



Barcelona in the Life of St. Ignatius (1524-1526)

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Publisher: CRISTIANISME I JUSTÍCIA
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ISSN: 2014-6558
November 2025
Editor: Santi Torres Rocaginé
Translated by David Brooks
Layout: Pilar Rubio Tugas

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“He Was More Inclined to Study... and He Determined
to Go to Barcelona” (Autobiography, 50)

Glòria Andrés, Laura Rius, Lluís Ylla

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Presentation

The spiritual formation of Ignatius of Loyola was a very long journey. It went from Loyola to Montserrat, Manresa, a short stay in Barcelona, the Holy Land, again Barcelona, Alcalá de Henares, Salamanca, Paris, Venice, and ended in Rome. Each one of these places and cities left a particular mark on the pilgrim who continually was looking for God, never anticipating the Spirit, but rather following it.

Now 500 years have passed since the stay of the pilgrim Iñigo in Barcelona which took place from February 1524 until March 1526. Since he was not permitted to remain in Jerusalem where he had thought he would stay his whole life, dedicated to devotion and “to the help of souls,” he decided to return to Barcelona to study and to prepare himself better for the apostolic task which he had held in his heart for some time. It was a decisive turn of events. Up until that moment he had concentrated on *doing*, on dedicating himself to devotion and to the spiritual help of others in the Holy Land. Nevertheless, he went from doing to *seeking*. Quid agendum? What needs to be done? he asked himself. Barcelona was the first step of his new journey.

The stay in Barcelona of two years was not only the chronological beginning or the first steps along a new road that carried him to the definitive ideal of dedicating his life to healing souls, but also the start of a new way or a new sense of doing things which began in Barcelona and which would be developed afterwards in Alcalá, Salamanca, Paris and Italy. In effect, in Barcelona, the pilgrim began to make use of studies and natural intermediaries, turned into apostolate; in Barcelona began the unfolding of human relationships and friendships, a characteristic feature of his life and the Ignatian apostolate; also in Barcelona, the apostolic spirituality of Ignatius began to take on flesh with a special concern for the reform of the Church. Three vectors formed an intimate unity: studies and natural intermediate steps for the apostolate; human relationships and friends as a form of the apostolate; spirituality and apostolate.

All of this is the legacy left to us by Ignatius, the pilgrim, during his stay of two years in Barcelona, a stay that had been prepared by a shorter one that lasted only three weeks. For that reason, it seems that this legacy is a call to be thankful to God for how he molded the Ignatian charism in this city, and a testimony for us who are called to live it in a society that is very different 500 years afterwards. The work that we are presenting is a modest aid to assimilating the Ignatian legacy: to become more aware of the significance for Iñigo the pilgrim of his stay in the city and so to extend it into our lives.

This work has three well-defined parts. In the first part, Laura Rius explains how the life of a student was for Ignatius, given that the motive behind his coming to Barcelona was to study. This part explains the academic framework in Barcelona at that time (the *Estudi General* with all its regulations), the books that Ignatius could have read, and the cultural ambience in which he moved (Lililianism and Erasmianism). This helps us to understand the way in which for two years the spiritual life of the Pilgrim was being remodeled, how his human relationships were developing for the *help of souls*, and what were the origins of deep friendships, and how from his life as a student the deepening and formulation of the experience of the *Exercises* benefitted.¹

After that more historical part, the following papers deal with two important aspects of the personality of Ignatius that are clearly manifested during his time in Barcelona. The paper of Gloria Andrés speaks to us about the network of relationships that he wove where there appears the ease of the Pilgrim in creating human relationships and friendships, an outstanding personal quality. Another paper by Lluís Ylla is an approach to the spirituality that the Pilgrim was developing during his studies and to the relationships with benefactresses and female friends in Barcelona, always trying *to help souls*. In short, these pages are a close look at the studies, at the human relationships and friendships and at the spirituality of Ignatius, three facets of one life that wanted to be faithful to God “in all things”. So, this publication completes the excellent and very useful Booklet by the Jesuit Miquel Lop, *Recuerdos ignacianos en Barcelona*, that was published by EIDES in 2005, a descriptive and exhaustive presentation of the passing of Ignatius through Barcelona.

