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What is
a Jesuit?

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by Daniel A. Lord, S. J.

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3742 West Pine Boulevard
ST. LOUIS, MO.



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Deacidified

What Is a Jesuit?

My Mother has just celebrated her four-hundredth birthday.

Amazing as the statement is meant to seem, this is not a jest but a happy truth. Of course by my Mother I mean my spiritual Mother, the Society of Jesus. For I am merely one of Ignatius's 26,309 sons, whom the world knows as Jesuits.

Considering her four hundred years, I and the thousands of other Jesuit sons find our Mother vigorously young, intensely alive, graciously charming.

Devoted sons always find it easy to launch into a eulogy of their mothers. If they hesitate, that is because they are restrained by the fear that their enthusiasm may make them seem boastful. They are a little shy about confessing before the world their love for their mothers; such confessions may seem to lack reticence.

Yet I have set myself the pleasant task of trying to explain to the reader what my Mother is and what are those distinctive marks that characterize her sons, the Jesuits.

Ignatius Dreams

In this brief and informal booklet I am trying to explain—quite objectively and without too much reference to my own happy

experiences as a Jesuit—what Ignatius of Loyola had in mind when he dreamed of the Society of Jesus. His vision of what the men attached to him would do was clear. He hoped to offer them with the aid of God a spirit and an inner drive that would make them eager to do important and Christlike work.

In his own lifetime Ignatius heard these associates of his called Jesuits and saw them actually at work in every country of Europe. He perhaps foresaw what they would do—penetrate the high walls of China and follow in the wake of the ships that pioneers were guiding into the harbors of a new world. He lived to see his handful of street preachers play an important part in the Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation. He watched the rise, as he himself had planned it, of the Jesuit universities and colleges that shortly were to rank with the best in Europe.

Too Much of Credit?

The world soon came to know the Jesuits. (Historians give them, if anything, too much credit for their part in the affairs of the next three centuries.) But from the very start their enemies were numerous and powerful. Their name, as a name to love or fear, as a synonym for devotion to Jesus or for subtle, conscienceless political trickery, was soon written into the English dictionary. At the pressure of the Bourbon monarchs they were for a lifetime suppressed by a Pope. They continued to exist

in un-Catholic Russia, and, restored by another Pope to their full tradition, they have in about a century and a half again encircled the globe with their houses and their works.

Who are these Jesuits? What are they like? What makes them what they are? Are they villains to be feared? Or are they sincere men trying to carry on what they believe to be Christ's kingdom and mission?

The Real, Not Imagined, Thing

Needless to say, I am not writing of Jesuits as they are imagined by people who probably never met one of them. I am describing the real Jesuit, as you will find him in the nearest Jesuit house. And those Jesuit houses are easily accessible to any American.

If you happen to know your Jesuits only through the pages of fiction and melodrama, you find them a pretty sly and rascally bunch of fellows. But luckily for us the Jesuits created by Eugène Sue or Thackeray are like no Jesuits we have ever known in our own community or in the records of our Society. Jesuits have traveled in disguise; but they have done and do this only in those rare lands where if they are known to be priests they are shot at sight, hung to the nearest lamppost, or tossed into the city jail. Russia is not hospitable to Jesuits, nor was Spain kindly in its brief Red days.

But Jesuits in America or in any of the other lands that have a decent respect for

human rights and freedoms do not travel in disguise. In America you can find them in almost every major city. Here they are in charge of large parishes. They are connected with institutions whose names appear frequently in the papers as the meeting place, for example, of scientific conventions; as part of the chain of laboratories in which earthquakes are predicted, recorded, and measured; or, if you are more familiar with the sports page, in the football news. Fordham, Holy Cross, Boston College, Georgetown, Gonzaga, Santa Clara are a few Jesuit-conducted institutions instantly familiar to any American reader.

Jesuits are really very easy to meet, and they are more than willing to let the honest investigator have access to their libraries; to the famous Constitutions of the Society, which contain their rule of life; to their houses, in which they lead a very normal life. In fact what irritates a Jesuit most is that, entirely accessible as he is, he is presented and explained to the world by people who simply won't call on him to talk his life over with him and who won't bother to read anything about him that wasn't written by an avowed enemy.

Part of a Logical Chain

Before we come to Jesuits as such however, there is the larger question of the logic that makes men and women become what we Catholics know as religious. For Jesuits are of course religious, like the Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, and the

other men and women who take vows and live in community.

A religious, when the word is used as a noun, is simply a man or a woman dedicated by the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the service of Jesus Christ in the Church He established. In order to follow the poor Christ, the religious gives up his right to own property. Through chastity he determines to follow the pure, unmarried Christ by giving up his right to marriage. Since Christ was obedient even unto death, he determines by obedience to follow the orders of his lawfully constituted superior officers.

Careful Steps

Back of these three vows lies a series of carefully thought-out steps. Here they are:

1. God created the world for His honor and glory and the happiness of His human creatures—men and women.

2. This world He turned over in important part to men and women as His sons and daughters. God the Father asked these children to manage the earth devotedly, to handle the good things of earth unselfishly, and to make their brothers and sisters happy.

3. Regretfully history here enters to point out that the majority of men and women have made an awful mess of their management. Wars and oppressions, vices and crimes, greed and lust, selfishness and exploitation — these make up man's pitiful

record, often outweighing the good he has done for God and his fellows.

The Clear Way

4. So God, in order to show His sons and daughters how they ought to live and in what fashion manage the earth, sent his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, perfectly to live, beautifully to do His "Father's business," and heroically to die, that truth might triumph and virtue prevail.

5. Christ, the perfect Son, called upon men and women to follow Him in bringing happiness to earth and right order into the management of God's world.

6. Though Christ meant this invitation for all mankind, He divided His followers into two main classes:

a. All men and all women were invited and ordered to keep the commandments of Moses, Christ's own two great commandments of love, and the Beatitudes. When the rich young man first asked what he must do to win God's approval, Christ stated those essential things.

b. There were however men and women who wanted to follow Christ far more perfectly. These He put into another class. Apparently the rich young man himself was considering this possibility of greater perfection. To these men and women, as to the rich young man, Christ said: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor . . . and come, follow me."

