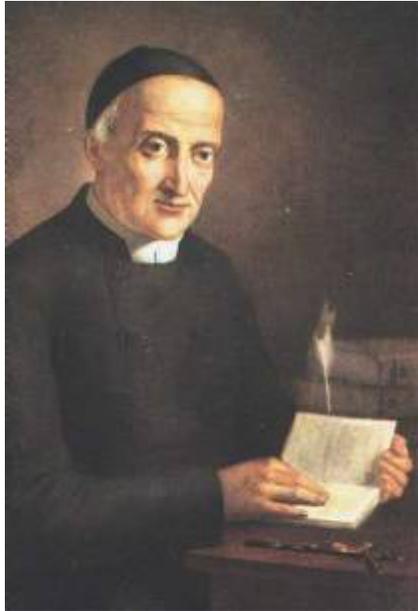


St. GASPAR BERTONI



Eight Day Retreat Part I: Days I-III

on the
**EXAMEN: PARTICULAR and GENERAL –
The DUTIES OF CLERICS:
Regarding
ARMS & HUNTING, SECULAR BUSINESS,
TONSURE, HABIT, BREVIARY, OBEDIENCE – CHASTITY, GOOD EXAMPLE**

CONFESSION, PENANCE & MEDITATION

based on the Instructions of

St. IGNATIUS of LOYOLA

[Mss B ## 2688-2963]

with Notes by
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Preface

Earlier in the *Collectanea Stigmatina*¹ series, there appeared the *Meditations for the Spiritual Exercises*, which St. Gaspar Bertoni preached to the Priests and Seminarians of Verona in 1810. Here, there come to light some special *Instructions* that the saint preached as the *Spiritual Exercises* offered to Priests and Seminarians from the very beginnings of this ministry in his life. To put it more exactly, this is material that he collected and organized for these special *Instructions* where he intended to illustrate, with texts from the most authentic Catholic tradition, that which we might call the 'practical technique' of the Ignatian method which he himself was able to adopt in all its efficacy: this appears manifestly even from the titles of these present *Instructions: The Particular Examen; The General Examen; Confession; Penance; Meditation; Rules for the Discernment of Spirits; Means to conserve the Fruit of the Holy Exercises*: all these, it is clear, according to the norm of the precious text of St Ignatius.

It is a commonly held view, universally recognized, that the technique of St. Ignatius, remains still now unsurpassed. The Dominican, Fr. Innocenzo Colosio, writes explicitly:

...We cannot fail to state that the *Spiritual Exercises* are an *institution*, with their own physiognomy, finality, well defined structures, and that the uncontested master in this field is St. Ignatius, according to the frequent statements of the recent Popes. In this matter, therefore, the Ignatian doctrine has, so to speak, a special value of a proper theological place, and therefore all of us out to hold it in its due consideration...²

And this same author continues, as the genial director of this Review, stating:

... all, readers and non-readers alike whether they are enthusiastic admirers or adversaries, more or less admitted, we are all under the influence of this powerful booklet, which together with the Rule of St. Benedict, with the Summa Theologica form the bibliographic triad which have enjoyed the more influence in giving to Catholic asceticism its actual structure.

It is evident that our Stigmatine Founder in fully embracing the Ignatian Method has understood that one must exclude in deed just any capricious or whimsical individual formation thought up on the spot, with which there is often

¹ CS I, pp. 100-205.

² *Rivista di Ascetica e Mistica*, 1956, p. 327.

masked the spiritual anarchy which does not lead to anything other than desolating sterility.

The Ignatian ‘gymnastics’ undertaken with decisive will and persevering confidence has always given proof of the *extreme practicality* in the admirable effects that flow from these.

There is not intended from this that the method of St. Ignatius, no matter how excellent it indeed is that it would have an absolute value; this method, too, is but an instrument, a weapon, that is to be used for the attainment of a determined end. It is precisely in this that there the more greatly lies open the prudent wisdom of St. Gaspar Bertoni. He determined the genuine function of this method with that discretion that does not keep him from abandoning it when it has accomplished its purpose. This might be seen when Fr. Bertoni suggests to the Servant of God, Mother Leopoldina Naudet who was about to enter in to her own course of the *Spiritual Exercises*. He wrote:

... it seems to me that the *method* as far as we are concerned, , of the retreat of eight days, *could not be better accomplished than by taking in hand the Exercises of St. Ignatius*. I have said, ‘as far as we are concerned’, because, as far as God our Lord is concerned, it will be fitting to allow Him all freedom without restricting Him neither to the times, nor to the themes, nor to the manners, nor to the days. What is important, in my view, is that whenever the soul is not actually attracted by the Lord, yet should prepare itself according to what is present in the genuine book of St. Ignatius, and to observe diligently the schedule, the manner, the theme, the order and whatever else is expressed there. However, when the Lord Himself attracts us, it is not right to look to someone else, but to follow Him as long as His pleasure is known to us...³

St. Gaspar Bertoni returned to this same matter in the following letter:

... The *Spiritual Exercises* need to be made with that very same spirit as the St. Ignatius himself presents them and with that same spirit. As far as you are concerned, Reverend Mother, you might just look briefly at the Purgative way, pass through the first part to the Illuminative way, and stop a while longer in this second part. And then, even further in the Unitive way: according to this reason and the time, you, reverend Mother, might be able to distribute the *Exercises*... Meanwhile abandon yourself entirely to God in these days, as precisely St. Ignatius intends, not putting boundaries, no prescribing certain goals, nor times, to our Lord...⁴

And in closing the letter, he returned again on his own thought:

³ Fr. J. Stofella, *Epistolario del Ven. G. Bertoni*, p. 71. The *Rivista di Ascetica e Mistica*, in a special number dedicated to the *Spiritual Exercises* published some letters of our Founder under the titles: ‘Counsels for a soul who is making the *Spiritual Exercises*.’ [cf. RAM, 1956, pp. 656-661].

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 73.

...As for what was said above concerning the paths of the *Exercises*, this is what is meant that together prudently and discreetly, you, Reverend Mother, knowing the Lord does not hold Himself to methods, follow Him also outside the paths and beyond the times...⁵

The supernatural wisdom of these counsels is convalidated also in our own day by those most familiar with the Ignatian method:

...A certain methodological procedure, especially at the beginning of the spiritual life, is a *psychological necessity*, ... with advancement in perfection, when the soul is by then under the habitual influence of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the methodological staging, has no further reason for being. Then, spiritual freedom triumphs. But as long as one has truly not conquered his external and internal senses, his disordered passions, there is necessary a very well regulated ascetical gymnastics...⁶

Therefore, except for the case in which the divine initiative has encountered an uncontested dominion in the soul, the method cannot be substituted for, unless one wants to encounter and come to enjoy delusion.

Pope Pius XI, before being raised to the Supreme Pontificate, had written: ...The ***Spiritual Exercises*** of St. Ignatius, as he conceived them and wrote them down, are not a doctrine, but a method, and a method I which is based in the exquisite finesse of marvelous experiences and intuitions, not to speak of miraculous insights of the most profound and complicated psychological processes...⁷

And Pope Pius XIIth stated: '... The *Exercises* of St. Ignatius will always be one of the most effective means for a spiritual regeneration of the world and because of its correct organization, *but on the condition that they continue to be authentically Ignatian*. We emphasize the efficacy of the *Exercises* of St. Ignatius, when there is conserved *the fidelity to their spirit and method*...⁸

Therefore, Fr. Bertoni's preferences for the genuine method of St. Ignatius could not have more authoritative confirmation.

This present course of ***Instructions*** is taken from n 17 of the ***Manoscritti*** of the Founder, as these were retained by the Congregation of Rites.

⁵ *Ib.*, p. 75.

⁶ RAM, 1956, p. 619.

⁷ Achille RATTI, *Historical Writings*. Florence 1932, in: RAM 1956, p. 613.

⁸ Discourse of October 24, 1948, cited in: RAM 1956, p. 588.

We have already pointed out that this is all material collected by him and organized. This is true: this is gathered in the field of the Catholic spirituality that is the most accredited and traditional. It is true that such a collection of material could have already been available to him from the works that the Servant of God has at his disposal: e.g., the works of Fr. Rodriguez, and all of Cornelius a Lapide. Certainly, St. Gaspar drew from these, nor did he hide this fact. But, he was not contented just with these: these same texts he reviewed, completed, and added to them, by having recourse to the originals, even the enormous amount of writing in the ***Opera Omnia*** of the individual fathers of the Church, or – as for Cassian, St. Dorothy, St. Nile, St. John Climacus... the ponderous ***Library of the Fathers***, citing the precise volume and page. And there were perhaps other works of every format of other individual Authors. Thus this work in the end is presented as a ***Golden Chain***, or an ***Anthology*** of select passages in order to illumine the points of the Ignatian text of the *Exercises*, always within the context of the treatise.

Therefore, the material is **gathered and organized** by the Servant of God: but all of it was also by the Saint very profoundly meditated and made part and parcel of himself, prior to his dispensing it for the nourishment of other souls. And it does not seem that there is to regret the lack of his own personal words, when the matters by him even impersonally pondered, impose themselves on their own. This is evident above all when it is a matter of some particular example of action of Fr. Bertoni. The Saint is well recognized in this style of his, even though as an assiduous student of the tradition, he was careful never to give his own opinion. He once asked: what good could come from me? ⁹ Whoever wants to assimilate his complete thought can treasure these pages.

While the work is **not original in its substance, it can be said to be so in its conception**, in so far as the Saint approaches St. Ignatius at his most pure sources of Catholic doctrine and most satisfyingly accredited spirituality, adding his own appreciation for his book and bringing out its practical character.

Fr. Bertoni has not striven here to offer an integral explanation of St. Ignatius' text. It would be necessary also to have recourse to other writings of his, as for example, his ***Meditations on the First Book of Kings*** [found in Mss nn. 23, 24] in order to have a more complete treatment. ¹⁰ However, these present ***Instructions*** can suffice in order to comprehend how profoundly was the Ignatian ascetics indeed

⁹ Cf. MssB n. 21, Medit. I.

¹⁰ In Meditation 15 and following, Fr. Bertoni treats of the election in three times, according to the teaching of St. Ignatius contained in ***SpEx*** nn. 175-177.

operative in St. Gaspar and to what point it was effective in assisting him in gathering that abundant harvest of holiness that in fact matured in the souls entrusted to him.

Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove.

Rome, September 23, 1960.

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NOTICE

As for the texts of these *Instructions*, is concerned we have made decided to offer the Italian translation of the Latin passages. For Sacred Scripture, we have made use of the Fr. Mark Sales *BIBBIA*, edition. For the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, we have taken Msgr. Henry Bindi's translation. For the *Breviloquium* of St. Bonaventure, we have taken the edition of Fr. Piccioli. For the text of St. Ignatius, we have taken the literal translation of the original Spanish, published by the Jesuits: for the rest, we have made our own efforts.

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2688:**FIRST INSTRUCTION****PARTICULAR EXAMEN**

[or], that is made on one matter only.

- I. On what is this examen to be made.
- II. On how it is made.

- I. **On What:** On the predominant defect.

Note: St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, Rule 14¹¹ for the First Week on Discerning the Motions of the soul:

327. 14. The conduct of our enemy may also be compared to the tactics of a leader intent upon seizing and plundering a position he desires. A commander and leader of an army will encamp, explore the fortifications and defenses of the stronghold, and attack at the weakest point. In the same way, the enemy of our human nature investigates from every side all our virtues, theological, cardinal, and moral. Where he finds the defenses of eternal salvation weakest and most deficient, there he attacks and tries to take us by storm.¹²

2689: The Divine Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, III, c. 2: Concerning the first temptation of our parents:

3. ... Now Satan, wise and just at first, but rendered sly and envious after falling through his act of pride, had the will to tempt because he hated; and in his craftiness, he knew how to tempt...But it was the devil's own cunning that he approached the woman first. It is easier to overcome the weak. A clever enemy always attacks a stronghold at its weakest point...¹³

In order to defend ourselves beforehand, we need to consider and to recognize our weakest part, and on this part, to be the more vigilant, and to take care of its needed repairs.

¹¹ Cf. St. Ignatius, 'Rules for the Discernment of Spirit', I, nn. 313- 327, in: *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. A New Translation. Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph. Louis Puhl, SJ. Westminster MD: Newman 1963, pp. 141-146.

¹² *Ib.*, p. 146.

¹³ St. Bonaventure, *The Works of Bonaventure. Cardinal, Seraphic Doctor. II. The Breviloquium. Part III, c. 2*. Translated from the Latin by Jose' de Vinck. Docteur en Droit of Louvain University. Pater NJ/ Paris: St. Anthony's/ Desclee 1962, pp. 112, f.