The distance of the years that have passed should not distance us from the teaching, so significant for our life of today, that Ignatius left us during his passage through Barcelona. If the teaching of the Pilgrim has a universal

1. The pages by Laura Rios are a summary of an extensive and rigorous work with rich documentation, “Los estudios de Ignacio en Barcelona”, that is awaiting publication.

reach, it calls in a special way to those of us who move through the city about which Ignatius himself wrote these friendly and unforgettable words: “I have a greater burden and debt owed to this city of Barcelona than to any other town in this life.” In order to grasp this statement of Ignatius, we will be helped by the words of Psu Vidal, SJ, in the Epilogue which concludes these pages.

Josep M. Rambla Blanch, SJ

The Course of Study by Ignatius in Barcelona

Laura Rius

The Cultural Context of Barcelona at the Beginning of the 16th Century

To understand what Ignatius learned in Barcelona and the decisions he made, it is necessary to be familiar not only with his actions regarding his studies, but also the cultural context of the city.

At the beginning of the 16th century, Barcelona was still living with the aftereffects of the terrible black death (1348) and the Catalan civil war (1462-1472), in the preceding centuries, and it was not until half-way through this century that the economic and demographic recovery began. The social fabric was composed in its majority by those involved in agriculture and artisans, both groups having suffered severe poverty when wheat became scarce. There was also an incipient class of burghers, a notable proportion of clergy and a relatively small proportion of nobles.

This unfavorable situation was confirmed by the state of higher education, since in that era the *Estudi General* of Barcelona maintained a precarious existence. It was under the patronage of the *Consell de Cent* which guaranteed its independence from the power of the monarchy, but the economic scarcity limited the quality of the teaching chairs. Among the group of teachers, two currents of spiritual renovation were present: the thought of Ramon Llull, which had as its focus of dissemination the Llulian school of Barcelona, and Erasmianism, closely tied to the evolution of the humanist movement, in the *Estudi* itself. In these years, along with the *Devotio moderna* and its most representative work, *The Imitation of Christ*, both movements were spread among the cultured classes in the city, a spread that was facilitated by the fact that the Catalan Inquisition could not interfere very much, since it was seen as an instrument at the service of the Castilian monarchs. Perhaps it was for that reason that Barcelona was the only city where the Inquisition did not persecute Ignatius.

The religious panorama was somewhat deceptive. There was constant interaction among the civil authorities, the municipal authorities' and representatives of the Church. The state of the clergy and of the convents of women was disconcerting. These were the years of the so-called "non-resident bishops of Barcelona" who were the titular heads of the diocese but who lived in other places. At the level of the people, the "brotherhoods" concentrated on the distribution of alms and confession and communion to obtain indulgences. In the more cultured families, there was a certain disaffection for this environment, and they were desirous of a deeper spirituality, they were open to the *Devotio moderna* and they drew closer to the groups favoring renewal such as the Llulianists and the Erasmians.

The Pilgrim Begins to Study

Since he was not allowed to remain in Jerusalem as he had wanted to do, Ignatius became determined to go to study in Barcelona, a city where he had found friends and understanding during the three weeks of his stay in 1523 on the way to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, his first intention was to return to Manresa to take advantage spiritually of the help of a monk "of the order of St. Bernard" (Autobiography, 54 [hereafter abbreviated as Au.]). This was Antonio de Agurreta, from the monastery of St. Pau, who was wise and holy. When Ignatius learned that the Cistercian monk had died, he returned to Barcelona where Isabel Roser and Agnès Pasqual put him in contact with Jerom Ardèvol, a teacher of grammar and an important Humanist. Isabel Roser committed herself to providing him with whatever he needed and Agnès Pasqual to lodge him in her house. The teacher agreed to give him free lessons in Latin grammar and a well-known priest. Nicolay, who held the benefice of the church of Pi, offered to review the grammar lessons with Ignatius.

At the home of Agnès Pasqual, Ignatius had for his use the rich library of her brother, the priest Antonio Pujol. Nevertheless, to learn Latin grammar required him to take on some daily mental and physical habits which were very different from those which he had lived with until that time. He was a man of action who had never surrounded himself with books, he had never gone to classes nor memorized declensions although because of the education that he had received at Loyola and Arévalo he was fond of reading, writing and music and had good handwriting (Cf. Au 5, 6, 11). Difficulties appeared almost immediately because when he sat down to memorize, there appeared to him many spiritual visions that he could not reject and which im-

peded his learning the declensions (Cf. Au 54). His reaction when he became aware of the inner deception was to go to meet with Ardèvol (Cf. Au 55) in the church of Santa María del Mar and promised him that he would go to listen to him for a period of two years because Ignatius had already taken on studies as a means to the service of the Lord.