Professionals

Here then in this second class were the professionals. They were men and women who, like the Apostles, devoted themselves exclusively to the following of the master. So that they might own nothing, they sold their possessions and gave away the proceeds. They relinquished family ties, for they followed the virgin Christ. They accepted His leadership and the leadership of the Church He had established, doing exactly what He ordered and what His Church commanded.

These men and women, whatever the age in which they lived, were known as religious. Without personal property, without any work other than the work concerned with God and souls, cut free from family ties and responsibilities, they dedicated their whole lives to the work that brought the Son of God from heaven to earth. In this life they hoped, despite their limited abilities, to advance the glory of God, the kingdom of Christ, and the happiness of mankind. For themselves they aspired to attain some portion of the personal characteristics of the Savior.

Some Special Facets

The many founders of religious orders simply accepted the logic of these steps and invited men and women into organizations that would make relatively easy this ascent to perfection. They asked their followers to walk in the path of the Savior; they showed them how they could model their

lives on His. They carefully planned to continue the work that had engrossed His attentions and labors during His visible life. They saw in Christ their personal leader.

To insure stability in this difficult life, the founders bound themselves and their associates by vow to be as like Christ as possible, to allow no other love to come between themselves and God, and to work, pray, and suffer for the advancement of man's happiness on earth and his final joy in eternity.

Thus far all the founders and their associates agreed. These things made them religious, professional followers of the Savior.

Yet each founder saw some special characteristic of Christ that awakened his enthusiasm. This he pointed out to his associates. The many-sided Christ made possible the widest variety of religious orders, each following the great ideals of the Savior yet each showing marked differences in the special characteristics of their lives and the type of work they undertook.

Many Founders Find Many Sides

So Francis of Assisi, called the most Christlike man since Christ, loved the poverty of the poor Christ and asked his Franciscans to be detached from wealth and to serve Christ's beloved poor.

Dominic watched Christ standing with arms uplifted on the Mount of the Sermon or preaching from the bark of Peter; so he called his order the Order of Preachers.

Bernard of Clairvaux followed Christ into the mountaintops to pray and remembered the thirty years He spent in His significant hidden life; so Bernard built the monasteries where his Carthusians might lead the hidden life of meditation and solitude and pray for the sleeping, lazy, sinning world.

John of the Cross held before his Passionists the sufferings and death of the Savior. Vincent of Paul remembered Christ preaching to the Samaritans and in the little villages; later he reminded his Daughters of Charity that the merciful Christ walked among the poor, the sick, the outcast.

Out of the Needs of the Age

In each case the wise saintly founder focused his attention on that particular aspect of Christ's mult-sided character that was most needed to solve the problems of his age. Dominic saw the need of preaching to counteract the errors of the Albigenses. Francis chose Christ's poverty to overcome man's idolatry of wealth. As the Roman Empire fell before the warlike barbarous invaders, the Benedictines repeated Christ's charming admonition, "Peace!" and established havens of culture and gentleness on the relatively safe mountaintops.

Now the Society of Jesus—or the Jesuits, as we usually hear them called—was born in exciting days. Those days could not fail to affect the character and the work of Ignatius's new company. The Renaissance, Catholic in origin, had grown chillily pagan;

its cynicism had become a springboard for the Protestant revolution. Mohammedans were making their final bid for world domination, and they were doing it so successfully that Christendom feared they might succeed.

Pagan Renaissance, Protestant Christianity (hitherto unheard-of in world history), the threat of the great Red monster Mohammedanism — these were the pressing, insistent facts that dominated the age of Ignatius. All civilization felt their effects. For example:

What Happened

1. The scholars of the Renaissance in their enthusiasm for pagan literature, art, and philosophy were trying to swing the universities away from Christ and back to pre-Christian ways of thinking.

2. The militant Protestant revolutionists disdained everything that was Catholic Christianity. They disliked Scholastic philosophy because it inevitably lead to Catholic conclusions. They turned Papal-founded universities from allegiance to the Pope. They substituted national religions for the world viewpoint of Christ's Church. They violently disagreed among themselves but were united in their vehement agreement that the Catholic Church and all things Catholic must be wiped from the earth.

3. Much of the known world was being lost by the Church of Christ. Mohammed had long claimed Africa; now the flag of

the crescent floated in victory over the once-great Greek empire. Protestantism was winning nations from their allegiance to the ancient center of Christendom, Rome. Germany had swung toward Luther. England, Scotland, Wales, Switzerland, parts of France and the Low Countries set up religions that were as nationalistic as their climates and as individualistic as their favorite national food. Yet at this same time the discoverer and the explorer were opening another world, the Americas, to man's delighted attention.

The Triple War

4. What I must say of the Protestantism of Ignatius's day, I say without the intention of offending modern Protestants. But one merely repeats history when he recalls that Protestantism then was a militant, vigorous, aggressive group of fierce preachers like Calvin and Knox and soldiers ruthless as the princes of Germany and later the armies of Scandinavia and Puritan Cromwell. They were engaged in a campaign of smashing Catholic teaching and Catholic tabernacles. They had in many a land razed the altar and exiled the Eucharistic Christ. The large body of revolutionists denied that Christ was present in the Host. They called the Mass idolatry and sacrilege. They outlawed priests and made the celebration of Mass a capital crime.

5. The religious revolutionaries of that day were persuaded, in what we Catholics feel was a strange obliquity, that the sure

way to please the Son of God was to attack Mary, His mother. As a consequence her statues lay smashed to rubble; her name was uttered in contempt or hatred; and the love of Mary was branded as idol-worship.

Outlawed Church

6. As for the Catholic Church, which historic Christendom believed Christ Himself had established forever to continue His work, this the revolutionists attacked in Europe and the Mohammedans besieged on a dozen frontiers. The pagans of the Renaissance had wanted to wipe out any law that interfered with the cult of ancient Greek beauty. The Protestant revolutionists split from the Church and then marched off at the head of a dozen or more warring churches. Mohammedanism continued its war—helped now by the Protestant revolution, which has been called, only too correctly, “the camp mutiny in the heart of the Christian world”—in its determination to reduce Christianity to a memory and Christian men and women to the status of slaves.