2690: 2. On this alone.¹⁴

... Now the King of Syria had commanded the captains of his cavalry, saying: Fight not with small or great, with the king of Israel only [Achab] ...And it happened that one of the people shot an arrow at a venture, and struck the king of Israel between the neck and the shoulders, and he said to his chariot man: Turn you hand, and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded. And the fight was ended that day... [cf.2 Par. 18:30, 33, 34].

...And David prevailed over the Philistine, with a sling and a stone, and he struck, and slew the Philistine. And as David had no sword in his hand. He ran and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath, and slew him and cut off his head. And the Philistines seeing that their champion was dead, fled away. And the men of Israel and Judah rising up shouted, and pursued after the Philistines till they came to the valley and to the gates of Accaron and there fell many wounded of the philistines in the way of Saraim, and as far as Geth, and as far as Accaron. [cf. 1 K 17:50-53].

2692: Cassian, Collations 5, Abbatis. Serap. C. 14: On initiating the battle against the vices according to their infestation:

... Thus, against these vices, we have to engage the battle: each one, having explored which one among the voices which bring him more travail than all the others. . It is against this one that each must undertake the combat, holding and riveting each thought and care to the surveillance and to the attack. Against this one each must direct his darts, his daily fasts, at ever moment there be launched against the sighs of his soul and his groans, like so many arrows: against this predominant fault each must spend the discomforts of his vigils and the meditation of his heart, pouring forth, before God, the incessant tears of his prayers and there should be especially and continuously imploring from Him the cessation of this battle.

It is impossible that anyone should merit the triumph over any passion whatever, before he has come to comprehend that the victory of this combat he cannot achieve with only his own industry and fatigue. Rather, however, in order to be able to emend it is also necessary for him to persist day and night in that concern and care ...

2693: 3. One defect after the other:

Cassian: *When one will experience himself free, he will scout out the hidden depths of his heart with similar industry, and see to it that he take up among his*

¹⁴ The object of the particular examen is not necessarily on a defect, for it can also be on the acquisition of a virtue, or the exercise of union with God. The first examen that Fr. Bertoni prescribed for Mother Naudet was to 'consider ourselves always in the presence of God', and to do that which one knows to be pleasing to Him' – according to the formula that he drew from Pseudo-Gregory and the **Commentary on First Kings** : It is for each one of the elect to walk before Christ and to look at things as though one were always in the sight of the Redeemer. And to carry out those things which are acceptable to Him [c. II, n. 41]. Cf. **From the Royal Court to the Cloister**, p. 205]. Two months later, he prescribed better the examen, inviting Mother Naudet to model herself directly on the example of Jesus, without another formula also taken from Pseudo-Gregory: 'In all that one does, always consider Him and the rectitude of His life, and direct it to Him whom one has recognized having come in his assumed humanity in order to compose the species of the elect.

passions that which is the most difficult to overcome and against this he put in motion especially the weapons of his spirit. And thus, having overcome always the most resistant passions, than those which remain he will swiftly be able to claim victory and triumph: first, because the soul as it goes along in victories will become always stronger; and secondly because progressively succeeding in the combat over the weaker, the overall advantage ought to become more swift for him: as customarily happens with those who in the presence of the sovereigns of this world and in view of their rewards, they give themselves to combat with every kind of beasts. This kind of spectacle is popularly called 'Pancarp'.

These combatants take on first of all those beasts that appear to be the most vigorous and the most terrible for their ferocity. When these have been overcome, they battle on with greater success the result with those that remain will prove less terrible and less vigorous. Thus, having overcome the more robust vices and succeeding little by little over the weaker, there will soon come the complete victory, without further risk.

2694: *Nor should it be thought that one struggling principally against one vice alone, would be any the less on guard from the aim of the others, and one indeed might be wounded the more easily by a sudden shot. This will simply not happen in any way. It is in fact impossible that one who, out of the concern he employs for the purification of his heart, would have armed the powers of his soul for the extirpation of every vice whatsoever, would also have general sense of horror and a general caution against all the other vices. Since in some way, he would merit to carry off the victory while over one single passion form which he deeply yearns to be liberated, but who from that reward is made unworthy of the infection of the other vicious passions?*

But when the principal force of his heart will have assumed as special for himself the war against a single passion, for this he will pray more attentively supplicating with zeal and care to be able keep it more accurately under surveillance, and merit with this a swift victory.

2695: *The fact is that we have to maintain this order in our battles, never however, confiding in our own virtue, as also the Legislator teaches us with these words:*

... You shall not fear them because the Lord your God is in your midst, a God mighty and terrible: He will consume these nations in your sight by little and little and by degrees. You will not be able to destroy them altogether: lest perhaps the beasts of the earth should increase upon you. But the Lord your God shall deliver them in your sight: and you shall slay them until they be utterly destroyed. And He shall deliver their kings into your hands, and you

shall destroy their names from under Heaven: no man shall be able to resist them, until you destroy them... [Dt 7:21-24].¹⁵

2696: 4. Up until they are all extinct.

Ps 17:38: *I will pursue after my enemies and overtake them: and I will not turn again till they are consumed.* Thomas a Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Book I, c. 11, n. 5 ... *If every year we rooted out one vice, we should soon become perfect men.*

5. First, regarding exterior defects.

Lk 1:6 ... *And they were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame.*

This is what reason and charity teach him: i.e., that we have to converse in a manner in which no one can complain and be offended in us, and so it is necessary that one first remove that which scandalizes others.

2697: 6. Then, regarding the interior defects

Then it is necessary to take care of the interior defects, which are the more difficult. [St. Augustine, ***Confessions*** Book 8, c. 8, 20]:

*...So many things therefore, I now did, at such time as the will was not at alone with the power; and something on the other side I then did not, which did incomparably more affect me with pleasure, which yet so soon as I had the will to do, I had the power also; because so soon as ever I willed, I willed it thoroughly: but for such a time the power is all one with the will; and the willing is now the doing: and yet was not the thing done, and more easily did my body obey the weakest willing of my mind in the moving of its limbs at her beck, than my mind had obeyed itself in carrying out this great will that could be done in the will alone...*¹⁶

2698: Chapter 9, ibi B:

... whence is this portent, and to what purpose? I saw it commands that it self would will a thing; which never would give the command, unless a is not the thing done which is commanded, as it wills it not, because the will commands that there be a will; not another will, but the same. But it does not command fully, therefore, is not the thing done, which it commanded. For were the willing full, it would never command it to be, because it would already be. 'Tis therefore no portent partly to will, and partly to nil; only an infirmity of our soul it is, that it being overloaded with ill custom, cannot entirely rise up together, though supported by verity. Hence, it is that there be two wills, for that one of them is not entire; and the one is supplied with that, wherein the other lacks... s it willed it; yet it does not that, which is commanded.

¹⁵ Cassian, Collat. V, c. 14.

¹⁶¹⁶ **St. Augustine's Confessions.** The Loeb Classical Library. English tr. By William watts in Two Volumes. Vol I. Book 8c. 8, Cambridge/ London: Harvard/ Heinemann 1939, pp. 446, 447.

But it does not will it entirely: therefore does it neither command entirely. For so far forth it commands as it wills: and so far forth is not the thing done which is commanded, as it wills: and so far forth is not the thing done which is commanded, *as it wills sit not. Because the will commands that there be a will; not another will but the same. But it does not command fully, therefore, is not the thing done, which it commanded. For were the willing full, it would never command it to be, because it would already be. 'Tis therefore no portent partly to will, and partly to nill; only an infirmity of our soul it is, that it being overloaded with ill custom, cannot entirely rise up together, though supported by verity. Hence, it is that there be two wills, for that one of them is not entire: and the one is supplied with that, wherein the other lacks...*¹⁷

2699: 7. And then afterwards the causes and roots of the defects

St. Doroteus: [*Doctr.* 12: Concerning the fear and the pains of Hell. t. 5, Bibl. Pp. p. 927 D]:

...It is impossible that one should reap something other than what he had planted. It is fitting, however, that the farmer who wants to clean out better his field, should first cut the hay even to the roots, and if he does not do this, and only cuts down the tips of what grows, he will have to weed it out all over again. It is necessary, therefore, as I have said, to dig out the roots.

And when he has done this he will have rendered the ground free and cleansed from the sterile and bad growth, and then he will be gin to indeed overturn and break up the sods. Finally, then will he plow the earth, and spread into it the good seed. When he will have done all this, would he leave the ground undisturbed, and would there now grow in again the sterile weeds? Would these not find the soft soil a better state, where they will put down even better their ore profound and rigorous roots?

2700: 8. Lastly, work is needed on the Contrary Virtues

*It is the same in the soul. It is necessary for us to amputate every sentiment of the old man and the evil customs of the world. Nothing is worse that bad customs and a bad habit. Thus far, St. Basil. **The Longer Rule**, Interr. 6, 1. T. 2, 344 C]. It is no small struggle to overcome one's own bad habits. Most times, a habit confirmed over a long time has the force of nature.*

2701: *Therefore, let the initial combat be against those bad customs, against the vices and the causes which are their roots. If these roots are not extirpated, the thorns will break out again and will inevitably increase.*

There are those vices which can do nothing if you cut off their causes: for example envy, in itself is nothing, but it has as its cause the love of empty glory. For

¹⁷ St. Augustine, ib. pp. 448, 449.

whoever wishes to take glory if necessity has envy for one who is more worthy and more honored than he is.

2702: *It also proceeds from other causes and especially from the quest for pleasure. Of this Evagrius took account, when he told the story of a certain holy man this beautiful tale, saying: For this reason I remove from myself all pleasures: in order to cut off from me also the occasions of wrath. And the elders all affirm that every vice has its origins. In these three passions: namely, avarice, vain glory and luxury.*

2703: *Therefore, each one must amputate from himself not only his vices, but also the causes of his vices, and adorn his morals through penance, through tears, through sighing. Thus, bit by bit he will begin to disperse through his field the good seed, i.e., good works. For, as we said about the property above if after it has been cleaned out and worked over by the farmer, one does not immediately through down the good seed, rather the bad weeds need to be pulled up, and the earth will be found softer and turned over, more and more the good seed can take root.*

2704: *It is also this way in man. For where he will have worked on his morals and cultivated good customs, and by means of penance he will have desisted from his old and former way of acting, he will be moved to do good works and to acquire the virtues, there takes place in him that which is said in St. Luke's Gospel, Lk 11:24:*

v. 24: ***When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through places without water, seeking rest; and not finding it, he says: I will return into my house whence I came out. v. 25: And when he is come, he finds it swept and garnished*** [others add here: and empty of all force]. **v. 26: Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there. And the state of that man becomes worse than the first.**

2705: *For it is impossible for man to remain always in the same state, but he either becomes worse or better. As a result, whoever wants to be saved, is to abstain not only from evil, but it is necessary also that he should do good, as it is said in Ps 36:27:*

... Decline from good and do good ...

2706: *This happens, for example, in this way: is there one who is usually unjust? He should not only cease being unjust, but he should also perform just deeds. Is there some intemperate persons who was also addicted to luxury? He should not only abstain from intemperance, but he should also continently live his life. Is there someone who is prone to anger? He should not only not get angry, but should also embrace meekness. Is there one who has been presumptuous? He should not only*

remove presumption, but needs to put on also humility. And all this is to decline from evil and to do good.

2707: *For indeed every vice has its contrary virtue, as pride has humility, and avarice has mercy, and luxury had continence, wrath has patience, anger has meekness, hatred has charity, and many other such examples of this type.*

Therefore, I often admonish that we not only do not eliminate the virtues within, and that we introduce vices instead – but that we expel vices from us as something alien, and that we admit virtues as proper to us. ...I have set you this day over ... to root up, and to pull down, and to waste, and to destroy, and to build and to plant ... [Jr 1:10].

2708: **9. Do this step by step.**

Cf. Dom Scupoli, *The Spiritual Combat*;

Rodriguez, *The Exercise of Perfection*, Part I, Tract VII, cc. 4 & 5.

Each should consult a wise [spiritual] director.

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2709: **II. HOW IS THE PARTICULAR EXAMEN TO BE DONE**

The Manner of the Examen. St. Ignatius places the Daily Particular examination of Conscience in the First Week.¹⁸

There are three different times of the day and two examinations involved in this practice.¹⁹ There are three times to be set aside for this examen, but only two times are given to actually for the pondering or examining one's own defects.

¹⁸ **SpEx, n. 24:** The English translation followed in this work is: *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. A New Translation. Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph. By Louis Puhl, SJ, Westminster: Newman 1963, pp. 15, f.

¹⁹ Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove, CSS, notes that St. Gaspar Bertoni has this in his *Original Constitutions* :

47. The first means of achieving Spiritual Progress is Prayer.

In addition to the daily, common prayers and those that are obligatory, which are most especially the Divine Office and Mass, to be celebrated by divine grace, attentively and devoutly - whenever possible the following prayers are offered:

Every morning meditation before Mass for one half hour. Then, Spiritual Reading after lunch, for twenty minutes.

