone. But I felt even more anguish for my Christians who were perhaps suffering because of me. And above all there was no mass. How much I learned then! I believe that it was the month in which I learned the most in all my life. Alone as I was, I learned the knowledge of silence, of loneliness, of harsh and severe poverty, the interior conversation with “the guest of the soul” who had never shown himself to be more “sweet” than then.

During those hours, those days, those weeks of silence and reflection I understood in a more illuminating and consoling way the words of Christ: “Remember what I have told you: a servant is not more important than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20).

I was interrogated for thirty-six hours in a row. I was asked matters that were very touchy to answer, and I was myself

astonished by the “wisdom” and the fitness of my replies. It was a proof of the saying of the Gospel: “Do not be concerned about what you must say to defend yourselves. I shall give you the right words and I shall give you such wisdom that all your adversaries will not be able to resist and much less defeat you” (Luke 21:14–15).

When my sufferings were becoming more cruel, I experienced a moment of great consolation. It was Christmas night. My mind went back to so many happy Christmases, to the three masses which I was able to celebrate that night. What remembrances filled my mind! But none of all this was now possible. I was alone, without mass. Instead of Christmas it seemed more like Good Friday! Just then when my Christmas was being changed into the passion and that blessed night into a sad Gethsemane, I heard a strange sound near one of the windows. It was the soft murmur of many voices which, with muted accents, sought to escape detection. I began to listen. If any of you have been in prison waiting for a sentence, you would appreciate the anxiety with which I followed those sounds which were now of themselves becoming an immediate source of suspicion. Such are the fears that one feels within the four walls where one is detained.

Suddenly, above the murmur that was reaching me, there arose a soft, sweet, consoling Christmas carol, one of the songs which I had myself taught to my Christians. I was unable to contain myself. I burst into tears. They were my Christians who, heedless of the danger of being themselves imprisoned, had come to console me, to console their *Shimpu Sarna* (their priest), who was away that Christmas night which hitherto we had always celebrated with such great joy. What a contrast between that thoughtfulness and the injustice of senseless imprisonment!

The song with those accents and inflections which are not taught or learned poured forth from a touching kindness and

sincere affection. It lasted for a few minutes; then there was silence again. They had gone and I was left to myself. But our spirits remained united at the altar on which soon after would descend Jesus. I felt that he also descended into my heart, and that night I made the best spiritual communion of all my life.

—“Eucharist and Youth” in OA 296–300

In the Midst of the Poor

A few years ago I was visiting a Jesuit province in Latin America. I was invited, with some timidity, to celebrate a mass in a suburban slum, in a *favela*, the poorest in the region as they told me. There were around a hundred thousand people living there in the midst of mud since the town had been built along the side of a depression and became almost completely flooded whenever it rained. I readily accepted since I know from experience that visits to the poor are most instructive: they do much good for the poor, but one also learns much from them.

The mass was held in a small structure all patched together and open. Since there was no door, cats and dogs came and went without any problem. The mass began. The songs were accompanied by a guitar which was strummed by one who was not exactly an expert, but the results seemed marvelous to me. The words were as follows: “To love is to give oneself, to forget oneself, by seeking that which can make another happy.” And they continued: “How beautiful it is to live for love, how great it is to have to give. To give joy and happiness, to give oneself, this is love.” “If you love as you love yourself, and give yourself for others, you will see that there is no egoism which you cannot conquer. How beautiful it is to live for love.”

Gradually as the song went on, I felt a knot in my throat, and I had to force myself to continue with the mass. Those people,

who seemed to have nothing, were ready to give themselves to share their joy and happiness.

When we arrived at the consecration and I raised the host in the midst of an absolute silence, I perceived the joy of the Lord who remains with his beloved. As Jesus says: “He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor” (Luke 4:18), “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt. 5:3).