Ignatius Chooses Obedience

Ignatius of Loyola was deep in the currents and the problems of his time. A soldier of then imperial Spain, he had seen the last of the bloody Mohammedans thrown out of the Spanish peninsula. He watched the universities in that swing from Christ back to Apollo, from Mary to Venus. And he heard the amazing doctrine that every man had—where religion was concerned—a

divine right to decide what Christ had taught and what He had meant by what He taught. He saw the countries of Europe hurrying on toward that terrible principle that a ruler might establish for his people the religion which he preferred and oblige them to bend knee and neck to that faith.

The soldier in Ignatius resented this breakdown of authority. His training on the battlefield told him clearly that a church divided, like an army divided, was a church ready to be conquered and destroyed. He could not believe that Christ, who prayed for "one fold and one shepherd," was the founder of a hundred different churches, all disagreeing about the most fundamental elements of His teaching.

The Gospels and the life of Christ that fell into Ignatius's hands showed him on the other hand a magnificently obedient Christ. He watched Christ bow to the command of His heavenly Father. He followed the Boy Christ down to Nazareth, where He was subject to an earthly mother and foster father. He could not miss the perfect obedience of Christ to the state—even to pagan Rome; to the ecclesiastical authorities of his time, however corrupt they personally might be; to the laws of census and taxation and unjust tribunals.

So with the world throwing off obedience at the exhortations of Luther and Henry of England and Calvin and the rebellious princes of Germany, Ignatius determined to bind his followers with a very special obedi-

ence to the desires and commands of Jesus Christ.

He was a soldier, this Ignatius Loyola. As a soldier he knew the necessity of obedience. He loved the obedient Christ; and following Christ, he felt he must give Him that same strict obedience which had marked the actions of Christ.

He was a man of his times; and when he saw the international chaos brought about by the contempt for authority, he determined to make obedience the mark of his new Society. He would bind his associates to Jesus, giving them the Savior's name. He would use a military name, calling his organization a company. He would demand of the future Jesuits a military obedience as essential in the kingdom of Christ as in the nations of the earth.

Soldierly Obedience

So obedience became the heart of Ignatius's military rule. His society was called, not an order, but a company. He demanded of himself and of those who with him fought Christ's peaceful war implicit obedience to the commands of Christ and to those of Christ's commander in chief on earth, the Pope. If Christ declared to His Apostles and their successors, "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me," then Jesuits would hear and obey those commands as if they were spoken by the voice of the Savior Himself.

It has always struck me as strange that the very same people who vastly admire the obedience of a soldier find the obedience of a Jesuit ugly and unnatural. They write poems in praise of the Light Brigade dashing to its doom because somebody ordered (he blundered as he ordered), and then they write volumes denouncing the Jesuits because they give implicit obedience to Christ and to those whom the Jesuits regard as the officers in Christ's army.

Does it seem quite fair or reasonable?

The Immediate Problems

With a company held together in Christ-modeled obedience, Ignatius turned to meet the problems of his day.

If the Renaissance was turning the universities into schools of pagan living and unchristian thinking, he determined to establish new universities in which Christ and His truths would be taught to young men, especially to those who might reasonably be expected to be leaders in their generation.

If the Protestant schools had cut themselves away from Scholastic philosophy and the teachings of the Fathers and the great Doctors, then the schools Ignatius established must be aggressively Catholic, strong in loyalty to that truth which flowed from the Sermon on the Mount straight through the uninterrupted tradition of Christianity.

If the religious revolutionists were using the printing press to spread their new teach-

ings and their swiftly changeable opinions, Ignatius determined that his Jesuits should write and publish, meet book with book, pamphlet with pamphlet.

New Worlds and Old

Under the blows of Mohammedanism and Protestantism the old world seemed to be cracking into frightening disunity. Ignatius and the general superiors who succeeded him turned their attention to the new worlds. Jesuits started for the Americas almost on the heels of the first explorers. Jesuit missionaries actually preceded traders into vast wildernesses of the new continents. I myself have seen in ancient Panama City the ruins of a Jesuit college that was flourishing hardly more than three quarters of a century after Luther had tried with his famous theses to cut the bloodline of Christian tradition.

Those early Jesuits built a complete civilization among the converted savages of Paraguay. They won to Christ the entire Huron nation in what was to be New York and Canada.

Not content with working in the new worlds, they turned to the worlds that were older than Europe itself. They laid spiritual siege to Japan, China, and India; they won millions of these pagans to the faith of Christ.

Systematic Replacement

This was not a mere accidental burst of zeal on the part of new and enthusiastic

recruits. It was a systematic effort at replacement by men who, when they saw one battleground apparently lost, counterbalanced defeat in one field with a dozen victories in others.

They built their schools and became world-striding missionaries because the faith was threatened and they felt impelled to leap into a battle that was not of their making or choosing but of Protestant and Mohammedan declaration. They taught on the street corners of Vienna and Antwerp, of Seville and Paris. They built new schools in every important center of Europe. They walked into the temples of India and Japan and spoke the name of Christ. They set up their altars and conducted their classes in the jungles of South America, the slum quarters of Benares and Peiping, and the unmapped forests of North America.

To the Defense of the Attacked

Ignatius could not have failed to be shocked at the treatment accorded the Eucharist by many who called themselves reformers. History records the smashed altars and broken tabernacles, the Eucharist trodden by mailed boots, the sacrilegious blasts against the Mass—written into the coronation oath of England and into the constitutions of German principalities gone Protestant. Men risked their lives if they assisted at Mass. Priests could be hung, drawn, and quartered for the crime of bringing viaticum to the dying.

To anyone who does not regard the Eu-

charist as the body and blood of Christ, all this might seem unimportant. But we cannot expect Ignatius so to regard it. To him the Eucharist was Christ dwelling with men, and he sprang to the defense of his attacked, insulted God.