The three-fold examination of conscience, namely, in the morning as soon as one awakens; at noon; and before retiring at night.

One should listen to sermons which are publicly delivered in our churches, as well as at home, for the purpose of exciting devotion.

Everyone should make the Spiritual Exercises for eight or ten days each year. Each shall go to Sacramental Confession to the regular Confessor once a week.

The manifestation of one's own conscience is to be made to the Superior, either in Sacramental Confession, or outside it, whenever he sees fit.

The manifestation of the faults of another, or of any of his serious temptations that are known outside of Confession, is to be made out of charity.

First, in the morning, immediately on rising, one should resolve to guard carefully against the particular sin or defect with regard to which he seeks to correct or improve himself.

2710: ²⁰ *Secondly, after dinner, he should ask God our Lord for the grace he desires, i.e., to recall how often he has fallen into the particular sin or defect, and to avoid it for the future. Then follows the first examination. He should demand an account of himself with regard to the particular point which he has resolved to watch in order to correct himself and improve. Let him go over the single hours or periods from the time he arose to the hour and the moment of the present examination, and in the first line of the figure given below, make a mark for each time that he has fallen: in the little notebook, or booklet, that he has prepared for this purpose that he will have with him. When this has been accomplished, then he is to renew his resolution, and strive to amend during the time till the second examination is to be made.*

2711: *Thirdly, ²¹ after supper, he should make a second examination, going over as before each single hour, commencing with the first examination, and going up to the present one. And in the same way in the second line of the following figure having been prepared for this, having remembered and numbered the times he has fallen he will note the proper number of these.*

2712: *Additiones: Four ²² additional directions to serve as a help to more ready removal of these particular sin or fault.*

- 1. *Every time one falls into the particular sin, or fault, let him place his hand upon his breast, and be sorry for having fallen. He can do this even in the presence of many others without their perceiving what he is doing.*

- 2. ²³ *... he should observe at night having numbered and compared the different points of the line, whether there is an improvement from the first examen to the second.*

2713: - 3. *The second day ²⁴ should be compared with the first, considering if there has been an improvement from one day to another.*

- 4. ²⁵ *Let him compare one week with another and observe whether he has improved during the present week as compared with the preceding.*

²⁰ SpEx, n. 25

²¹ SpEx, n. 26.

²² SpEx, n. 27.

²³ SpEx, n. 28.

²⁴ SpEx, n. 29.

²⁵ SpEx, n. 30.

2714: 1. Note one's defects down on paper²⁶

Hermias Sozomenus Book I Church History, c. 13. Concerning Anthony M., the Abbot: *He never could stand laziness: And he exhorted each one who wishes to institute his life in the right manner, to attend to duty, and having removed all judgments, that he might examine himself, and demands an of those of both their night and day. And should anyone have committed anything out of order, that he should note it down in paper, and that from then on this person should abstain from sins. If perchance he might have offended many prescripts, then he should feel embarrassment, and fearing that his paper might fall into the hands of others, that these might make manifest to others his lack of probity.* [Pad. Niceph. Callistus Xanthopulus, Book 8, chapter 39].

2715: 2. Twice each day.

The Holy father of the Church, St. John Climacus [*The Ladder of Paradise*, rung 4, n. 921 G g. 10 Bibl., p. 408 b].

It cannot happen that someone in acquiring an art would not make much progress every day. As for this profit made some would notice it, while others would not, as by a providence of God, they would not see it. The perfect banquet manager [caterer] is the one who every day is the one who at night makes the reckoning gains and losses.. This cannot be accomplished accurately unless you take note with accuracy through all the hours: The observation of the single hours show the situation of the whole day.

2716: 3. Compare one day with another

St. Basil, Sermon on the Renunciation of the world and perfection, n. 10. Opera. T. 2, Paris edit. P. 211]: *Examine your work each day. And compare this with the work of the preceding day, and thus try to figure out what is better. Make progress in virtues and soon you will approach the Angels.*

²⁶ Fr. Dalle Vedove notes: Fr. Giacobbe records the young Gaspar Bertoni in the act of examining himself and of noting daily every slightest defect. [cf. *Summ. Addd.*, XXVI, p. 313.] He adds that for the betterment of himself he had ordered also *to note down what he did from the perspective of defect committed, by indicating a certain number of the beads that he would offer from his rosary that he wore hidden under his clothing around his neck ob his breast' [cf. p. 477.]. He also made note of these in a little booklet the defects into which he had fallen, as:*

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At the end of the Mass: much recollection and modesty. It lasted a short while, though, because I got distracted in exercising external charity.

Also, In reading once of the internal presence of God, he experienced great recollection which lasted some time afterwards, even though on my part,, as usually happened, my mind wandered ... tomorrow I will be diligent ... [here the page was torn] and in every thing pure love for God.

His biographer concludes: I was not able to uncover any other episodes of his negligence or defects in all those notes of his, which take up about a year [it was actually four years] of his life...'

Arnulf, the Monk, [*The Mirror of the Monk*, among the works of St. Bernard, com. 8, and The Library of the Cistercians, t. 6, P. Tissier, n. 2 f]: *This present day is to be compared with the previous, so that from the comparison of the two, the Monk might be able to discover either profit and defect.*

2717: 4. Compare one week with another week.

St. Fr. Doroteus, Abbot, *Doctr.* 10, Concerning the scope of a certain main, n. 12, t 1, Op. edit. Robor p. 152/2 E]: *We ought not only to make the examen on the individual days, but for all times, for the months, for the weeks, and to say to ourselves: In the first week, you were affected by this passion: and now, what is your situation? Likewise for all time: Last year you were conquered and overcome by this passion: now, how are you doing? And so, for all times, you to look inwardly diligently to see if we have been able to cut away anything of these vices, or if we have returned to the same ones again, or whether we have lapsed into worse ones.*

2718: 5. To dispose oneself to the emendation bit by bit, from one mid-day to another.²⁷

St. John Chrysostom, [His Homily against those who have young women in their homes. N. 12. T. 1. Opera. Edit. Robor, p. 152.2 E]: *But if one does experience real difficulty in putting away some difficulties because of long-standing custom let us be permitted all of this with the strength of reasoning together with the grace of God. Let us be persuaded that if we will only begin this endeavor, we will we will not encounter further difficulty. Thus, we will prevail against all habits. For if for ten days you abstain, then the more easily will you conquer for twenty, and even twice as many. Lastly, making tangible progress, neither will you feel the difficulty that you had in the beginning. You will see most easily in practice that what previously took such agony, you will then be transferred into different habits of life.*

2719: [And in Hom. 10, in the Letter to Romans, n. 5. T. 9, 3/313 1 D]: *Just begin the undertaking, and all is accomplished. Give up sinning, and even if you did nothing else, you have already received all. As those who labor under some illness, not to get worse is already the beginning of convalescence, and it is this way also in evil: that you do not proceed further and he wickedness will come to an end. If you do this for two days, on the third day you will the more easily abstain. Then to the three days you add ten, then twenty, afterwards a hundred, and finally, your whole life.*

²⁷ St. Gaspar wrote this in his Diary:

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Meditation. Death. The past is no more. The future has not yet arrived. Only the present is here. And it is in my hands. Let me live day after day, or rather from morning to midday and from midday to evening. Let me do every single thing with all possible perfection. Perhaps I will have no more time in which to glorify God.

2720: 6. Sorrow and Resolutions

Sorrow and to propose emendation: these are the principal two points of the Examen in which one ought to strive the more and for more time.

St. Augustine [Letter, 48, alias 93, 13, 53. T. 2, 252 G]: *Do not ever think that anyone would ever pass over from a great sin, or even from a small one to correction without penance.*

And [Sermon I, in Ps 18] all iniquity, great or small, it is necessary that it be absolutely punished, either that it be repented of by the repentant man, or by the vindicating God. For whoever does penance, punishes Himself... Sin cannot be left unpunished.

2721: St. Thomas [Supplement 2, 3 Q]: *Every actual fault results from the fact that our will does not cede to the Law of God, either by transgressing it, or by omitting it, or acting beyond it. And what is hard here the fact that it has the potency that it does not easily be corrected; therefore, in every actual sin there is a certain hardness of the will. And because of this if sin is to be cured, it is necessary that it be remitted through a crushing contrition.*

2722: 7. Add some penance.

Ribadeneira, [*Life of St. Ignatius*, Book 5, c. 10]: He likewise counseled that the man himself should impose some certain penance upon himself, which in itself would be executed all the times that the man should fall into error from which he wanted to be emended. And this too there should be read that which Fr. Bartoli noted and Fr. Marani as well in his *Life of the Saint* [Book 4, c. 2].

2723: Having made the examen in this manner it served him to take away a temptation of laughter which once bothered him, by adding to the examen so many failures he committed the fault, and how many times he had laughed during the day: And when he had come to have the number of these more certain, while he was in Manresa, each time he added a knot to the belt he wore around him.

2724: This served him as a wake up call, or a spur. In the lives of the Holy Fathers [t. 2, Part. 3, c. 39, pag. 74] it is read: The brothers said of the Abbot Agatone, that for three years he kept a stone in his mouth to learn how to be silent.

This penance, too, moves God to hear us. Dn 10:12: ***For from the first day that you did not set your heart to understand to afflict yourself in the sight of your God, your words have been heard...***

2725: Text of St. Ignatius. *Spiritual Exercises*, First Week Additions 10]²⁸:

²⁸ *SpEx* : n. 87, Note 1 – cf. Puhl, SJ, pp. 38, f.

The principal reason for performing exterior penance is to secure three effects:

1. To make satisfaction for past sins.
2. to overcome oneself, i.e., to make our sensual nature obey reason, and to bring all of our lower faculties into greater subjection to the higher;
3. Lastly, to obtain some grace or gift that one earnestly desires. Thus it may be that one wants a deep sorrow for sin, or to weep much over his sins or because of the pains and sufferings of Christ our Lord; or he may want the solution of some doubt that is in his mind.

2726: St. Ignatius, in the same place²⁹:

90. Note IV . The Particular Examination of Conscience will be made to remove faults and negligences with regard to the exercises and the Additional Directions. This will be observed in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Week.

The Directory of the Exercises, c. 13, Concerning the two-fold Examen, n. 3: *The use of this examen although after the Exercises are over, ought to be continued for all the time of life, now it is begun, both so that there might be acquired its certain experience, and also because the use of this examen ought to be applied to the Exercises and to their Additions.*

2727:

**FIRST DAY
SECOND INSTRUCTION
THE GENERAL EXAMEN
1st Instruction**

St. Ignatius 1. *Spiritual Exercises*,³⁰ First Week, under this title: most useful for the purgation of the soul and for the confession of sins.

General Examen for the Purgation of the Soul.

Ps 4:5: ... *the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds.*

2728: St. John Chrysostom, ib., *In Ps 4*: n. 8. T. 5,11/1 C, ff.]: *what is it that is being said here? For the text seems to be quite obscure. After supper, it is said, when you are going to sleep, and you are about to lie down, and no one else is present, there is much quiet, and with no one else to cause a disturbance, there is profound tranquility, then excite the judgment of your own conscience, ask from it the reason for your actions. And since throughout you have taken on bad counsels, or perpetrated deceptions, or misled your neighbor, or accepted depraved desires, you will bring all these before you in the midst of that quiet and you have made your conscience a*

²⁹ *SpEx* : n. 90. Note 4, o.c., p. 39.

³⁰ *SpEx* n. 32 – cf. Puhl, SJ, o.c., pp. 18, ff.

judge for its improper thoughts. You are to pierce them and lance them and take on some penalty for them: and bring on some torture for the thought which sinned.

2729: *For this means this for each one: 'Have compunction', which stands for: punish them, bring discomfort for what you have said through the day in your hearts, and give attention to it. When there is no friend there present that would disturb you, nor any family member who might bother you, no is there any bother from business matters pressing on you, then demand an explanation of the activities of your life in that day.*

And why does the text not speak of words and deeds, but only of bad thoughts? Doing so, it teaches us about even more in abundance. For if evil counsels are to be castigated that they not come forward in deeds, all the more so is it necessary to bring sorrow to your spirit for your deeds and words.

2730: Most useful for the purgation of the soul: advantages – useful.

This has to be done every single day, so that you, o man, before you go to sleep, you need to go over in your mind what actions were taken by you during the day: and on the following day you will be much slower of acting in this same way again.

And as the way you have handled money, in offering some explanation to the one working for you so that you will never allow two days to pass so that your forgetfulness will not lead you to confusion: do the same for your own actions every day. Demand an explanation from your soul in the evening and condemn any thought which has sinned, hang it and torture it as from a tree, and command it that it might not further act with such aggression.