Soon after, when I was distributing communion and was looking at their faces, dry, hard, and tanned by the sun, I noticed that large tears like pearls were running down many of them. They were meeting Jesus, their only consolation. My hands trembled.

At the end a big fellow, whose fearful looks could have inspired fear, told me: “Come to my house. I have something to honor you.” I remained uncertain, not knowing whether I should accept or not, but the priest who was accompanying me said: “Go with him, Father; the people are very good.” I went to his house, which was a half-falling shack. He made me sit down on a rickety chair. From where I was seated the sun could be seen as it was setting. The fellow said to me: “Señor, see how beautiful it is!” And we remained silent for some minutes. The sun disappeared. The man added: “I did not know how to thank you for all that you have done for us. I have nothing to give you, but I thought that you would like to see this sunset. It pleased you, didn’t it? Good evening.” He then gave me his hand. As I was leaving, I thought: “I have met very few hearts that are so kind.” — “Eucharist and Youth” in OA 302–3

Eucharist and Hunger

“Lord, it is good for us to be here” (Mark 9:5). It is good to be with you and share with you this wonderful celebration. But suppose the hungry of the world were also here with us this

morning. Let us think only of those who are going to die of starvation today, the day of our Symposium of Hunger. There would be thousands of them, probably more than all of us who are gathered in this hall. Let us try to see them: their bodies weak and emaciated, their outstretched hands, their weak and fading voices, their terrible silence: "Give us bread... give us bread for we are dying of hunger!"

And if, at the end of our discussions on "the Eucharist and the Hunger for Bread," as we left the hall, we had to pick our way through this mass of dying bodies, how could we claim that our Eucharist is the Bread of Life? How could we pretend to be announcing and sharing with others the same Lord who said: "I come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

It matters little if these starving people are physically before our eyes here and now or scattered throughout the world: on the streets of Calcutta or in the rural areas of Sahel or Bangladesh. The tragedy and injustice of their death are the same wherever it takes place. And wherever it does take place, we who are here this morning have our share of responsibility. For, in the Eucharist, we receive Jesus Christ who will one day ask us: "I was hungry, did you give me to eat? I was thirsty, did you give me to drink? I tell you solemnly, insofar as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, my brothers or sisters, you neglected to do it to me" (see Matt. 25:42, 45).

Yes, we are all responsible, all involved! In the Eucharist, Jesus becomes the voice of those who have no voice. He speaks for the powerless, the oppressed, the poor, the hungry. In fact, he takes their place. And if we close our ears to their cries, we are shutting out his voice too. If we refuse to help them, then our faith is indeed dead as St. James tells us so clearly: "If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on and one of you says to them, 'I

wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty,' without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead" (James 2:15–17).

Brothers and sisters, let us be honest! Most of us here this morning are well fed and in reasonably comfortable circumstances. God grant we may not merit the condemnation St. James reserves for the selfish rich, whether individuals or nations, who refuse to give bread to the hungry or to raise up the poor! "Start crying, weep for the miseries that are coming to you. . . . On earth you have had a life of comfort and luxury; in the time of slaughter you went on eating to your heart's content. It was you who condemned the innocent and killed them; they offered you no resistance" (James 5:1, 5–6).

— "The Eucharist and Hunger" in *JF* 172–73

The Mass in "My Cathedral"

A mini-cathedral! Just eighteen feet by twelve. A little chapel which was prepared after the death of my predecessor, Father Janssens, for the new General, whoever this might be! Providence willed that this should be myself. I am grateful to the one who had the idea: he could not have interpreted the wish of this new General better. The planner of this tiny chapel may have desired to give the new General a quiet and convenient place to celebrate the mass in greater privacy and where he might visit the Blessed Sacrament without leaving his rooms. Possibly he did not think that the little oratory would be the fountain of incalculable power and dynamism for the whole Society, a place of inspiration, consolation, and strength — even a living room! It was going to be the room for relaxing in the most active leisure, where doing nothing everything is done! As the idle Mary drinking in the Master's words, much more active than

her sister Martha! Where the Master's glance and mine cross each other, where one learns much in silence.