Thus it was that into the very core of his company Ignatius wrote a loyalty to the Eucharistic Christ. Later this loyalty was to show itself in the Jesuits' famous devotion to the Sacred Heart. It was to express itself in the Jesuits' struggle for frequent communion, a struggle against the teachings of those Catholic puritans who are known to history as Jansenists. Loving Christ Himself, shuddering at the attacks upon Christ in the Eucharist, Ignatius swiftly dedicated his company to the service of the Eucharistic king.

In the same way he rushed his new soldiers to the defense of the attacked Queen of Heaven. The Protestantism of those days was bent on snatching from the head of Mary her star-circled crown. It begged mankind to give up its beloved mother. Hence Ignatius demanded of his followers a love for Mary that would be like the spiritualized service of a knight for his lady. He pledged his company to serve Mary as soldiers of pen and pulpit and prayer. They were to love her, these Jesuits, as grateful sons.

The Beleaguered Church

Because the Jesuits sprang into action at the very time when Protestantism seemed

most likely to succeed, and because from the moment of the Jesuits' arrival the Protestant revolutionists never won another country, history has been accustomed to pay almost too exaggerated a compliment to the Jesuits for their loyalty to the Church. Jesuits are often regarded by non-Catholics as kind of super-Catholics. In the words of the little boy, "Oh that priest is worse than a Catholic; he's a Jesuit."

Even loyalty can be exaggerated by rumor and report. But this much is true: Ignatius did his very best to bind his men to a strong and constant defense of the Church. He dreaded the prospect of a disunited Christendom, a Christendom weak before the attack of Christ's enemies. He was sure that Christ wanted His followers to be united as He and His Father were united, not split up into a hundred national and a thousand sectional churches. He believed that Peter was the rock and that to Peter and to his successors had been entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

The non-Catholic reader may emphatically disagree with Ignatius's convictions. But at least those convictions explain what Ignatius tried to do and why he tried to do it.

A Strong Defense

From the beginning the Society of Jesus has been battling in defense of the Church. To the regular three vows of all men and women religious Ignatius added a fourth for his company, a vow of special obedience to the Pope as Christ's Vicar on earth.

Friends Admire

Jesuit schools made Catholic teaching the basis of their curriculum. In the famous Council of Trent, when Protestantism demanded that the Church withdraw from its divine and historic position and admit a purely human character and consequent fallibility, Jesuit theologians reasserted in strongest terms that Peter was the rock on which Christ established His Church forever, that the Church has Christ's own power to loose and bind, and that though human abuses may arise and the weaknesses of men for a time obscure the divine character of the Church still Christ will never forsake that Church. He had given it a blanket promise that He would be with it all days, even to the end of the world. If He failed to keep that promise to His Church, He failed His plighted word.

Their schools, their missionary zeal, their love of the Eucharistic Christ and of Mary Mother of God, their intense loyalty to the Church — these are precisely the things which have endeared the Society of Jesus to its many friends.

Universities

On the other hand these qualities would quite naturally excite in enemies of the Church a frank hatred and resentment of Jesuits.

There is first of all the matter of Jesuit schools. Looking for just a second merely at our United States, we find that Jesuits today

are still distinguished schoolmen. Of the 27 Catholic universities in the country, 14 — more than half — are operated, guided, and largely staffed by Jesuits.

The names of these universities are nationally known. Their Jesuit connection is often forgotten:

The Creighton University in Omaha, University of Detroit in Detroit, Fordham University in New York, Georgetown University in Washington, Gonzaga University in Spokane, John Carroll University in Cleveland, Loyola University in Chicago, Loyola University in Los Angeles, Loyola University in New Orleans, Marquette University in Milwaukee, St. Louis University in St. Louis, University of San Francisco in San Francisco, Santa Clara University in Santa Clara (Cal.), and Xavier University in Cincinnati.

Colleges

Jesuit colleges are numerous and often quite famous: Boston in Boston, Canisius in Buffalo, Holy Cross in Worcester (Mass.), Loyola in Baltimore, Regis in Denver, Rockhurst in Kansas City (Mo.), Seattle in Seattle, Spring Hill in Spring Hill (Ala.), St. Joseph's in Philadelphia, St. Peter's in Jersey City.

Statistics

In addition the Jesuits operate 38 preparatory and high schools across the country.

Statistically this record would read thus:

Jesuit universities 14

Faculty (Jesuit and non-	
Jesuit)	3,146
University students.....	34,661
Jesuit colleges.....	10
Faculty (Jesuit and non-	
Jesuit)	750
College students.....	10,360
Jesuit high schools.....	38
Faculty (Jesuit and non-	
Jesuit)	838
High-school students.....	15,555

Across the Pagan World

Well as the historian knows the Jesuit schools, he is perhaps even more likely to know Jesuit missionary labors. At the present time, 1941, of the 26,309 Jesuits in the world, 3,785 are working on the missions. This means that approximately one out of every seven Jesuits is directly concerned with the conversion of the pagans to Christ. And as over one third of the more than twenty-six thousand Jesuits are still in their long course of training and study, almost two out of every seven actively engaged Jesuits are missionaries.

Forgetting for a moment the wider world in favor of our own country, Americans may be interested to know that from the United States, Jesuit priests and brothers go out to teach the Christian religion and civilization in the following far-flung places and in the following numbers:

Indian Reservations of the United	
States	90
British Honduras.....	32

Patna, India	90
The Philippines.....	256
Jamaica	42
Alaska	33
Iraq (Bagdad)	17
China	25

The Great Loyalties Continue

Any Catholic who knows Jesuits at all is likely to have visited one of their 96 parishes in the United States. In these the Jesuits continue to stress devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Mother of God. Some Jesuit churches have the privilege of perpetual adoration of the Eucharistic Christ. All of them continue the practice, started in protest against Jansenism's aloofness from Christ, of the first-Friday devotions.

The devotion of the Jesuits to the Blessed Sacrament took the form of the international League of the Sacred Heart, which has for its objective world-wide love of Christ and personal closeness to the Savior in Holy Communion. In the United States alone the League of the Sacred Heart has 14,000 centers and over 6,000,000 members.