2731: *You have seen an excellent procedure for healing, how the text suggests the use of both preservative and corrective medications. For to offer the precept that you do not fall into sins is the place occupied by preservative medications, as is noted: **Be angry and sin not** [v. 5]. But that which follows: **be sorry on your beds for the things you say in your hearts**, this is the place for preventive medication. For after one has sinned, he anew makes use of the medication and this is taken by the one who has sinned.*

Therefore, let us make use of this medicine which practice has nothing of difficulty in it.

2732: The harm [derived from neglecting it].

If, however, the soul should not have any recollection of sins, being embarrassed and full of shame, say to it: You gain nothing if you do not call these to mind, but rather you will suffer an ever greater harm. For if you do not call them to mind, later on your sins will be stated before the eyes of all. For if indeed now you

make an accounting of them, you will very quickly be liberated for them, and you will not easily fall into others.

2733: *For the soul that is fearful of the night-time judgment, so that it might not later suffer the same sentence if it is tortured and scourged, later on will return to sin anew. And from this there will derive such a benefit that if we were to do this examen only for one month, we would constitute ourselves in the perfect habit of virtue.*

*Let us not neglect so great a good. For whoever will establish this judgment here and now, will not give place to bitter pains later on. 1 Co 11:31: **But if we would judge ourselves, we will not be judged.** v. 32: **But while we are judged we are chastised by the Lord, that we be not condemned with this world.** Let us therefore be not condemned, let us do this.*

2734: *From the contraries.*

Pr 24:30: ***I passed by the field of the slothful man and by the vineyard of the foolish man, v. 31: And behold it was all filled with nettles and thorns covered the face thereof [Syr. and brambles] and the stone wall was broken down. V. 32: Which when I had seen, I laid it up to my heart, and by the example I received instruction.***

2735: [Cornelius a Lapide, ibi] *He alludes to this, and then picks up with the sacred text, v. 27: **Prepare your work without, and diligently till your ground: that afterward you may build your house.** Carefully clean up ... the field of your heart. Plant seed with the seeds of virtues, and till the field to fruition with virtuous exercises and make it fecund with merits. [Denis the Carthusian, on this text]. And thus in a contrary manner the text shows into how many miseries one casts himself who negligently tills his field and works it.*

2736: St. Gregory the Great, Book 30, Moralia, c. 20: *To pass by the field of the lazy man, and through the vineyard of the foolish man, is to look at the life of any negligent person, and to consider his deeds, which are full of nettles and thorns. Because in the heart of the negligent there are earthly and unworthy desires, and the punctures of the vices sprout up, because it is written: 'Every lazy man is full of desires.'*

2737: Venerable Bede [in this place. The Allegorical Exposition in Solomon, Pr Book 3, c. 26, near the end]: *The soft clay stones in the vineyard or in the field of the stupid person lies destroyed, since each negligent person loses the undertaken fortifications of the virtues, or is deceived by the deceitfulness of evil men, or by the enticing persuasion of unclean spirits.*

2738: St. Bernard [Sermon 63. *In Cant.*]³¹:

... If this cold once penetrates the soul when [as so often happens] the soul is neglectful and the spirit asleep and if no one [God forbid] is there to curb it, then it reaches into the soul's interior, descends to the depths of the heart and recesses the mind, paralyzes the affections, obstructs the paths of counsel, unsteadies the light of judgment, fetters the liberty of spirit, and soon – a rigor of the mind takes over: vigor slackens, energies grow languid, repugnance for austerity increases, fear of poverty disquiets, the soul shrivels, grace is withdrawn, time means boredom, reason is lulled to sleep, the spirit is quenched, the fresh fervor wanes away, a fastidious luke-warmness weighs down, brotherly love grows cold, please attracts, security is a trap, old habit return.

2739: *Can I say more? The law is cheated, justice is rejected, what is right is outlawed, the fear of the Lord is abandoned. Shamelessness finally gets free rein There comes that rash leap, so dishonorable, so disgraceful, so full of ignominy and confusion; a leap from the heights into the abyss, from the court-yard to the dung-heap, from the throne to the sewer, from heaven to the mud, from the cloister to the world, from paradise to hell...*

2740: *The manner of the General Examen, containing five particles, or points:*

1. *The first point is that that thanks are to be given to the Lord our God for His already received benefits³².*
2. *Second, that we ought to inflict penance for the knowledge and the expulsion of sins.*
3. *The third is that investigating we need to ask the reason from our soul for those sins admitted on this present day, from the time we arose, through the individual hours of the day . And first, this must be regards thought, and then concerning speech and then action, in the same order in which it is handed down regarding the particular Examen.*
4. *The fourth is to ask pardon for sins committed.*
5. *The fifth is to propose, with God's help, an emendation, and the Lord's Prayer is to be recited after all these things being said.*

³¹ cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs*, Vol III, Sermons 47-66. Translated by Kilian Walsh, OCSO and Irene Edmonds. Introduction by Emero Stiegman. Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications 1979, Sermon 63, n. 7, pp. 167, f.

³² Fr. Dalle Vedove notes that t. Gaspar Bertoni literally practiced what he preached – cf. his Spiritual Journal:

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In the first point of the Mid-day Examen, that is during the thanksgiving, prostrate on the ground in the sight of Heaven: great sense of the presence of God, and love and self-offering.

2741: 1. To give thanks.

*Thanks are to be given for benefits already received: i.e. by opposing to this our failures and sins, let us seize the occasion to confound ourselves and to be sorry. 2 K 12:7: **And Nathan said to David: 'You are the man.'** **Thus said the Lord the God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. v. 8: And gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom and gave you the House of Israel and Judah: and if these things be little, I shall add far greater things. v. 9: Why, therefore, have you despised the Word of the Lord, to do evil in my sight?***

2742: 2. Petition for light.

*To beseech the grace for the knowledge of sins. Jr 17:9: **The heart is perverse above all things and unsearchable. Who can know it? v. 10: I am the Lord Who search the heart and prove the reins: Who give to everyone according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices ...***

Perverse: the Chaldean version: **cunning** - in the Septuagint: **profound**; - Hebr. Acob., i.e., **shrewd**; **changes its skin; fraudulent, trips up another**. It is more genuinely place in this place: **prevaricating, fallacious**; and therefore also **inscrutable**, as though it were to say: **full of digressions and of a thousand thoughts, one who is all introspective and perplexed much like a labyrinth with the secret twists and turns of longings and desires, thieveries, of a shady background.**

*Vatabl. : **scheming ahead and desperate**, that you might penetrate to the depths, his **intricacies**, and **shifty ways**.*

*...**Who can know it? Only, I am the Lord who search the heart [i.e., its intentions] and prove the reins [of its affections]** [cf. Jr 17:9, f.].*

2743: Ask for the grace for the expulsion of sins: **Remove your scourges from me. [Ps 38:11]**

The examination to be made. We need to ask the reason from our soul for those sins admitted on this present day.

*St. John Chrysostom, [In Mt, Hom. 42, n. 3: t. 7/290/2 C]: **Do you wish to judge? This for your would be a great judgment providing great advantage and not prone to any wrong-doing: establish in your conscience your judicious examen, and in the midst of all this add all your sins. Examine the sins of your soul, and repeat exactly the account of them and say: Why did you do this one, or dare to do that one? If the soul should reject this and will explore the deeds of other actions, say to it: I do not judge you about these, nor do you have to be purged for them. What is it to you if this other action is evil? Why have you committed this, or that other sin? Defend yourself, do not accuse others; pay attention to that pertains to you to cure, it is not about others. Very often lead yourself to this or that investigation.***

2744: *And therefore, if you have nothing that needs to be responded to, but then even subterfuges, subject your soul to disciplines, just as the proud and prostituted servant and set up this judgment every day. Describe to it the flaming river, the poisonous worm and the other torments, and do not lastly permit to have relations with the devil, nor should you ever proffer imprudent comments, as: the Devil came to me, he tempted me. But say to him: Whether you want it or not, all these attempts of yours will be superfluous.*

And if your soul offers this rejoinder: I am bound to the body, I am clothed in flesh, I am in the world, and move about on earth. Say to it: These are all pretexts – for others have put on flesh, have been in this world and moved about on earth, and yet have lived in an outstanding manner, so – you, too, endowed with flesh, can act correctly.

2745: *If hearing all this brings you anxiety, do not withdraw your hand: for it will not succumb if you are struck, rather you will free it from death. Again if your soul should reply: He makes me angry, then say to him: It would be better for you not to get angry; for often you have overcome anger. If your soul should say: The beauty of that woman has enflamed me, say to it: But, you can overcome this. Bring forward the examples of those who have overcome this: present the example of the first woman, who said: Gn 3:13: **The serpent deceived me!**, nevertheless she was not freed from fault.*

*While you inquire about these matters, there is no one present, there is no one to disturb you; but whenever the judges place the veil, are seated in judgment, then and you seek by the veil both the time and the place of quiet. When after supper you get up and are seeking your bed enter into this judgment: this is indeed the suitable time. This is indeed the proper place...Ps 4:5: **the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds .***

2746: *Demand a careful accounting even of little failings, so that you might never approach more serious matters. Do not permit even the least amount of dust to come into the pupil of your eye: and would you suffer negligently a whole heap of such evils to drag down your soul? When will be able then to do away with all that filth which each day we draw in? When will we be able to cut down the thorns and spread the seeds? Do you not realize that the time of the harvest is quite soon? For we have not even yet prepared for the new plowed rows; if the farm boss should come and accuse us what will we respond to him?*

2747: **Going over as before each single hour from the time in which we got up.**³³

Fr. Bartoli [*Life of St. Ignatius*, Book 4, n. 25]: The two were always in complete harmony [God and St. Ignatius] , one in taking care, and the thought of the

³³ cf. *SpEx*, n. 26.

other. This is the most proper effect of those who intimately love each other. In St. Ignatius, as the most eminent Cardinal del Monte said to Pope Gregory XVth, in referring to him in the secret Consistory regarding his virtues and miracles, **He renewed the examples of many martyrs and saints, who were entirely forgetful of themselves, they worked solely for the glory of God.**

But at the opposite end of the spectrum, nothing less than a total forgetfulness of oneself for God, is the act of perfect love of being mindful always of oneself, while also for Him as well, i.e., by keeping oneself continuously before one's eyes, and looking at oneself with a most critical examen, to come to understand whether there be anything before the eyes of God that in any manner whatsoever would be displeasing to Him: in this it can be said that St. Ignatius truly brought even the extreme diligence to bear on this.

2748: There did not pass an hour of the day during which he would not collect his thoughts and take up a most minute recollection of all that he had done and said and thought in that brief space of time, by embellishing and renewing his soul a little less than 24 times per day, and by appearing before God more pure and clean, with every new and efficacious proposal of finding himself better the following hour than he had been the previous hour.

Wherever there is a great fire of God's love there is also great light in order to know in what He might take pleasure or be displeased. And in accord with such knowledge is the care of removing from the soul every defect, with even lesser account than it might seem.

2749: Even though for men who are truly holy there is nothing to them that they would think of little account, most especially to whatever might be displeasing to God. Him they love more than themselves, willing to be cooked in the flames in order to come from them as purged. However, no marvel should be taken that other minor acts of diligence, such as that custom of often examining themselves and that they would make use of a rigorous regime of self punishing.

In addition to this, the gold of charity toward God is not like that as found in the mines in the mountains, which has for its measure the natural goodness of 24 carats. To these, however, there might be joined either by the nature of the vein, or by cement, cannot be said but that in order to be perfectly perfect gold, nothing can be lacking to it. This is not the way it is with the works of divine charity, to which, since they are perfect in their totality, it does not suffice that they have a mixture of the adherence of some slight imperfection or defect that would lower its value, or cheat you regarding its worth.

2750: The saints, full of God and inflamed with love of Him, do not consider their own actions in regard to God, i.e., what they would like them to be, or what they

ought really to be already, in order to be worthy of God. And since no one is that holy and that perfect that he would not end up most imperfect in just such a comparison. Therefore, since it is above their every interest as each person is extremely less than is their every duty to be, they engage in such rigid exams, and renew so often their proposals. This, then, is a continual exercise of humility together with charity, and beyond all manner pressuring them to go up in a short time to the great increase of perfection.

2751: And St. Ignatius, who exactly practiced this, did not understand, so to speak, how others would have yearned to please God and to advance in holiness, and not he himself always, or at least, as very frequently as he, by examining purging and perfecting his heart. And it is from here that his words of wonder sprang when he said to a Father who had asked him how many times up until that moment he had been recollected within himself, in order to examine himself, hearing the response that it had been seven times, - Alas!, he replied, so few? And yet there remain to you many hours until evening ...

2752: N. 26 [of Fr. Bartoli, in the place already cited]. Such an ardent desire to please God, much like the great love that he bore Him, assisted by an exquisite diligence of varied and continuous exercises of the examen, cannot easily tell to what sublime degree of purity of soul this brought him. He maintained over his every action and conversation and thought a thousands eyes in vigilance, on one who stands always before God and in Him is continuously reflected³⁴, and from His infinite beauty to which one should will, to what extent is a creature capable, to see his own likeness, he conceived an extreme horror from even the slightest shadow of fault that would even very little deform his soul and displease Him.