The General would have the Lord all the time, every day, next to him, with just a partition between them; the very Lord who was able to enter through the closed doors of the upper room, who made himself present among his disciples, the one who would be invisibly present in so many conversations and meetings in my office.

They call this little room the private chapel of the General. It is a teacher's chair and a sanctuary: Tabor and Gethsemane, Bethlehem and Golgotha, Manresa and La Storta! Ever the same, ever different. If its walls could speak! Four walls that enclose an altar, a tabernacle, a crucifix, a Marian icon, a *zabuton* (a Japanese cushion), a Japanese painting, one lamp. Nothing else is needed; that's all: a victim, a sacrificial altar, the standard of the cross, a Mother, a burning flame that is slowly being consumed while giving light and warmth, and love expressed by two Japanese characters: God-Love.

Here is a program of life: a life being consumed in love, crucified with Jesus, in Mary's company being offered to God, as the victim which is offered to the Father day after day on the altar. . . . This cathedral is the theater of the most important act of the entire daily routine: the mass. Christ is the true and supreme priest, the Word made flesh. It is a divine attribute to be contained in the smallest place and not to be circumscribed by the universe: this tabernacle or little tent is not too small for him, but the entire universe is not big enough to hold him.

Each mass has an infinite value but under some personal circumstances and in some special moments this quality of infinitude is felt more deeply. There is no doubt that the fact of being the General of the Society of Jesus with its twenty-seven thousand men consecrated to the Lord and totally dedicated to

collaborate with Jesus Christ the Savior, in all sorts of difficult apostolates, which may at times lead to sacrificing life in a bloody martyrdom, carries with it a weight of responsibility and a profound sense of universality of its own.



My position between God and the Society of Jesus, as a priest and during the celebration of the Eucharist, is that of a “mediator between God and human beings” to govern the whole body of the Society. As Ignatius writes in the *Constitutions*, “The superior will do this primarily by his prayer which is full of desires and by his sacrifices, to obtain the grace of preservation and development. On his own part he should hold these means in high esteem and have great confidence in our Lord, since these are the most efficacious means of gaining grace from his Divine Majesty, the source of what is longed for.” The office of General thus considered appears in all its depth and in clear light: “morning after morning the Lord God opens my ear that I may hear” (Isa. 50:4–5).

— “The Mass in ‘My Cathedral’” in *HA* 46–48, 50

FIFTY YEARS AS A JESUIT

On January 15, 1977, Arrupe celebrated his fiftieth jubilee as a Jesuit. At the anniversary mass held in the Church of the Gesù, in Rome, Arrupe preached the following homily. In this personal reflection he reflects on three religious leaders who inspired him and three great passions at the center of his religious vocation. The homily was previously published in English under the title “Three Models and Three Loves.”

Today's celebration is only one of many you have attended on the occasion of anniversaries and jubilees. All have had one common denominator: on the one hand, a genuine sense and admission of smallness on the part of a man humbly conscious of his unfaithfulness, and on the other, an acknowledgment of the Lord's generosity and a deep feeling of gratitude toward him. This dialectic between a human person's smallness and limitations and the greatness of the Creator runs like a master thread through each personal history. All, from this point of view, are alike, but at the same time they each reveal ever differing aspects and developments. Each one differs from the other. Each one has his or her own distinctive character. Each one has his or her own particular history, one that does not repeat any other, and one that will be repeated by no other.