Mary

May and October are always beautiful months in Jesuit parishes and schools. Then Our Lady is especially loved and honored. The Jesuit novice shortly after he enters the Society gives as his first public sermon a talk on Our Lady. University students assemble around the statue of their mother

on the university campus. There are May altars in every Jesuit church and chapel. Young men and women walk in procession to honor heaven's queen. You will find the Jesuit school papers filled with young men's prose and poetry in her honor.

Significantly the first church entrusted to the Society after its foundation was that of Our Lady of the Wayside. Today that title has been conferred on one of the latest Jesuit chapels, the chapel at Loyola University in Chicago.

Again the Jesuits' devotion to Mary became concrete in an organization, this time the world-wide Sodality of Our Lady. The Sodality exists in every civilized country and most of the missionary countries on the globe. In the United States alone it has 11,974 units with an estimated membership of more than 2,000,000 men and women, boys and girls.

For the Leaders

Ignatius was especially interested in the men and women who would be, not ordinary, routine-ridden Catholics, but leaders in the kingdom of Christ. Hence from the start of the Society, Jesuits have stressed the special training school known as the retreat. For this school Ignatius himself wrote the textbook. Because of this pioneering, the Holy Father proclaimed Ignatius the heavenly patron of retreats throughout the world.

The retreat is pleasantly familiar to most Catholics. They know it as a time of silence

and prayer, a time when a man looks deep into his own soul, upward and downward at the possible goals that lie ahead, carefully at the person of the Savior, and far into the center of fundamental truths. For three days or longer the man or woman measures his own strength and his obvious weaknesses, the successes of the past and the reasons for recurring failures; and then in the light of Christ's teaching and life he faces a future patterned after the divine model.

Centers of Prayers

Returning from this time of prayer and serious thinking, the retreatant tries to make concrete in his own life the lessons Christ through His life taught him in theory and in practice.

During the course of a single year Jesuits give about 3,000 of these retreats. In specially built citadels of prayer and meditation they invite men to do something that was old in the Society long before Gandhi made it headline news: meditate on the great truths and measure their lives by these standards.

They give retreats to priests and seminarists, to men and women religious, to parishes and schools, to university students, to professional men and women, to mothers, to workingmen.

In the United States there are 10 Jesuit houses in which retreats are given all through the year. Another 15 are opened for retreats during the summer.

Publications

The Society of Jesus was born shortly after the invention of the printing press. This greatest of all inventions, which a great Catholic printer got from the Chinese, became extraordinarily effective in the hands of the Protestant revolutionists. Hence from the very start of the Society, Jesuits have taken a strong interest in publishing. Many a Jesuit is a trained publicist. Jesuit journals appear in every country of the world.

In America, Jesuits publish the following major publications:

America, A Catholic Review of the Week, with a weekly circulation of 30,000.

The Messenger of the Sacred Heart, published in the interests of the League of the Sacred Heart, with a monthly circulation in advance of 300,000.

THE QUEEN'S WORK, the official journal of the Sodality of Our Lady, with a monthly circulation of 95,000.

Jesuit Missions, a magazine devoted to the work of Jesuits among pagan peoples, with a monthly circulation of 30,189.

Jesuit learned publications start with *Thought* and include Jesuit-university journals in the fields of history, philosophy, literature, and theology.

Presses

Jesuits own and operate several important publishing houses, among them being

America Press, THE QUEEN'S WORK Press, the Messenger Press, Fordham University Press, Loyola University Press.

Under the editorship of Father Joseph Husslein, S.J., Bruce Publishing Company of Milwaukee brought out a University in Print called "The Science and Culture Series." Father John J. Wynne, S.J., conceived the idea of "The Catholic Encyclopedia" and with an eminent board of editors brought it to scholarly completion.

Jesuit textbooks are widely used in seminaries, universities, high schools. Jesuit writers are well known in poetry, fiction, history, biography, literary criticism, theology, and learned and popularized philosophy.

Not So Popular

Inevitably those very things which have endeared Jesuits to staunch Catholics have won for them sincere distrust or frank hatred from those who do not like the Church of Christ or Christ Himself or Mary. Jesuits would themselves be shocked and surprised if tomorrow they awoke to find themselves universal favorites.

Take for example the reaction aroused by the Jesuit schools. Whenever a persecution of the Church breaks out in any land, the Jesuits are inevitably the first to be attacked, suppressed, and driven from the country. The prime reason for this is of course their schools. Any man determined to root out the Church would of necessity

have to make war on those Catholic leaders in whose schools young people are frankly taught to know, love, and give their loyalty to the Church. Any man who dislikes the Church is bound to hate the Jesuits for their schools, which have for their objective first of all the education of loyal, intelligent, and convinced Catholics.

The Protestant revolutionists hated the Jesuits with special enthusiasm. They knew that the Jesuit schools were a hurdle high and difficult to clear.

Absolutism or totalitarianism is certain to dislike Jesuits. When a tyrant or a despotic ruler means to fasten his rule or whim on a nation, he must of necessity get rid of the Church. More important still, he must close the Church's schools. For no matter what faith or lack of faith the despot professes, he cannot be supreme while the Church is teaching young minds that over every ruler there is the supreme ruler and that Christ gave to all men a dignity that cannot be suppressed by tyrant or code or despotism.

On the other hand the despot is sure that once Catholic education is denied to children he can easily win them to him and away from the Church. So throughout history we see him invariably hitting at the Jesuit schools. The Jesuits are driven out of their colleges; their schools are confiscated by the state; the educational grip of the Church upon the young mind and heart is notably weakened.

It is the Jesuit as a schoolman that the despot always hates. Whether in Russia or modern Germany, in the Bourbon Portugal of the late eighteenth century or in scarlet Mexico the despot suppresses the Jesuits because that is a quick way of putting their schools out of business. Often the despot will let the Church seem free to minister to souls—provided its schools are closed and its teachers silenced. But the despot knows he cannot make absolute his tyranny while the Jesuits and Catholic teachers like them are training men and women to recognize the essential dignity of the human soul and the inalienable rights of human beings.