2753: Therefore, even a total detachment from all creatures, loved by him only in God, was such that in them he loved only God. There was nothing in this world that moved him to desire, nor to joy, so much so that it might be said that there was nothing in it that appealed to him unless it was not already entirely of his Master. This was true so much so in him that other than God Himself there was nothing that attracted him: every other reality, other than God, as infinitely less worthy than He, he considered and held as nothing.

³⁴ St. Gaspar Bertoni made use of this image of seeking his own reflection from his models throughout his life, the Jesuit saints, Aloysius Gonzaga, and his own model, St. Ignatius, as Founder - noting on the eve of his Patron Saint's Feast day in his Spiritual Journal:

30th JULY 1808

For the examination of conscience one should choose a Saint of the same vocation as a mirror. In this way one finds matter for confession every day. Whatever falls short of that Saint's perfection is faulty.

2754: *And first, regarding Thoughts³⁵: then concerning Words³⁶ and Deeds³⁷, in the same order in which the Particular Examen³⁸ is handed down.*

In the same order in the morning, proposing: for the morning, proposing the examen.

St. Thomas, [Opus 20, ***De Regimine Principum***, Book 4, c. 22. t. 19, 611]: *St. Jerome [Book 3, ***Apol. Against Rpfinum***, n. 39, t. 2, 564, D, ff.] wrote other documents or laws which Pythagoras brought into his work, ***Politeia*** : i.e., take the greatest care of two time periods, namely morning and evening, in other words, regarding those matters which we are to do, and those which we have already accomplished. And there are many other documents, or laws, similar to these, which the above-noted Philosopher has handed down, more ordered toward the governance of the soul than of the body; by means of such regulations, more easily are those matters pertaining to the body are regulated.*

2755: Comparing the Profit³⁹ day by day:

³⁵ Cf. ***SpEx***, nn. 33-37.

³⁶ Cf. ***SpEx***, nn. 38-41.

³⁷ Cf. ***SpEx***, nn. 42.

³⁸ Cf. ***SpEx***, nn. 24-26.

³⁹ St. Gaspar dedicates the entire Fourth Part of his ***Original Constitutions*** to this theme:

**FOURTH PART:
THE PROGRESS OF THE CONFRERES
CF, cc. 1-6, ## 47-68**

Presentation

[1] In modern terms, this might be called “Continuing Education”, “On-going Formation” and it is a major piece of Fr. Bertoni’s legacy. A careful reading of his ***Original Constitutions*** might reveal the following types of ***Profectus*** :

- **Spiritual** [cf. CF ## 34; 42;47; 48; 262; 263; 283; 284];
- **Intellectual**: [cf. CF ## 41; 49-68; 173; 175, ff.];
- **Juridical**: [cf. CF ## 152-157; 158, ff.]
- **Apostolic**: [cf. CF ## 72-76; 163-186]

[2] As has already been noted in the previous Part, St. Ignatius’ Constitutions present a very long Part IV [cc. 1-17, nn. 307-509]. From this extensive material, Fr. Bertoni has drawn on only a small portion for his own ***Constitutions*** . As he did not intend to imitate “every manner that St. Ignatius used”, he never planned on Colleges or Universities, in the Ignatian sense. However, he was much impressed by the **spiritual**, **intellectual**, **juuridical** and **apostolic** progress to be made for the Apostolic Missionary ideal that permeates throughout. He did adopt some of the Program of Studies of the Jesuits for his own intellectual formation of candidates - and their mission of forming the youth.

[3] In his Fourth Part, Fr. Bertoni speaks of the Spritual and Intellectual Development [cf. ***Formula***, # 8] of the Confreres, prior to their final vows. In the following Fifth Part [CF cc. 1-3, ## 69-92; cf. also **CF # 203**] he treats then of Progressive Incorporation, or Promotion of the members ever more fully into the Institute. This will be followed then in the Sixth Part, a brief section on Vows in General. [St. Ignatius maintained that some aspirants might make a private vow to enter the Society one day] - then, a long Seventh Part on the Religious Vows in particular - then the Eighth Part, Promotion of the

St. John Chrysostom states:

If those who are dedicated to secular affairs cannot be brought to begin a matter, unless first there might be seen some financial gain in it, it is all the more just that we should do likewise, nor should the weeks simply pass by, but may each one of us examine his conscience, and seek an accounting of it, and let us consider whatever it is in this week has been done well, and what in the week before, and what further profit we perceive in the following, and which corrections in us we need to undertake.

2756: *For indeed, unless we so organize our lives, and take great care of our soul, of no use to us will be fasting, or that abstention that we tolerate, especially if we are discovered to be inferior to those commit such zeal in conducting business. No one of these will you ever find who does not engage in supreme vigilance that each might add something to his earlier gains, and one that would ever be satisfied with what he has. But all the greater is his increase to what he already has amassed the more intensely does he commit his care and zeal to this matter.*

*But if ever and his riches at times afford him only with dejection of soul, yet with how much greater vigilance does he conduct his business – how is it that this is not done even more so where much usefulness of diligence is realized, and an ineffable increase, and an immense financial gain.*⁴⁰ [John Chrysostom, **In c. 1, Genesis**. Homily 11, 2. T. 4, 48:1 C, ff.].

Students - and then finally, the all important Ninth Part, on the "Profession", the "Apostolic Missionaries" properly so called.

[4] Then, following this Dispersal of the Missionaries in the Vineyard of the Lord, in the apostolates of the Church, a strong and rather long section on keeping the community together, through the Unity of the Institute [Tenth Part - it should be noted that c. 9 here, CF ## 262-266, also treats of 'Progress' in the care of Confreres] - then an unusual section on Familiar and Friendly Conversation among the members [Eleventh Part] - and finally, the Government of the Community [Twelfth Part]. This was entrusted to one, so that primarily the Apostolic Mission would go on without much interruption.

[5] In this section, presently under discussion, the reflection will be on the Fourth Part, taking the six Chapters individually. There will be a slight departure here in the manner of the presentation of the customary "Ignatian Influence", due to the over-lapping of his Parts and Chapters, treated differently by Fr. Bertoni.

⁴⁰ St. John Chrysostom was both admired and much utilized by St. Gaspar Bertoni:

Spiritual Director at the Seminary, from September 13, 1810

Over the years in his role as Spiritual Director to the Seminary of Verona, Fr. Bertoni had already preached 73 Meditations on the **First Book of Kings [Samuel]**, based on the Latin Commentary of **St. Gregory the Great**. This was followed, then, by 41 Meditations on **Matthew**, based on the Latin translation of St. John Chrysostom.

Perhaps around **Lent of the year 1815**, Fr. Bertoni returned to this work following extensive illness, beginning his commentary on **Chrysostom's Homilies on Genesis**. Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove, CSS, has traced well this period of the Stigmatine Founder's life. St. Gaspar Bertoni challenged the seminarians of that time with: "...let us imitate the farmers! Whenever they find their fields ready, and free of

harmful over-growth, they plant seeds in abundance." Fr. Bertoni continued, saying that **"...now our own spiritual fields are in readiness by the grace of God. He has purified us from disordinate affections. After listening to the dogmas of Sacred Scripture, today let us take up even more subtle matters..."** [cf. **Mss B # 4615**].

In his Third Prelude, St. Gaspar uses the very words of St. John Chrysostom - stating that he would **"not use any of his own words: "...there will be nothing of ourselves in all this, but only that which by divine grace, will prove helpful to you."**

Following this brief introduction, Fr. Bertoni begins his development: "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth" [cf. Gn 1:1. From the outset, God has spoken to human beings - but, once they distanced themselves from Him, He sent them "**Letters of Reconciliation**" so that once again, their friendship would be restored. These "letters" are the Holy Scriptures. The Prophets manifest what is new, while in Genesis, Moses is looking back through history, in that he was personally instructed by God Himself.

In the second meditation of this series, Fr. Bertoni commented on the words: 'And there was darkness over the face of the earth; and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters' [cf. Gn 1:2]. These words were used to refer back to baptism: unless one is born anew of water and the Holy Spirit [cf. Jn 3:5].

A modern Italian author, Divo Barsotti, has noted that in the history of Italian spirituality, it would be difficult to find in spiritual writers, at least those of recent centuries, with a greater dependence on Sacred Scripture, than Fr. Bertoni. St. Gaspar noted in the inspired word not only the sure norm for good actions, but also the means to reason well. The Divine Scriptures are that **"one and sure School of Good Reasoning."**

Quoting from St. John Chrysostom, Fr. Bertoni wrote: that the Scriptures well meditated, insinuate not only good ideas, but also well ordered thoughts according to the Divine Wisdom which has dictated these. The Scriptures form the spirit, develop it, educate it, multiply and order its ideas, perfect the reason, rectify judgments, motivate reflection. The attention, the confrontation, the reflection on the words and deeds of God is the font of all knowledge and holiness.

With Chrysostom as his guide, Fr. Bertoni greatly admired the immense beauty of a starry night [cf. **Mss B # 4655**] - the heavens indeed are the object of our praises, and inspire us to pour forth our sacrifice of praise [cf. Ps 49:14.] He commented that Sacred Scripture leads one to authentic humility. In principle, humility is a reverence of the majesty and greatness of God. It enables one to submit the human will to the divine will: and admonishes diligence in all [cf. **Mss B # 4658**]. Meditation on the works of creation leads **us to order our entire lives into relationship with the Creator**. We need to **perfect our lives as the Lord God has ordered the entire universe**.

Most of these Meditations have followed carefully the text of St. John Chrysostom. Here and there one might find marginal notes of Fr. Bertoni himself, but for the most part, he followed the text he had copied, and commented from it.

Fr. Bertoni's Commentary on Genesis may be found in: **Mss B, Vol. III, ## 4615-4852, pp. 749-850**. There is **an English translation** of the 67 Homilies on Genesis by St. John Chrysostom underway at the present moment [cf. **Robert C. Hill, Saint John Chrysostom. Homilies on Genesis 1-17. Washington DC: CUA 1985, Vol. 74** - from whom some of these introductory notes are taken]. His translation will be followed in presenting Fr. Bertoni.

[NB: The Meditations on Genesis were delivered by Fr. Bertoni perhaps in Lent of the year 1815 - after he had preached the 73 Meditations on the First Book of Kings and the 41 Mediations on the Gospel of St. Matthew. The Stigmatine Founder believed the clerics were ready to take on the Book of Genesis. Let us imitate the farmers, he said to them, quoting St. John Chrysostom - the field is ready, it has been cleared of harmful over-growth and now the young minds and hearts were ready to take on the more subtle truths. [cf. Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove, pp. 606-611].

2757: *Seek pardon:* seek forgiveness of sins:

My son, have you sinned? Do so no more: but for your former sins, pray that they may be forgiven you. [Si 21:1] - He will open his mouth in prayer and will make supplication for is sins [Si 39:7].⁴¹

*To propose emendation with the grace of God.*⁴²

⁴¹ Fr. Dalle Vedove adds this note: 'In his *Instructions on Penance*, St. Gaspar proposed to his young listeners this prayer :

[2: THE MANNER OF RECEIVING WORTHILY THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE. CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, AND THE MANNER OF APPROACHING IT. CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE].

MssB 67: - Why, when we have fallen into mortal sin, must we have sorrow and make a purpose of amendment?

- 1. Because we do not know if we will have time to go to confession.
2. Because not to repent is to show a lack of care for the friendship of the Lord.
3. So as not to fall into other and greater sins.

After, therefore, having made an act of sorrow for my sins, and I have considered how evil sin is, how much it displeases the Lord, I will speak thus: - 'O Lord, my sins displease Thee, Thou art good: it will no longer be true that I will offend Thee. I wish to die before I offend Thee again. For this I will abandon that companion, and I will do all that the Confessor suggests to me. And from now on, I want to serve Thee and I want to continue until death. Assist me in my good purposes and holy resolutions And thou, O Mary, accept me under thy protection and defend me from my enemies. O Guardian Angel and all the saints of Paradise, in particular, though, saint with my name, etc., intercede for me with God and help me to begin a new life, etc.'

[Translator's Note: His *Catechetical Instructions taught as a Priest (1807, circa]* [cf. Section II} - **On the Sacraments and On the 'Our Father'** that follow his *Catechism Lessons taught as a Seminarian (1798: the citation above is taken from this source)] for children were not carried out precisely in the same manner, as what preceded them. As a young seminarian, teaching either in a class-room, or perhaps even in a private home, he stood before a small group of adolescents who were to be formed in the Christian way. Later on, as a young priest, with greater experience, he stood in front of an assembly of the faithful, on Sunday afternoons of the hottest part of the year [between the two Feast of the Holy Cross, May 7th-September 20th, of 1807 - at least as far as the Instructions on the 'Our Father' are concerned], in the nave of the Parish Church, of St. Paul in Campo Marzio.*

In this latter situation, rather than pointing out the fundamental elements of a truly religious life, his principal concern here was to develop these elements in proportion to the greater capacity of his hearers. Toward this goal, he proceeded following the *Catechismus ex Decreto Concilii Tridentini ad parrochos, S. Pii V, Pont. Max., iussu editus*. I have before me a 1920 Roman edition of the Catechism [*Officina Typographica Senatus - Joannis Bardi*].