In listening to these personal histories one senses in each of them something that is unspoken because it cannot be uttered, a personal secret that not even the individuals themselves fully understand. This sphere that is hidden, or half-hidden, even from ourselves is the area that is truly interesting because it is most intimate, deepest, most personal. It is the area of closest relationship between God, who is love and who loves each one in a different way, and the human being who from the depths of his being gives a response that is unique because there is not nor will there ever be his like. It is the secret of wondrous trinitarian love, a love that intrudes when it wills into the life of each, in a manner that is unforeseen, inexpressible, irrational, irresistible, and yet one that is nonetheless wonderfully decisive. No individual's life, as a life, can be defined or expressed in "Aristotelian" categories. The reason is because there is at work in each life a double vital force, one human, the other divine, and the latter is God's love that surpasses all intelligence — "how impossible," as St. Paul says, "to penetrate his motives or understand his methods" (Rom. 11:33).

Reviewing the course of my seventy years, of which fifty have been in the Society, I cannot help but recognize that the decisive stages, the radical turning points in my life's path, have always been unexpected, I might even say irrational. But sooner or later, in every instance, I have had to recognize the hand of God that gave the helm a bold twist. My vocation to the Society of Jesus, after having begun the study of medicine, a subject that interested me so greatly, and right in the middle of my university career; my vocation to Japan (a mission for which I had no attraction at all prior to God's call), which my superiors refused me for ten years while they were preparing me to become one day a professor of moral theology; my presence in the city over which the first atom bomb exploded; my election as General of the Society . . . these were such sudden and unexpected happenings and at the same time they carried with them so clearly the "mark" of God, that in fact I have viewed and still view them as a series of those "irruptions" by which God's loving providence is pleased to reveal its presence and its absolute dominion over each of us. The reactions that I experienced made me think of the words of Isaiah: "What a wretched state I am in! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5); or of Jeremiah: "Ah, Lord God; look . . . I am a child!" (Jer. 1:6); or of Moses: "Who am I to go to Pharaoh?" (Exod. 3:11).

I have said that you are assisting at one of those many anniversaries in which the smallness of a man (and here today I am that man) evokes amazement and gratitude when God's blessings are recalled. Amazement and gratitude, not only, or not so much, over the privileged, decisive, or important moments of my life, but above all over the series of uninterrupted and immeasurable graces I have received each day during the course of everyday life in a monotonous, humdrum, and ordinary existence. All these memories make me wish that my life

could have been, or at least might be from now on, an unending “Magnificat.”

This indeed is the sentiment that sweeps over me when I experience a clear awareness and lively sense of my smallness, joined to a certain unshakable feeling of security in the various posts of responsibility that obedience had placed on my weak shoulders. The experience I have felt is that “I will always be with you” (Judg. 6:16), the guarantee that the Lord gives but that always leaves an uneasy doubt on one’s part whether “the condition will be fulfilled” or whether he will remain faithful. These are the lights and shadows of human insecurity that cannot call in question the security that derives from God’s help.

Abraham, Paul, Xavier

Reflecting above all on these more recent years, I have discovered three figures that symbolize my state of soul. In a way, they are patrons and models that help and instruct me.

1. The first is Abraham, the resolute and generous patriarch who responded promptly to God’s call to go forth from his own land, to take up his abode elsewhere, in a place that was unknown to him. Abraham set out on his way, leaving behind his own land, the house of his father . . . in search of “the land I will show you,” as the Lord had said to him (Gen. 12:1). This is a type of vocation that, especially in the circumstances of some years back, seemed to me to be filled with inspiration. A call from God, an unexpected “intrusion” by God, an uncharted assignment — “I will show you” — and a response that might seem to be unreasonable and whose fulfillment will involve one’s whole life. Still, Abraham started out straightaway on the road, sustained by a blind trust: “Though

it seemed Abraham's hope could not be fulfilled, he hoped and he believed" (Rom. 4:18).

This was my inner state in the first years of my life in the Society, at the moment when I set out for Japan, and especially on the day I was elected General. This last experience was an exodus, much more radical, amid extreme uncertainty and under an enormous burden of responsibility; an exodus out of a whole world of habits, practices, ideas, choices, from which I had to take leave in order to face up to a whole set of others that were very imprecise and lacking clarity and definition; an exodus out of a world filled with securities fashioned along the centuries-old traditions of the church and of the Society, in order to set out on paths that would bring me into a world that was still "in the making," unknown, but to which God called us through the voices of the Council, the pope, and the General Congregations. These were paths filled with unknown elements and challenges, but also filled with hopes and opportunities; paths that were and continue to be God's paths.