Abolish the Schools

So the impartial historian comes to realize that Jesuits are hated and struck down, not because they are priests or religious or traitors or internationalists, but because they are Catholic schoolmen who teach in their schools loyalty to Christ, His Vicar the Pope, and the infallible Church. They are expelled and their schools are confiscated because they insist on the principles of Bellarmine and Suarez, great Jesuit theologians and lawyers, who flouted the divine right of kings and taught the fundamentals of human right, liberty, dignity, and equality under God, fundamentals from which was born all modern democracy.

Repeated Confiscation

In Mexico the Jesuit schools have been confiscated time and again by a succession of tyrants differing in party and shade but

identical in their determination that there should be no power above them, no freedom under them. When in France the Grand Orient of freethinkers and atheists determined to rid the country of God, it immediately suppressed the Jesuits and confiscated their schools. The Bourbons had done the same thing a full century before when an arbitrary ruler wanted complete power over his people. In the case of the Grand Orient there was a determination that God should be exiled from France and Christ denied a place in national life. So out must go the Jesuit professor, and barred forever must be his school.

The Jesuits are so accustomed to this that the news of a fresh suppression in some country neither surprises nor vastly alarms them. Suppression and confiscation have been the commonplace routine of their history.

England in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts racked and hanged the Jesuits because, with all Englishmen in Oxford and Cambridge and the public schools being trained to hate the Church and deny the Eucharist, the Jesuits had the effrontery to establish schools right across the Channel, there to welcome and train young Catholic Englishmen in their faith.

You can hardly be surprised that Protestant and pagan historians who have been frank in their dislike of the Church and Scholastic philosophy have detested the Society of Jesus. They are naturally bit-

ter at the thought that these Jesuits build schools to "pervert young minds." We think this "perversion" really a splendid thing, the training of youth to love Christ, accept the Church's ancient truths, sit at the feet of Aristotle and Aquinas, find the Savior in the Eucharist, and serve their fellow men with Christlike devotedness. But if you don't believe in Christ or if you dislike the Church, you can hardly be expected to cheer the Jesuits at work in their schools.

Stop the Army's Advance!

Those who regard the Church as evil naturally regard as a misguided enemy anyone who extends the Church's influence. Those who think the kingdom of Christ a purely mythical realm that rates no place in the council of the nations aren't going to be enthusiastic about a body of men vowed to win new lands for that kingdom.

Hence—and once more naturally enough—the missionary activities of the Jesuits have met with a lot of unfavorable comment and systematic opposition from men not precisely enamored of the Church itself.

Early American colonists bent on destroying the Indian tribes cordially disliked the Jesuits, who were trying to civilize the savages. It was trying news to the staunch old Puritans when word came that the Jesuits were actually making Catholics out of the Hurons and the Iroquois.

One Calvinist pirate in a burst of religious zeal threw into the sea forty Jesuit mis-

sionaries bound for South America. No doubt he complimented himself on having done a praiseworthy deed. Hadn't he stopped a parcel of mischief-makers from turning savages into sons and daughters of the villainous Church of Rome?

As soon as the Indian rajahs learned that the Jesuits were teaching pariahs the essential dignity of all human beings, they swiftly had the priests banished from India. The slave traders grew furious and then effectively obstructive when Jesuits undertook to work among the Negroes brought from Africa to the slave port of Cartagena in Central Africa.

Bourbons Smell Money

As for the Bourbons—when they heard that the Jesuits had built up a flourishing mission in Paraguay and were teaching the Indians to live in peace and to construct a Christian culture and a prosperous civilization—they decided that the influence of these priests must come to a quick halt. If there were riches in the new world, those riches belonged, not to the natives, but to the European exploiters. What right had these Jesuits to establish a culture in which Paraguay Indians thought first of the kingdom of God and only second of the empire of Portugal and Spain? Indians were meant to be slaves, not saints.

So the Bourbons clapped the Jesuits into prison ships and hustled them back to Europe; then they raked up every penny

they could find—little enough, heaven and history know—from the defenseless Indians. And then they lost all interest in the new lands, and the Indians were permitted the privilege of plunging back into slavery and savagery.

Naturally Unkind

Protestant historians have not been kind to Jesuits. Jesuits would not expect them to be. They could hardly be enthusiastic about a Campion or a Persons, who, with a hundred like them, tried to keep the old faith alive in Tudor totalitarian England. They could scarcely be fond of the Jesuits, who themselves denied and trained "seminary priests" to deny that James I or any other monarch was king by reason of divine right.

German Protestants could scarcely applaud Canisius for turning back the Reformation in Austria, Holland, and Belgium. French Protestants were not likely to be warm in praise of the Jesuits, who kept insisting that the Huguenot fifth columnists were splitting France wide open and building up in the vulnerable center of France a separate and treacherous nation.

Hating the Catholic Church or at least distrusting it, Protestant historians could not be asked to pin medals on the men who lived their lives and often shed their blood in defense of that Church. Standing on the side lines of history, they could hardly cheer Jesuit effort, which was advancing the Catholic cause.

In all this I am not discussing the rightness or wrongness of the Catholic cause; I am merely trying to point out why the Jesuits' intimate connection with that cause has led to so much unpleasant interpretation of their spirit and their deeds.

As for the Eucharist . . .

But we must remember something else: Protestantism in those early days was not the gentle, almost kindly thing it now is. In a hot and glowing fire it was melting down intellectual convictions of long centuries past and fusing for centuries to come all kinds of emotional prejudices. Protestantism—and we have only to turn to Protestant history to see this—was as violent as the tongue of John Knox, as fierce as the doctrines of Calvin, as warlike as the swords of the German princes, as relentless as the rack of Elizabeth and the torture chambers of Topcliffe and the pursuivants of England and the Huguenots of France.

High on the list of most of those early Protestant hatreds was the Catholic Mass and the Catholic Eucharist. Near that ran the hatred for Mary Mother of God. Protestants of England smashed the altars in their cathedrals, banished the tabernacle, made it treason to say Mass on English soil, and required the king before he mounted the throne to swear that he regarded the Mass as idolatry and the Catholic Eucharist as a blasphemy.