⁴² Fr. Dalle Vedove reminds us that Fr. Bertoni is strong on this as he notesd in his Spiritual Journal:

22nd MARCH 1809

Those who make a resolution without the determination [of taking practical steps] are similar to those soldiers or hunters who are portrayed in the pictures. They are always on the point of wounding and killing but in fact they never unleash the blow.

"He who has good will has everything, but that will is not good which does not want to do what it can"

One blames weakness.

What would you say of an old man who throws away his walking stick and goes skating on the ice like children?

This is easy: *God can do it, it is easy* in the eyes of the Lord: He wants this even more than we do – as He did this with the Ninivites.

St. John Chrysostom [*In Gen.*, c. 7, Hom. 24, 8 t. 4, 130/ B, ff.]: God does not need many days, nor time; but if we will it ... in two weeks we could correct our sins. For indeed if the Ninivites doing penance for just three days have been found worthy of such mercy, with all the more reason He will not despise us, only if we really repent and desisting from sin,, then we will enter that way which leads to virtue.

2758: For indeed, concerning those above-mentioned, I speak of the Ninivites, as Scripture bears witness [Jon 3:10]: ***And God saw their works that they were turned from their evil way, and God had mercy ...*** And therefore, should He see that we, too, have arrived at virtue and that we are desisting from evil, and let us hasten on to the working of good deeds, He will approve our conversion and from the baggage of our sins, He will bestow His gifts of freedom. For we do not even desire the expiation of our sins and salvation as He Himself yearns for these, and He hastens to be with us that He might render us free and that He might be able to grant these to us.

And therefore, I beg you, let us arouse our minds and let each one be an examiner of himself. And let each see if he has had any usefulness from this continuous doctrine and if there is anything that might serve one's neighbor that he might have collected some fruit from it, if he has corrected his vices, and if he has received some encouragement from our daily admonitions he has come to the true philosophy each must take every care to come to good deeds, and never to leave off from this doing good that has been begun.

2759: If one should notice that there still remains his old customs, and that he is still persevering in these, let him spur on his mind to examine the reason for his reaming this way, so that he might not allow this to proceed further, but that he might put an end to this failed practice. Let him cut off the impetus toward the bad habits, let him control his thoughts, let him go over in his mind that terrible last day, let him think over the terrifying participation at this [Eucharistic] table, and the splendor of the raging fire emitted from there and its power of conflagration, all of which befits the mind of anyone approaching It: namely being pure of every stain and all sin, overturning the frequency of illicit thoughts, so that we might be able – in these very

One blames the Devil.

What would you say of a farm worker who sells the vineyard stakes of his master, puts reeds to support the vines and goes away with the money to dine in all the inns while the wind breaks down everything?

We have to re-direct our *passion*: namely towards the love of God, and be interested in the heavenly goods... and hate sin.

days preparing our own selves – to become participants of this present sumptuous banquet and that we might share in these ineffable goods which He has promised for those loving Him.

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†††
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2760:

**SECOND DAY
GENERAL EXAMEN**

Instruction 1.

The purpose of this examination of conscience is to purify the soul and to aid us to improve our Confessions⁴³

St. John Chrysostom [t. 2, Hom: *What should not be preached for grace*, n. 4, Edit. Paris and Ven., p. 665, t. 2, 418 D, ff.].

The same procedure is to be followed regarding sins that we bring to the keeping financial accounts. For immediately, and just as soon as we get up in the morning, before we set foot outside, or take on some private or public matter, having called our servant, we ask of him an accounting of the expenses, so that we might see if there is anything out of order, what had been consumed in legitimate uses, and how much is still left. And should we see that what remains might really be insufficient, we must think up every means of increasing the deposits, so that we might not incur hunger through mismanagement.

2761: *Therefore, this is what we should do regarding our own actions. Having called on our own conscience, let us ask an accounting of it of our words, actions and thoughts. Let us seek to find out what comfortably and usefully might still remain, what has been lost to our own harm, what speech might have been improper, as in detractions, impure language, in calumnies; which thought directed the eye to a*

⁴³ *SpEx*, n. 32, cf. o.c. Puhl, S.J. p. 18. Fr. Dalle Vedove notes that St. Gaspar noted during his oft-quoted diary from his retreat in September 1808, the following:

15th SEPTEMBER 1808

[41.] Introduction to the Spiritual Exercises. While visiting the altar of St Ignatius with my companions I felt much devotion and recollection with great inner cheerfulness and some tears - even though the visit was short. I had the feeling that the Saint was welcoming us and inviting us to work for the greater glory of God as he did. To work in the same ways: though not using all those means that he was able to use. He seemed to tell us: "Onward, soldiers of Christ! Gird yourselves with fortitude! Pick up the shield of faith, the helmet of Salvation, the sword of the divine Word and fight against the "ancient serpent". Make my spirit alive again in you and in others through you"...

[45.] Let us draw up the accounts of our service before the Master calls for them...

[This is a reflection strictly connected with the preceding note and perhaps written on 16 Sept during the Retreat. It is inspired by Lk 16,2: *Give an account of your stewardship!*]

[46.] Give yourself back to yourself. St. Bernard to Pope Eugene.

[This, too, is a Retreat text. It might have been quoted by the Retreat Master. Or it could come from Fr. Bertoni's personal reading of St Bernard's *Considerations for Pope Eugene*. It was an exhortation to St Bernard's former disciple who became Pope.

lascivious glance, which counsel might have resulted in our own harm, and whether any of this had been executed by our hands, or by our tongue, or by our eyes.

2762: *And let us studiously strive truly to abstain from inopportune expenditures, and in place of those goods which we have unwisely consumed, let us seek for other deposits: in place of statements importunately uttered, we offer prayers; in place of lascivious looks, we bring alms and fasts. And since we are the more prone to consume imprudently, without this being of any profit to us, nor does it bring any worthwhile deposit to our treasury, this will lead our incautious selves into extreme need, and will lead us headlong into the eternal punishment of the flames.*

2763: *Indeed as very early in the morning⁴⁴, we are accustomed to initiate an accounting of our monies, and so, too, after dinner the same activity,, or lying in bed in the evening, with no one to seeking information we demand an accounting of all these matters which we have done through the day, as we have said⁴⁵. And should there be some sin committed, let us castigate our conscience, let us rebuke our mind, and that our heart may be so vehemently sorry that we might never further once we get up, to dare to impel ourselves into the same pit of sin, being mindful of what was thought of in the evening segment.*

2764: [N. 5 of the same Homily]: *The fact that this time period is indeed the most apt for a discussion of conscience of this kind, just listen to how the Prophet gives testimony in this matter, when he says: **the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds ...** [Ps 4:5]. Many situations arise in the meantime and not as we would will them to be: our friends offend us, and our servants may exasperate us, one's wife may sadden him, one's son might afflict him, a crowd of secular matters might indeed lay siege to us nor can we understand in what manner we might take care of all these things.*

2765: *But having been delivered from all these cares, since in the evening we are accustomed to be alone, in bed let us exercise the judgment so that God might be merciful to us, let us render our own decision in this matter. The fact being that if we sin every day, and if we wound our spirit, we will never experience other than those who are frequently wounded, and who subsequently, without paying any attention to them, there results either an intolerable fever, and so we, too by going forward in this continual stupor, we render ourselves inevitably obnoxious to this penalty.*

I know that what I am saying are indeed disturbing batters, this I know: but they also bring much usefulness to the soul.

⁴⁴ Cf. *SpEx*, nn. 24, ff.

⁴⁵ cf. above MssB ## 2724, ff.

2766: *In a certain tract , Regarding the Interior Gift, cited by St. Bernard, from some unknown author of his time, and which is found among the works of Hugo of St. Victor [under the title: The Third Book On the Spirit', in the Ven. edit., of the Venerable works of St. Bernard, t. 5, c. 6, Concerning the Proper Spirit, n. 12] we read: Therefore return to your heart and diligently examine yourself. Consider from where you have come, where you are going, how you live, how much you progress each day, and how much you fall back , by what thoughts are you the more inundated, by what affections you are the more frequently touched, or by what stains of temptations are you the more severely attacked by the evil spirit.*

2767: *When you have fully understood the entire state and habit of the interior man, and not only what you are actually, but also what you ought to have been, will you be able to elevate this knowledge of yourself to the contemplation of God. For the more that you progress each day in such knowledge, the more you always tend toward the more sublime realities. [ib., c. 33, n.70].*

Therefore,⁴⁶ consider quite frequently, think over energetically, and investigate diligently, your conscience, so that you may know how to correct, or also where you should render thanks. For it is useful and indeed very necessary that you realize what is lacking to you, what you want, what you desire and what you opt to have.

2768: Thoughts, atoms, birds, creative imagination.

And in c. 34, n. 71: I might the more easily count the atoms of this world than the motions of my heart, the speed of animals and flying creatures cannot be compared to my motions; there is no one who can comprehend my thoughts. There is no method to my desires: at one moment it is these, and then those that I think about and desire, but I cannot have any of them.

2769: *While my body is totally vacant of thoughts, while I wander through different places: I repose in no hour, no single moment, but in every moment, in the wink of an eye, hastening through many spaces of different places, create new creatures, and again I then delete these same with the identical ease, or I vary them in varied other manner, and in multiple ways. I desire to have this or that, or desire to be such and such, as though god could not give it to me, or did not know how to bestow such on me.*

2770: *The response to oneself: O guardian of the heart, what a small desiring heart you have! It is small and it yearns for grandeurs. It would scarcely suffice for the nourishment of a single bird of prey, and yet the whole world does not suffice for it. It*

⁴⁶ Translator's Note: Fr. Dalle Vedove, for some reason, changed the order of the paragraphs in his Italian Translation of these lines – cf. **CS 2, p. 415** - for this following paragraph and what follows it, may be found on the top of the **preceding p. 414**.

is only in your heart that you wander aimlessly throughout the world; you run without feet, you work without hands, you do not have wings and yet you do not cease to fly; you gather riches each and every day, and you cannot be satisfied; you prepare banquets for eating, and then you do not partake; you think of one thing and then another, and what you think up is all false ...

2771: *You, though, find delight in those things which perish and which pass away, and cannot remain with you. Just think of how many are dying right now, and to whom if this very hour there would be granted to them the possibility of doing penance, which is now being granted to you, how they would run for the altars, and how quickly, and there on bended knees, or indeed with their whole body prostrate on earth, how they would sigh, how they would weep and pray, until they might merit to obtain fully from God the pardon of their sins.*

2772: *But you in eating, and drinking, and laughing lost time living in laziness, which the Lord has indulged you with for acquiring grace and for meriting glory.*

Think also of how many souls there are right now being punished in hell without any hope of mercy. If God's love cannot hold you at least may the fear of judgment hold you and terrify you, the threat of gehenna, the snare of death, the pains of hell, the excruciating fire, the corrupting worm, the flaming, stinking sulphur in the infernal regions, and all other evils, Examine yourself even further, so that you might know what is lacking to you, so that in that final examination before all you will not be confounded should some iniquity be found in you.

2773: n. 73, ib. : *I am not capable of thinking worthily, and sufficiently estimating just what might be that multiple volubility of my thoughts, and that restless and tireless speed, which makes me hurry through so much, such varied and infinite thoughts. There is no hour and no moment of time in which I can find rest, but I hasten through the infinite spaces of places and endless times, in here haste.*

2774: *Varied and contrary affections.*

As a result there lies open before me a very easy transition, and agile journey, from the heights to the depths, and from the depths to the heights: from the very first realities, unto the last, and from the last to the first. I am unable to explain worthily just how many alternating moods I assume from these shifts, from one moment to another, and just how many forms of motions of vicissitudes alternating me that I am accustomed to be vitiated and with what disturbances I am afflicted every day.

2775: *At one moment I am standing tall in confidence, and in the next, I fall into diffidence; at one moment I feel as though I am fixed in constancy, and then, very soon I am struck by sudden terror; at one moment anger disturbs me, and then a*

huge fury takes me over. Nor should there be any wonder that I am afflicted in various qualities, and diverse disturbances through the passing moments, but it is stupefying simply beyond measure but that even in one and the same minute I am often touched by contrary affections: now by hatred, and then I am led by love; at one moment, joy and then I am dragged down by sadness.