The figure of Abraham has always been for me an inexhaustible source of inspiration. "Where is the Society heading?" people have asked me. My reply has always been: "Where God is leading it." In other words: "I don't know. But there is one thing I do know and it is that God is carrying us along somewhere. Let us go forward confidently. Let us go forward with the church that is guided by the Holy Spirit. I know that God is leading us toward a new land, the promised land, his land. He knows where it is. Our task is only to follow him."

This stance, which without faith is absolutely unreasonable and imprudent, with faith, with the trust of Abraham, becomes clear, secure, consoling. One who reasons according to God's logic recognizes it as the only truly reasonable, uniquely prudent position. This spirit of self-abandonment, of hurling

oneself blindly into the arms of God, is a source of consolation and strength that can be experienced only through the mediation of faith.

2. Naturally, on such pathways there cannot fail to be difficulties, misunderstandings, obstacles. Human strength is not enough because what God asks of us is “beyond our capacities.” But here I come up against my second model and patron, St. Paul. His advice is inspired and has never led me astray. “I hardly deserve the name apostle; but by God’s grace that is what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10). “There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength” (Phil. 4:13). “With God on our side who can be against us” (Rom. 8:31)? In our effort to follow the Lord, we beg continually, as did St. Paul, for the moment when “you will be told what you have to do” (Acts 9:6). And we hear his reply: “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it” (John 15:7). The outcome is certain: God’s omnipotence requires that it come about, “since no one can oppose his will” (Rom. 9:19).

But “how rich are the depths of God — how deep his wisdom and knowledge” (Rom. 11:33), and thus, the outcome does not consist precisely in the fact that everything works out to a happy ending, that everything turns out well. In God’s way of thinking the cross holds a privileged place and leaves a distinguishing mark: for him who has faith, this “madness,” this “obstacle” is the “wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:22–25). For this reason St. Paul, our model, writes: “As for me, the only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:14).

3. My third model and patron, this time from the Society of Jesus, is St. Francis Xavier. Xavier, the man whose real source of apostolic energy was trust in God: the more one trusts in himself and in his own resources, the less strength he will

have. Xavier, who understood brilliantly the value of the cross and of suffering, up to the very point where his prayer became one of “more, more” when it was a matter of the cross, and of “enough, Lord, enough,” when he was the recipient of consolations.

These three figures of Abraham, Paul, and Xavier have been a continuing inspiration to me because they incarnate the spirit of God in a realistic interpretation of perfect indifference, the ideal of the third degree of Ignatian humility. They realize to perfection the meaning of a saying of Ignatius: “Trust in God as if the success of things depended wholly on you and not at all on God; but set to work as if God alone were to do everything and you do nothing.”

The Society, the Church, Christ

During these fifty years of religious life with their varied experiences, certain particular loves have grown and increased in me almost unawares. They have, moreover, the proper characteristic of all true love: the more suffering, the more love.

1. The first is love of the Society of Jesus. A simple and filial love, from the time of the novitiate, and one that without losing any simplicity went on to acquire through life's experience an extraordinary depth and robustness.

The Society is understood as the expression and incarnation of the Ignatian charism. To the extent that the evangelical intuition of this charism is known intimately, the more its simplicity emerges. It is the intuition of love that succeeds in uniting elements that, without such love, would seem to be irreconcilable. Or at least they would give rise to dichotomies and tensions that restrain the true apostolic drive: action/contemplation, faith/justice, obedience/freedom, poverty/efficiency, unity/pluralism, a sense of the particular/a sense of the universal. St. Ignatius,

on the contrary, discovers marvelous solutions that unite what seem to be in conflict and thus yield the greatest apostolic effectiveness.