Calvin and Knox rent their garments at

the thought that Mass was said in the French palace and in the castle of Mary of Scotland. In Ireland death was decreed for the man who knelt at Mass behind a sheltering hedge. It was high treason in Scotland to shelter overnight a "Massing priest." Protestant Germans and Scandinavians were often scarcely less violent in their hatred of the Catholic Mass and the Eucharist.

Or Mary

Sometimes even today we find the ancient Protestant dislike of or actual acute hatred for the Mother of God still continuing. Naturally few modern Protestants smash a mallet into the face of Our Lady's statue. Yet they still accuse the Catholic of idolatry because he honors the woman God chose for His mother and because they regard as worthy of praise and poetry the Lady whom a messenger of God hailed with the words "full of grace."

Let us in all fairness remember that the men who for three centuries and more wrote the histories read in English-speaking countries had little if any belief in the Eucharist, often regarded it as the most frightful superstition, and spoke of the veneration of Mary as idolatry. Could they be expected to like the Jesuits, who fought so sturdily for the Mass, the Eucharist, and Mary?

The historian who disliked the Mass or thought it ridiculous saw the Jesuits persist in saying Mass, however vigorous the laws to the contrary. The German Protestant

historian saw the Jesuits in the famous German College in Rome training young Germans to come back into Germany and say that Catholic Mass in the shadow of Lutheran churches and honor Mary, toward whom the revolutionists had felt hatred and contempt.

At the present time the Jesuits are training young men to go back into Russia, there as priests to say Mass, preach loyalty to the Catholic Church, and praise the purity of Mary's virginity. No one could expect a communist writer to lavish much love on them; no one could expect the *Pravda* to print editorials praising their ideals and the high purposes of their seminaries.

Enemies of the Church

Perhaps it may sound strange to a casual reader, but Jesuits have often felt flattered that certain men have hated them and made war on them. More than likely those men were precisely the writers, historians, statesmen, and politicians who made war on the Church, hated or despised the Eucharist, and slurred the Mother of God. There has scarcely ever been an enemy of the Church who hasn't paid the Jesuits the compliment of his cordial dislike. "Judge" Rutherford, savage old anti-Catholic, constantly calls the Jesuits vicious names. In that he merely takes over the heritage of the "Menace," the KKK, the APA's, who consistently bracketed in the roster of hatred the Catholic Church itself and the Jesuits,

who take a special vow to defend that Church.

As long as England maintained its penal laws against the Church, Jesuits by name ranked high on the list of the proscribed. Calles of Mexico threw the Jesuits out in the first gesture he made against all the liberties of the Church. Once—and recently—by remarkable chance the Jesuits missed a bit of this hatred; for before priests and nuns began to fall before the rifles and machine guns of Spanish anarchists and communists, the Jesuits had already been banished from Spain and their beautiful colleges confiscated. Hence they could not be shot in really satisfactory numbers by the Christ-haters; they had been sent away before the bloody persecution of the Reds really got under way.

Training for the Task

The training of a Jesuit for his work is long and careful. Ignatius meant his sons to be carefully prepared for their life's task. They were to be trustworthy to the extent of going "to any part of the world and living in whatever manner they could, so long as there was hope of God's glory and the salvation of souls." Modified by such changes as the development of science and general knowledge has made necessary, the Jesuit's training remains unaltered since Ignatius mapped it out.

Future Jesuits must, before entering the Society, have finished their full high-school

course, with four years of Latin. Most of them enter with college training; many of them enter with degrees. On his entrance into the Society, the young novice is plunged into his first long retreat. For a full month, in unbroken silence, prayer, and meditation, under the skillful guidance of an experienced Jesuit, he looks at Christ, studies Christ's teachings in so far as they affect his own life, watches Christ at work, comes into personal association with the Savior, and is presented with the one leader about whom his whole life is henceforth to swing.

Preparation

This long retreat melts into the two years of his novitiate, the West Point of his militant career. During these two years he continues the training that consists in the close following of Christ's ideals, ideas, principles, and practices. He meditates on Christ for almost two hours each day. He does the humble work that characterized the hidden life of the Savior. He trains his will to do hard and self-sacrificing things. He is tempered to a burning enthusiasm for the cause of Christ as the only cause worthy of his lifelong loyalty.

Following this come the two years of his classical studies, when he reads the best Latin, Greek, and English literature. By mastering the style of the great writers, it is hoped, he will be able to use technical literary perfection in presenting the message of Christ to the listening and reading world.

Next come three intensive years of philosophy and science. The science is as modern as a university course can make it. The philosophy is the great philosophy of Aristotle and of Aquinas, the rock-firm reasoning and common sense that establish the fact of the existence of God and the immortality of the soul and face the great questions that can be solved by the light of reason.

The Course Continues

Usually after this he is sent for three years to experience personally the active life of the Society. He may follow the teaching Christ into the classroom, where he teaches the classics or sciences. But he may be sent to the missions to work for the conversion of the pagan.

When this period of three years is ended, he returns to his studies, for four years of theology. Theology, be it noted, is, contrary to popular misconception, really the sum total of the doctrines and principles of Christ presented, analyzed, studied in the light of science, history, man's wide experience, traced through the historical adaptations, and followed to the logical conclusions and applications to modern life. The young Jesuit is supposed to know Christ's truths in expert fashion. He is a lawyer where Christ's law is concerned. He should know how to deal with sick, sinful souls in the spirit of the divine physician. As a future young officer in Christ's regiment he learns the strategy of the battles of peace and the conquests for the kingdom of God.

During the period of his theology the Jesuit attains the priesthood. Then when his theology course has been completed, he retires once more to the hidden life, again makes the long retreat—another full month with Christ in silence and prayer — once more takes inventory of his virtues and weaknesses, faces the work ahead, rekindles his enthusiasm for the cause of Christ, and accepts the high responsibility that will be his for the advancement of Christ's interests and the happiness of mankind.