2776: *How often there comes upon me the most enthusiastic rejoicing in self-congratulation, and almost immediately there is an immersing cause of sadness that strikes me and dejects me, and turns all that solemnity of my exulting spirit into deep sadness. Often realities loved much and for a long time, later I then pursue with much hatred and those vehemently approved and desired, I then immediately detest.*

2777: [n. 75, chap. 6, ib.]. The knowledge of oneself is the most sublime, for its object and its effect, which is to unite oneself to God: ***If you do not know yourself,*** and so on [Ct 1:7] and to be saved.

Since among all the other animals, the human race is the most worthy form, because there is more worthily discovered in it the most worthy potency, and no knowledge is greater than that by which a man knows himself.

2778: *Therefore, leave behind all else and examine yourself, run through yourself and stand within: let there begin in our your own knowledge and let it finish in you, since in the acquisition of your salvation no one is more germane, no one is closer to yourself. If therefore something offers itself to your thought which does not pertain in some way to the salvation of yourself, then withdraw from that and expel it, so that always you may inspect within, and from the knowledge of yourself, you might come to the knowledge of God.*

2779: Inclinations, weakness, strength.

A man ought to acknowledge himself, toward which goods he might naturally be the more prompt, and toward which evils he might the more be inclined, in which studies he should the more vehemently insist, by which vices he might be more easily be corrupted, in which merits he might stand out, and what penalty or reward ought he to expect; how much each day he might progress, or be deficient, with how much effort would suffice for him to weep for his past failures, decline those present, and forearm himself for those future; with what constancy of spirit should he strive to make up for the goods lost, and protect and multiply those possessed.

2780: *I how necessary is such an examination and what a marvelous speculation it is, to have before ones eyes so many virtues of the spirit, so many of its exercises, so many of its zealous efforts or merits, and for a longer period to inhere in a contemplation of this kind for a longer period!*

N. 76 [ib.]: *Suspend therefore your spirit from the love of inferiors, so that perhaps your having been ejected from the sublime realities, and in the place of voluptuousness, abstracted and lured away from your own concupiscence, Jas 1:14: as **every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured**, that you might follow after your concupiscences and become a wanderer and a refugee on the earth. Lastly, if you desire to fulfill the Lord's precept, Pr 4 d 23: **with all watchfulness keep your heart ...***

2781: St. Ignatius [ib⁴⁷], *Spiritual Exercises*, First Week, title: **General Examination of Conscience.** I presuppose that there are three kinds of thoughts in my mind, namely: one, which is strictly my own, and arises wholly from my own free will; two others which come from without, the one from the good spirit, and the other from the evil one.

2782: Thoughts⁴⁸.

There are two ways of meriting from evil thoughts that come from without:

- First, when a thought of committing a mortal sin comes to my mind which I resist at once, and thus overcome it.

- Second, when the same evil thought comes to me, and I resist it, but it returns again and again, and I always resist it till it is conquered. This second way is more meritorious than the first.

2783: It is a venial sin⁴⁹ if the same thought of sinning mortally comes to mind and for a short time one pays heed to it, or receives some sense pleasure, or is somewhat negligent in rejecting it.

There are⁵⁰ two ways of sinning mortally:

- the first is to consent to the evil thought with the intention of carrying it out, or of doing so if one can.

- the second way⁵¹ of sinning mortally is actually carrying out the sin to which consent was given. This is a greater sin for three reasons: because of the greater duration; because of the greater intensity; because of the greater harm done to both persons.

2784: Words⁵²

⁴⁷ *SpEx.*, nn. 32, ff. – cf. Puhl, o.c., pp. 18, ff.

⁴⁸ *SpEx.*, nn. 33, 34

⁴⁹ *SpEx.*, n. 35.

⁵⁰ *SpEx.*, n. 36.

⁵¹ *SpEx.*, n. 37.

⁵² *SpEx.*, n. 38.

One may also offend God in word in many ways: Jas 3:6: *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.*

Salmeron says shows in this place that the tongue is the alphabet and the congeries of all the vices. From the tongue there is born: adulation, blasphemy, calumny, detraction, excuse for sins, false witness, boasting, heresy, hypocrisy, derision, lamentation, lying, nonsense, idle talk, perjury, quarrelsomeness, arguing, complaining, betrayal of a secret, scandals, harmful taciturnity, censure, better zeal [Comm. In St. Jas, a Lapide].

2785: Detraction, or unjust deprivation, the injury or the lessening, of the good reputation of another in his absence. [Antoine, *De Jure*, p. 3, c. 4, q. 2. T. I, 538, which is done in 8 ways.⁵³

Imposing, increasing, manifesting, twisting toward evil.

One who denies, keeps silent, diminishes or praises remissively.

2786: Rm 1:30: ... *Detractors, hateful to God...* 1 Co 5:10: ... *neither the extortioners ... nor the bad of speech will possess the kingdom of God...* Jas 4:11: ...*Detract not one another... He that detracts his brother, or he that judges his brother, detracts the law and judges the law ...* Pr 4:24: ...*remove from your self a forward mouth and let detracting lips be far from you...*

St. John Chrysostom [*Hom. 3 a to the People*, n. 5, t. 2, 25/l E]: *May your mouth also fast from impure and villainous words. For of what use is it that we abstain from birds and fish, when we bite and devour our brothers?*

Detractors bite their listener⁵⁴.

*Those detracting devour their brothers, and bite into the flesh of their neighbor, As a result, Paul has terrified us, saying, Ga 5:15: **But if you bite and devour one another; take heed you be not consumed of one another.***

2787: *You have not implanted teeth into the flesh, but the curse of the soul, you have planted, you have wounded by monstrous suspicion. You have infected with countless wrongs your own self, and that other person, and still many others. For indeed calumniating your neighbor you have done worse to the listener; for either He is a sinner, and then he becomes even more sluggish, having stumbled in to the*

⁵³ St. Thomas Aquinas, II-II, q. 73, a. 1, ad 3 m:

Reply OBJ 3: A man is said to backbite [*detrahere*] another, not because he detracts from the truth, but because he lessens his good name. This is done sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. Directly, in four ways: first, by saying that which is false about him; secondly, by stating his sin to be greater than it is; thirdly, by revealing something unknown about him; fourthly, by ascribing his good deeds to a bad intention. Indirectly, this is done either by gainsaying his good, or by maliciously concealing it, or by diminishing it.

⁵⁴ NB: these five effects of calumny are not far from the modern understanding of the effects of sin: Theological, Cosmic, Society, the Church and Personal.

communicator of sin – or he is a just person, and then he becomes more arrogant and is inflated with the sin of others, being persuaded that he hears great things about himself. [in comparison].

2788: Detractors also bite the state of the Church.

Furthermore, you have thus brought harm to the common state of the Church; for all listeners do not accuse only the sinner, but they inflict the shameful deeds of Christians on the people; you would not hear it said of the infidels: he is a fornicator and dissolute, but for the one who has sinned, all Christians would then be accused of calumnies.

2789: They bite also the glory of God.

To these you have also blasphemed the glory of God. For just as by all of us living laudably for God the Name of God is glorified, so by those sinning it is blasphemed and afflicted with reproach.

They bite the one of whom evil is spoken.

Fourthly, you have afflicted with shame those badly spoken of, and thus you have rendered him impudent making him an enemy and an adversary.

2790: And lastly, they bite themselves, for even though they speak the truth, as the Pharisee contrasted with the Publican.

Fifth, you have made yourself guilty of penalty and punishment weaving a web of matters that have nothing to do with you. Nor should anyone come to me and say: I only detract when I relate false tales, but when I tell what is true, this is not so. For even when you may speak what is true, you still commit a crime. For indeed that Pharisee spoke truthfully about that Publican, but nonetheless, this was of no benefit to him. For indeed, I ask you, was not the Publican also a sinner? It is certain to all that Publican was indeed a sinner. But since the Pharisee maligned him, he went away with all these stains taken away.

2791: *Do you wish to correct your brother? Shed tears, pray to God: admonish him after taking him aside, admonish, counsel, exhort him. For this is what St Paul did: 2 Co 12:21: **For I fear lest perhaps when I come I shall not find you such as I would and that I be found by you such as you would not: lest perhaps contentions, envyings, animosities, dissensions, detractions, whisperings, upheavals, seditions be among you. V. 21: lest again when I come, God humble me among you: and I mourn many of them that sinned before, and have not done penance for the uncleanness and fornication, and lasciviousness, that they have committed.***

2792: *Declare your charity toward the sinner: persuade him that in reminding him forcibly of his sin, you are offering counsel and caring for him, and that you are not*

drawing him to judgment. Embrace his feet, kiss them, and do not be embarrassed if truly you would like to heal him. For indeed this is what the doctors do very often when they have patients with difficult illnesses. By tenderness, and pleading, they persuade them to take health-giving medicine. And you do the same. Show your wound to the priest: his task is one of curing, his is to provide, his is to advise.

2793: For the one who hates detraction.

*And I admonish not only those who do speak badly about others, but also toward those listening to detractors that they place obstacles in their way, and imitate the Prophet, saying: Ps 100:5: **...The man that in private detracted his neighbor, him did I persecute...** Say to your neighbor: do you have someone whom you praise and commend: I open my ears and receive these anointings. If, though, you care to speak badly about someone, I block entrance to your words: for I do not sustain filth and trash.*

2794: *What gain can there be for me when I learn that a person is unworthy? Indeed, supreme damage comes to me from this, and extreme detriment. Speak to him. Let us take care of our own affairs: how can we explain away even our own sins; let us rather exhibit an energetic investigation concerning our own life. For indeed what excuse can we have, what pardon, when our own sins never even pass through our minds, while with great curiosity we ponder those of others? Just as it is for a passer-by to commit himself to peering into another's home and to look over what is there is truly a very base activity and full of much shame and so is it likewise is it to be occupied with the life of another and is a total lack of good manners.*

2795: *But this is even more ridiculous, because those who have this kind of life and while neglecting their own affairs, when one speaks of something that is hidden, asks the listener and they swear, that this is not to be said to anyone else, thus declaring that what he has just committed is truly reprehensible. And if indeed you ask the other not to tell this to anyone else, it would have been much better beforehand that you ought not to have said what you did to anyone. You did have your discourse in safety: but after you have made it public, then you try to bring your words back into safety. And if you do not choose to have your opinion bandied about, and do not say it to anyone else. When after you have entrusted the custody of your discourse, you do something superfluous and useless, advising and warning to keep guard over your words.*

2796: *The real harm of detraction*

- *to detract really is ridiculous.*
- *But to detract is no joke. For the one who does detract, then becomes anxious, he suspects and fears, does penance and bites his tongue, fearing and*

trembling that perhaps that what he has stated to others, might bring to him great danger, and that he has wrought a superfluous and useless enmity among those about whom he spoke. For indeed whoever contains himself lives in utmost security and with great pleasure.

2797: *Si 19:10: **Have you heard a word against your neighbor? Let it die within you, trusting that it will not burst you.** What is this; **let it die within you?** Extinguish it, root it out, do not even permit it to come out nor even to move at all. But strive mightily not even to tolerate others who speak badly. And whenever you might hear anything of this nature, bury it, inter what has been said, hand it over to oblivion, so that you might become like those who have heard nothing, and you will pass your present life with much peace and security.*

2798: *If the detractors learn that we are more adverse to them than we are to those they accuse, and these detractors eventually desist from this bad custom they have, and correct their sin they will come to praise these actions, and they will maintain that we are servants and benefactors. For just as to bless and praise lead to , and to speak badly and calumniate is the source of hostility, so it is also the principle of hatred and injuries, and the source of infinite discords.*

2799: *In no greater way are our responsibilities neglected than when we excessively concern ourselves with the actions of others, and out of curiosity ponder what they do. Indeed to any detractor, and one who scrutinizes the morals of others, no time remains to take care of his own life. For such a one has committed all his commitment in curiosity regarding others, it is necessary that he fear for all his own obligations as these fall under his negligence. And indeed it is thought that one is acting well if we can profit over all laziness, being committed to the care of our own sins and judgment. Hom. 3, to the People, n. 5].*

2800: *n. 6⁵⁵ [ib]: Let us flee, therefore, beloved, let us free detraction, instructed as we are that this whole matter is the Pit of the Devil, and the hiding place of his insidious schemes.*

Damages: [detraction] makes us negligent of our own affairs, and makes us even more guilty.

So that we might neglect our own business, and be constituted even more guilty, the Devil leads us into this habit. For indeed there is not only evil in this for which later we will have to have an accounting of these matters about which we have spoken, but that also we make our own sins all that more grave , by depriving ourselves from all excuse. For truly anyone who harshly demands of others, will never experience any alleviation in his crimes.

⁵⁵ cf. above, n. 2764.