The Society is made up of persons. This is one of the greatest spiritual experiences that a General can have: that of understanding spiritually, as it were “from within,” so many members of the Society — to enter into contact with them in very varied ways and circumstances, directly and indirectly. For me this has been one of the greatest comforts and stimuli — to see the virtue and the quality of members of the Society. It is a little like what Xavier must have felt when he wrote from Amboino to his companions in Europe: “Because I never forget you. . . . I want you to understand, dearest brethren, that I have torn from the letters you have sent me your own names, written in your own hands . . . and I carry these constantly with me for the sake of the consolation that I receive from them.” Or when he wrote to the Jesuits in Goa: “If the hearts of those who love each other in Christ could be seen in this present life, believe me, brethren, you could see yourselves clearly in mine. And if, when you looked in it you did not recognize yourselves, that would be because I hold you in such high esteem, and on account of your virtue you hold yourselves in such low rank, that your humility renders you unable to see and recognize yourselves in it.”

This is one of the greatest grounds I have for optimism when I think of the future of the Society. The same Lord who has given such vocations and so many accompanying graces to these sons of Ignatius, cannot forsake it, and must continue to aid it, as Ignatius himself rightly expected. “Therefore in him alone must be placed the hope that he will preserve and carry forward what he deigned to begin.” If the Lord has helped us up to now, why will he not do so also in the future?

The Society is an institution and instrument of the apostolate. In these last years, while so many changes were taking place in

order to adapt institutions and structures to current apostolic needs, I realized more clearly than ever the gifts of government that St. Ignatius had and his understanding, not only of the human person as such, but also of structures that must of necessity be flexible if one wants them to be effective and suited for all circumstances.

Looking at the Society in its true reality, I have been reminded often of what St. Francis Xavier wrote with such deep affection: “I don’t know a better way to finish this letter than to protest to all the Society that, should I ever be forgetful of the Society of the name of Jesus, ‘may my right hand wither’ (Ps. 137:5), because I have come in so many ways to know how much I owe all in the Society.”

2. The second love is of the church, the church of Christ, his spouse “with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that” that St. Ignatius spoke of perceptively as “our holy mother the hierarchical Church.” Yes, this church, founded by Christ and having the Roman Pontiff as its visible head, to which we are bound by a special vow of obedience, “the principle and foundation of the Society.”

With the passage of time and renewed experience one discovers such a serene and unchanging vigor in the church — a vigor flowing from Christ, its invisible head, and from the vitalizing action of his Spirit — that trust in it can only grow more firm. This is a trust that receives further confirmation when one encounters so many who, having separated themselves from the church, offer reasons that, at least apparently, seem to justify their attitude, but whom we subsequently find in a state of moral decline and atrophy as a result of being cut off from that movement of the Spirit that is uniquely characteristic of communion with the hierarchical church.

As life goes on and as you penetrate more deeply the mystery of the church and the charism of the Society, you grow aware

with greater conviction that the true *raison d'être* of the Society lies in service of the church under the Roman Pontiff. To fail in this regard would be to sign our own death sentence. It is, rather, a reason for consolation to see how the Society endeavors always to be as faithful as possible to the spouse of Christ and to his vicar.

3. The third love is Jesus Christ, the Eternal King of the Exercises, the Incarnate Son of God, to whom we all owe a personal love, the key of our spirituality. Our deepest satisfaction and the source of every other satisfaction is to feel that Jesus Christ is the center of our life and our ideal. Christ who called me and directs me, who gives me his Spirit, who nourishes me with his flesh, who waits for me in the tabernacle, who shows me his pierced heart as the center and symbol of his love, who identifies himself with the hungry and the naked, with all the marginalized people of the world. Christ who comes to meet me on so many occasions of joy and of sorrow, as a close friend, who expects me, calls me, speaks to me: "The Master is here and wants to see you." Christ who said to St. Ignatius at La Storta: "I wish you to serve us." Without this love for Christ, the Society would no longer be the one that St. Ignatius founded, the Society of Jesus.