Special Training

This year finishes his formal training. A great many Jesuits however are given in addition special courses in various fields of learning. They may go to Rome or Louvain or elsewhere for advanced philosophy or theology. They may reenter one of the universities or enter a famous secular school for some specialized study. They may be given an added course in preaching or public speaking. Sometimes they take degrees in law, medicine, fine arts.

With all this behind him the Jesuit accepts the orders of his superior who assigns him to his work in the Society. He may be a parish priest; he may be an instructor in a college or a teacher in a high school; special training or aptitude may fit him for a post in a university; he may be assigned to retreat work, to an editorial post on a publication or in a publishing house, to special work as a preacher or in one of the

Jesuit radio stations. Or he may be sent to one of the near or far missions.

Give Common Denominator

Into whatever office he moves however, one sole ideal is supposed to be his: "I must be a follower of Christ; I must as far as possible duplicate the virtues of Christ in my own life; I must bring Christ to those who shall be influenced by my work."

That is the spirit that a Jesuit is trained to have and supposed to have. Despite all the weird, fictionized, and fantastic things written about him, he can rightly have no other spirit. If he fails, as often he must, it is not because the standard set before him is a low, shifty, mean, ignoble one but because the ideal is too high for mere unaided human strength. He has set for his goal the Christlike life. No one has ever suggested or claimed that that goal is easy to attain.

So in success and failure the Jesuit is expected by his founder, Ignatius, and by the rule that that genius left behind him to keep his eyes fixed on Christ. His friends love him because they know that that is his ideal. His foes hate him because they hate that ideal, or because they know of individual Jesuits who have missed that ideal, or because they have been given an altogether false picture of what a Jesuit should be and is.

Anyplace

As a Jesuit he may move into the learned societies or into a slum parish; whatever

his destination, there he hopes to carry Christ. His assigned task may be to teach first-year-high boys the paradigms of Latin, or he may be the president of a great university, or the dean of an important Jesuit medical school. Wherever he goes, he goes as a representative of Christ the teacher.

Perhaps he is told to write, ordered to preach, assigned to the work of giving retreats. In each assignment he knows the higher assignment common to all—to present Christ to a waiting world. He may be placed in charge of some activity of the Sodality of Our Lady or of the League of the Sacred Heart. He thus becomes a publicist of Christ and Mary. He may sail to Rome and in the Jesuit-staffed Gregorian University teach each year two thousand future priests who come to the center of Christendom for philosophy, theology, Scripture, sacred eloquence. He may be assigned to the Biblical Institute, also staffed by Jesuits, to work on Scriptural research or on the guidance of graduate Scripture students. He may take his place in the Jesuit Oriental Institute to pursue oriental sciences and languages.

The recent assignment entrusted to the Jesuits by the Pope may bring him as a volunteer to leave the Latin rite to follow the Greek rite of the Church; and trained as a Russian priest, he may prepare himself to enter the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics or to care for Greek Catholics in the various cities to which they have fled from

Red wrath. Or he may go to the college operated by the Jesuits in Iraq.

Missionary assignments may take him among the Sioux of Wyoming or the Eskimos of northern Alaska. He may travel the rivers of British Honduras, working among the "bush" Caribs, or he may find himself in the crowded cities of Patna, teaching Hindus the faith. His ticket may carry him to the great Jesuit university in Manila; if he goes to the Philippines, he may live among the lepers of Mindanao. He may conduct one of the many parishes in Jamaica's cities or back in the Jamaican hills, where can still be heard the drums that once beat out voodoo rhythms. He may go to the new Jesuit university in China.

The Important Thing

The matter of the particular place where the Jesuit goes he never regards as important. Whatever he does or wherever he is, his real assignment is to follow Christ, serve the Church of Christ, labor for the souls for whom Christ died, spread the truth of Christ, bring the Eucharistic Christ down into the midst of men, honor the mother of Christ, and protect by every honest means the interests of Christ.

In this tremendous assignment he will often fail. He cannot hope for popularity among people with whom even Christ is unpopular. Many Protestants will, thanks to the distortion of the Jesuit figure in the warped glass held up by historians, often

distrust the Jesuits. Their purposes and actions will be strangely twisted from the true meaning. Sincere men hearing the charges against them and then meeting the singularly inoffensive Jesuits who really work throughout the world will be puzzled. The Jesuit will sometimes be praised beyond his deserts and blamed beyond his faults.

But as a Jesuit he must continue his work. He keeps up the brave hope that his life will not be without some service of his fellows, some advancement of truth, some forward movement of the kingdom of Christ.

The Insult of a Name

The name Jesuit, it is interesting to remember, is not of Jesuit invention. Like the name Christian, it was first used as an insult. "Let us," said some forgotten enemy of the then new Society of Jesus, "find a new name for these intruders, a name that will hiss and sting, that will sound like a slap in the face, that will be ridiculous, disdainful. . . . I have it! Let's call them Jesuits."

So Jesuits they became, and by the choice of their enemies. Soon the word took on that ugly, secondary meaning that recurs so often in English literature. Jesuit came to mean a sly trickster, a villain lurking in dark corners, an underhand rogue given to equivocations and political conspiracies. Jesuit suggested a man with oil on his hands, poison on his tongue, and in his

dark, crafty soul malice and a hatred of his fellow men.

But as the early Christians hearing their name as a cynical insult quickly made it their own, so the Jesuits accepted their nickname quite gladly. They were Latinists, these early Jesuits, and the Latin form of the new name was *Jesuita*. And *Jesuita* was a thoroughly delightful word.

For it was a combination of the Latin words *Jesu* and *ita*, which in conjunction means simply like to Jesus. Their enemies had never meant a compliment like that. The Jesuits would not have dared suggest the name. But since malice and contempt had given them the title, they accepted it gratefully, each determining that, to the best of his powers, in life and doctrine, loyalty and love, service of the Church of Christ, devotion to Christ in the Eucharist and love of Christ's Mother, in his choice of important things, and in the works he understood, he would indeed strive to be a *Jesuita*, a person like to Jesus.

Today, on the four-hundredth birthday of their Mother—the Society of Jesus—the Jesuits have no higher ambition and no other aim than to be a little like the king and leader who is always Christ.



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