2801: *For God will pronounce His judgment not only from the nature of our own sins, but also from our judgment regarding others: as a result, He admonishes us, saying: Mt 7:1: **Judge not, that you may not be judged.** For not only what is the nature of sin that will appear just as it is in the future, but how great and inevitable an addition will one receive for his judgments made regarding a fellow servant. For just as one who is human and meek and clement will lower the greater gravity of his sins, so the harsh, the cruel the relentless adds to his own sins a great weight.*

2802: *Let us, therefore, eliminate all detraction from our mouth, knowing that even if we eat ashes, it will be of no use to us such a harsh life, unless we abstain from abstraction. **Not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.** Mt 15:11.*

2803: *If someone, as you passed by, should disturb a septic field, would you not response to this with an outcry and invective. Do this, then, to detractors. For indeed disturbed refuse does not so strike the membrane of the brain of those who smell this odor, as much as do the sins of others brought forward and the manifested impurities of life are accustomed to sadden and disturb the spirits of listeners.*

2804: St. Ignatius' Book, *The Spiritual Exercises*, First Week General Examen of Conscience⁵⁶: **Lying false testimony, detraction are also sins of the tongue. Nothing should be said to lessen the good name of another, or to complain about him. For if I reveal a hidden mortal sin of another, with a bad intention and with great harm to the reputation of another, a grave sin is committed; if it is a venial sin is made known, then a venial sin is committed.**

2805: *In these matters, as often as we make known the vice of defect of another, we manifest at the same time our own vice and defect of these.*

If, however, my intention is good there are two ways in which it is permissible to speak of the sin, or fault of another: first, when a sin is public, ...as of a sentence passed in court, is pernicious, or of a commonly known error infesting the minds of this among whom we live. Secondly, whenever a hidden sin is revealed to someone with the intention that he help the one who is in sin to rise form his state. But then there must some grounds or probable reasons for believing that he will be able to help him.

⁵⁶ Cf. *SpEx.*, n. 41 – o.c., Puhl, SJ, pp. 21, ff. [Fr. Dalle Vedove notes that St. Gaspar Bertoni noted these struggles in the spiritual life, in his Spiritual Journal, on **August 9, 1808**]:

Self-love often disguises back-biting as zeal, charity or as a means of protecting oneself or others. Its true face is passion. One has to pay the penalty for it to God and shed many tears over it.

2806 [Ibidem⁵⁷]: ... **No idle word should be uttered. I understand a word to be idle when it serves no good purpose, either for myself, or for another and was not intended to do so. Hence, words are never idle when spoken for any useful purpose, or when meant to serve the good of one's own soul or that of another, of the body or of temporal possessions. Nor are they idle because one speaks of matters that do not pertain to his state,, for example, if a religious speaks of wars or of commerce.**

In all we have mentioned, there will be merit if what is said is directed to some good purpose; there will be sin if it is directed to an evil purpose, or if engaged in for no good end.

2807: Deeds⁵⁸.

The subject matter for examination will be the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Church, the recommendations of Superiors. All transgressions resulting from any of these three groups are more or less grievous sins according to the gravity of the matter.

2808: By recommendations of superiors is meant Pontifical indults such as those for peace on condition of confession and reception of Holy Communion. For to be the cause of one acting against such pious recommendations and regulations of the Rectors of the Church, or to do so oneself in no small sin.⁵⁹

St. Cyprian [Letter 55 to Cornelius: 177 F]: *It is not from any other source that heresies have risen up and schisms were born, than from the fact that these do not obey the priest of God nor is it remembered that there is in the Church one priest who is at the same time a judge who takes the place of Christ.*

2809: The Ten Commandments. [St. Francis Xavier, Instruction I, 4 letter. e]⁶⁰:

Before the Christian, servant of God commits himself to dealing with his own affairs, he would do well if he would give some space of time in meditation on the Law of God, he will profit by this by repeating every day in the morning, the following exercise:

Prostrate before the Lord let him look at and consider one by one the ten Commandments in this manner:

⁵⁷ ib. n. 40, on previous page 20 in Puhl, SJ.

⁵⁸ ib., *SpEx*, n. 32, in Puhl, SJ, p. 22.

⁵⁹ Fr. Dalle Vedove here offers an important note. He believed that these paragraphs are clearer in the old edition authored by the Jesuit Superior General, Fr. Roothan [**Superior General, friend of Fr. Bragato ???**], ed. altera, Ratisbon: Pustet, 1920, pp. 5, ff.

⁶⁰ After all these passages I Latin, this quote is in Italian, from St. Francis Xavier runs from here to the end of this Instruction, i.e., **## 2809-2815.**

2810: The First Commandment of the Divine Law prescribed for me by the Lord is this: ***You will love and adore the Lord your God with all your heart, etc.*** thus, recollected within myself, from the very ultimate memory that it has of boyhood, recall every sin committed against this precept, and then with all one's heart detesting it, pardon should be asked of God, proposing very strongly of guarding myself for the future from similar faults, and to will rather in cement to lose one's possessions, life and every good, than to commit anything contrary to this most just and salutary precept.

2811: I added two colloquies in this, or like tenor:

To Jesus Christ: I beg You humbly, o Jesus, My Lord, I beg You that might give me today and always the abundant grace of observing perfectly this first precept of Your holy law.

To His Mother: O my Lady, most Holy Virgin Mary, I beg you that you deign to pray for me to the blessed Fruit of your womb, Jesus, my Lord, that in this and in all days of my mortal life, that He bestow on me benignly the abundant grace of most fully carrying out all that is commanded me in this first precept of His most holy law.

2812: And this is what is to be done going through the other nine Commandments.

This exercise, is made well at the beginning of each day, is of supreme efficacy in order to achieve eternal salvation.

Decline from evil, and do good.

And therefore, since all the hope and reason for the Christian lies in arriving at eternal happiness to which each is called, founded in the doing of good and the flight from evil, in which two directions consists the entire law of God, it is manifest how much there contributes to this and assists it the exact and distinct consideration of each precept of God. It is like standing before a mirror⁶¹, that makes us see the stains that we ought to remove and how much good yet to be achieved.

⁶¹ NB: Fr. Bertoni considers the life of St. Ignatius as a **Mirror**, on the eve of the saint's Feast:

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[17.] For the examination of conscience one should choose a Saint of the same vocation as a mirror. In this way one finds matter for confession every day. Whatever falls short of that Saint's perfection is faulty.

It is worthwhile to consider the method of Fr Bertoni in his daily Examination of Conscience. It is not surprising that during these examinations he sometimes was given remarkable gifts and graces. We have an example on 27 October 1808 when he wrote:

...In the first point of the Midday Examen, i.e. the thanksgiving, while prostrated on the floor in the sight of Heaven, I felt a deep sense of the divine presence with love and self-offering...

This maxim of Fr. Gaspar provides an insight into what should be every examen of conscience for one called to perfection.

Fr Bertoni had chosen St Ignatius of Loyola as model for his priestly vocation. He will tell us expressly in this JOURNAL on 15 Sept. The first biographer, Fr Giacobbe, wrote that Fr Bertoni *admired and studied much the works and virtues of St Ignatius, and had reproduced them very faithfully.*⁶¹ In fact Fr Gaspar studied the Life of St Ignatius directly of at least four authors, i.e. Fr John Peter Maffei, Fr Peter Ribadeneira, Fr Daniel

2813: Cancel the stains of the past, and avoid future stains.

Thus, there come to reality with genuine contrition to cancel the awful ancient stains and the avoiding of those actions to which we run the risk that they become attached to us, as the disgusting occasions of life remain.

Weaken the depraved habits and become strengthened against temptations.

Thus are weakened the depraved customs and vicious habits, and we are strengthened by the firm proposal which we renew every day, to resist, imploring for this end the divine assistance, for the temptations which arise in every area of malice. All of these, while they are reduced to some headings of the divine commandments, have to come under the censure of this most useful daily consideration.

2814: Purge the eyes of the mind.

In this manner also are purged the eyes of the mind from that doleful blindness, through which so many live lacking consideration, and they come to fall almost insensibly into sins, and by long usage they quiet the remorse of conscience to drink the disturbing waters, without knowing what they are doing, when in all truth these wretched souls are preparing an extreme ruin, playing around, as it were, on the precipice of eternal damnation.

2815: In this exercise, however, one ought to pay attention to insist on those sins principally against which one is the more often accustomed to sin and the more gravely. This is achieved by exciting against such sins a more sharp sorrow, through love of the divine Majesty with those outrages. There is a need to muster all the forces of the spirit in order to conceive an irrevocable proposal to abstain therefore, from these sins. All need to flee indeed the occasions and to use suitable means to crush that bad habit which draws us to the very precipice, imploring for this purpose a particular assistance of the divine grace.

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Bartoli and Fr Francis Mariani. Of the hand written extracts from the four authors which we possess, several could be part of this *Journal*. They reveal not only admiration for the Saint, but also his endeavor to imitate him.

The original idea of modeling his life on that of a Saint could have come to Fr Bertoni (after his boyhood practice of imitating Saint Aloysius Gonzaga), from the *Imitation of Christ* where he read: *Look at the living examples of the Holy Fathers*⁶¹. He found inspiration also in Fr L. Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat* :

*... Compare your works with those of the Saints and other servants of God. In comparison with theirs you will know that your best and greatest works are of very low quality and worth. If you then compare them with those of Christ...(I am not talking on the side of his divinity, but purely as they have been humanly performed with sincerity and pure love)... you will see that yours are insignificant...*⁶¹

The *Imitation of Christ* and the classic of Scupoli appear as the first teachers of Fr Bertoni. We shall have a further proof in this *Journal*.

SECOND INSTRUCTION.**2816: GENERAL EXAMEN⁶²**

The General Examen is most useful for the purification of the soul and for the confession of sins.

Guigo the Carthusian Abbot⁶³, Letter, or Tract to the Brothers of the Mountain of God, c. 10, nn. 28 & 29, among the works of St. Bernard, t. 5]:

According to the laws of the common institute, discipline yourselves according to the precepts of the Decalogue, or the canons, to be in charge of yourself and order your life, and compose your morals, and judge yourself, accuse yourself to yourself and do this often, and also condemn yourself, and do not dismiss yourself unpunished. May justice seat itself in judgment, and may your guilty conscience accuse itself: No one loves you more, and no one will judge you in greater fidelity.

2817: *The first time at Matins, and Terce.*

In the morning, make an examination of yourself of the past night, and set up for yourself a canon for the coming day. In the evening make an examination of the day that is past, and make some plan for the coming night. So set up by a fore-plan it will never leave you a period to be able to slip away. And for each of the hours, distribute its exercises according to the canon of the common institute. As for the hours for the spiritual exercises, attend to them; and for those of corporal duties, take care of these; in this manner in these there is thus paid the duty of the spirit to God, and the body to the spirit, so that if there should be something that has been set aside, or left imperfect, in its time, in its manner, in its place, let it not remain unpunished, nor without making compensation for it.

2828: *And for the individual hours.*

[And in the same place, c. 5, n. 1]: *All the sons of God, in this actual day, must always look to see diligently what is lacking to each: from whence he began, where he is heading and in what state of progressing; each hour and day, let each one make an examination of himself.*

In this same tract of an unknown but most approved author, both in the manuscript attributed to St. Bernard, under the title 'Concerning the Interior Man' – and also among the works of Hugo of St. Victor, under the title of the Forth Book, 'Concerning the Soul', and among the works of St. Bernard [edit. Ven. tome 5], Of the Most Pious Meditations, 'Concerning the Knowledge of the Human Condition': 'Concerning the Daily Examination of Oneself':

⁶² NB: once again, the majority of the text is in Latin.

⁶³ NB: The **Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2654** quotes a 'Guigo the Carthusian' and his classic on Contemplation, *Scala Paradisi*.

2819: *Curious explorer of your own integrity, examine your life in a daily discussion. Attend diligently how much you progress, and in what you are deficient, how you stand in morals, how are you in affections. How like to God you are, and how unlike Him, how close you are, or how far away, not with regard to places, but with the affections of your morals. Therefore, know yourself. How much better and more praiseworthy you are if you really know yourself, and how if, after having neglected yourself, you might know the courses of the skies, the powers of the herbs, the complexions of human beings, the natures of the animals, and you might have knowledge of all celestial and terrestrial beings!*

2820: *Render an account of yourself to yourself, and if not always, or often, then at least, sometimes. Govern your affections, direct your actions, correct your steps. Let there be noting in you that remains undisciplined. Place all your transgressions before your eyes: stand before yourself, as before another person, and then weep over yourself. Weep over your iniquities or sins with which you have offended God. Indicate to Him your miseries, show Him the malice of your adversaries.*

2821: In a certain Tract, 'On the Interior Dwelling', ascribed to St. Bernard, but of an unknown but contemporary author, and among the works of Hugo of St. Victor, under the title of the Third Book 'Concerning the Soul', in the Ven. Ed. Of St. Bernard, tome 5, chapter 6]:

Render an account of yourself to your own heart, and diligent examine yourself.

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