This love for Christ supposes and includes that for his Mother, "Our Lady," she who "places us with her Son," the Mother of the Society. Love for Mary: first taught me as a child, it has gone on growing throughout my life, without losing its childlike character, from the time when my mother died (I was ten years old) and my father said to me: "Pedro, you have lost a saintly mother, but you have another more saintly in heaven." There are moments and happenings in life that are not forgotten, the heritage of deeply good parents.



Thus, dear brothers, at the close of fifty years of life in the Society, the words of Ecclesiasticus come spontaneously to my lips: “I will give thanks to you, Lord and King, and praise you, God my savior, I give thanks to your name; for you have been protector and support to me” (Ecclus. 51:1–2). Moreover, I would like respectfully to ask of Our Lady that she let me borrow her words from the Magnificat: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my savior; because he has looked upon his lowly servant” (Luke 1:46–48). Finally, I wish to finish with the prayer of St. Ignatius in his Spiritual Diary, spoken out of the depth of my weakness (“From the depth I call to you, Lord,” Ps. 130:1): “Eternal Father, strengthen me; Eternal Son, strengthen me; Eternal Holy Spirit, strengthen me; Holy Trinity, strengthen me; my one God, strengthen me.”

—“Three Models and Three Loves” in *RL* 1–10

TRUE BIOGRAPHY

Toward the end of his years as General of the Society of Jesus, Arrupe gave a series of interviews to a French Jesuit, Jean-Claude Dietsch. These were published in English under the title One Jesuit’s Spiritual Journey. When all the interviews were completed, Arrupe read the entire manuscript and wrote a brief conclusion for the book. The selection that follows, written in June 1981, is taken from that conclusion.

In the life of each person there is an intimate dimension that cannot be communicated. Biographies are always unfinished portraits. In many matters, the light that is hidden within the depths of our being is lacking. If that light could be brought out, it would transform our image radically. But it cannot be imparted; its only value is in remaining hidden.

True biography is written only before the Lord. He alone is the one who can correct and add many things, sometimes those most precious elements which go unnoticed even by ourselves. Before the Lord, that is to say, as St. John of the Cross described it,

In the blessed night
hidden from others
and looking at nothing
without other guide or light
than that which burns in the heart.

Someone has written, I don't know where, that the most interesting biography is that which is written "without ink." That remark can, doubtless, be applied to the preceding pages. It calls to mind especially the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians, "You are a letter from Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. 3:3).

I have the impression that my life is written in a single sentence: "It has unfolded according to the will of God." It is summed up in the words of Jesus, "Thy will be done" (Matt. 26:42). That can be said and written easily, but I myself do not understand either concretely or fully what it means. It is the mystery of all human life, which will only be revealed on the day when we see ourselves reflected in the face of God, when we shall find ourselves "face to face" with him (1 Cor. 13:12)

This does not mean that I consider my life to be especially extraordinary. The extraordinary thing is that, although I have been much lacking in what the orientation of my life should have been, the Lord continued to make possible his plan in my life. He loves us as we are, and he has loved me as I am. The miracle of life resides in this love which disposes, helps, and sustains. Marvelous things occur in everyone's life, and it is this same love of God which makes them appear as if they were our

own doing, whereas in reality they are his work. One finds here all over again the great difficulty in marking the border between the human and the divine. — “Conclusion” in *OJ* 101–2

PRAYER FOR NEW EYES

Grant me, O Lord, to see everything now with new eyes,
to discern and test the spirits that help me read the signs
of the times,
to relish the things that are yours and to communicate
them to others.
Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave
Ignatius.

— “The Trinitarian Inspiration
of the Ignatian Charism,” in *SL* 138