The *Estudi General*

The place where Ardèvol taught, the *Estudi General* of the city, near the house of Agnès Pasqual, had become active in 1507 and in the following year (1508) an ordinance of studies was established which gave it a legal framework for functioning. This ordinance was the embryo of the future university and very probably the ordinance which was in effect in the years of St. Ignatius since there does not exist proof of any other.

In the *Estudi*, the Arts curriculum had four departments: Grammar, Logic, Natural Philosophy and Moral Philosophy and it was to be completed in four years. Classes began on October 18, the feast of St. Luke, and lasted until the month of July inclusive. The classes were free for the students even though they were asked for a small amount for the repair of the furnishings and for rent and a salary for the officers of the *Estudi*. In addition to the professors, the ordinance of 1508 included the person of a special tutor if the student requested his services and for whom the student himself would have to pay. In the period between 1508 and 1559 the majority of the professors in the grammar classes were laymen.

So, Ignatius began the study of Latin grammar in the *Estudi* as a personal disciple of the repetition teacher Ardèvol from the Spring of 1524 until October 1525. He formed part of the grammar classes of Ardèvol during 1525-1526, sharing the classrooms with other students. Years later some of the students remembered that when others made fun of Ignatius and they bothered him, he reacted with patience, charity and humility.

The Texts and the Study Plan

The ordinances of 1508 indicated also the materials for study. The main works were the *Introductiones latinae* of the Humanist Antonio de Nebrija, the *Aeneid* by Virgil and some others that assumed continuity with the thought of the Middle Ages.

The schedule of the classes was from Monday to Friday from 6 to 11AM, and from 1 to 6PM. On Saturday the classes were from 6 to 10AM and in the afternoons each teacher repeated his classes from 1 to 5 PM. There were also classes on Sunday and feast days, but only in the morning from 6 to 9AM.

At the end of the course in 1526, professor Ardèvol told Ignatius that he was now ready to take the courses in Arts and that he should do it in Alcalá. Ignatius allowed himself to be examined by a doctor in theology who had been recommended by Ardèvol (Au 56), and in the middle of July, he left Barcelona.

The Franciscan Influence

The assistance and enlightenment by the Spirit were clear throughout the life of Ignatius. But this wealth of spiritual gifts did not mean that Ignatius was living in isolation, impervious to everything around him and to the great variety of people who surrounded him. These were a source of inspiration, and at the same time an echo of the culture of the times. This influence, far from stifling his originality, lifted it up because only a powerful personality can integrate creatively contemporary influences, offering as a result a path to human fulfillment. One of these influences was that of St. Francis of Assisi. Franciscan experiences accompanied Ignatius from his infancy in Azpeitia, continuing through the years of his service to the Duke of Nájera, and were also present at the time of his conversion at Loyola. When he arrived in Barcelona, he had as his confessor Diego de Alcántara, a Franciscan friar from the monastery of Jesús, located outside of the walls of Barcelona. Without a doubt, the relationship Ignatius had with him maintained alive the flame of the intense desire that he had to go to Palestine, and the profound and tender love he felt for the humanity of Jesus, as well as poverty. These were aspects that were kept alive in the following years when he was concretizing the charism of the Society.

Llulism

As has been said above, in the cultural atmosphere and the social life of 16th century Barcelona, Llulism carried significant weight. The richness of the elements of the system of thought of Ramón Lull (1232-1316) which he called “Art”, spread out among the European intellectuals until the 17th century,

branching out according to whichever of its aspects (rationalism, criticism, mysticism) was being emphasized. It was a dissemination that was a response to the profound thirst for spirituality that was being felt by large sectors of society, especially the laity. Thus, with the creation of Llulian circles, there was extended a current of mysticism all around the Mediterranean with a very specific characteristic: it promoted a spirituality that was integral, human, social and practical. This spirituality, driven by love, looked to become concretized in deeds and from that came enthusiasm for reforming customs.

One of the centers of this spirituality was the Lulian school of Barcelona whose formational activity began in the middle of the 14th century and by the end of the 15th was the most important on the peninsula, the nucleus toward which the rest of the centers flowed. The school continued to be active until the end of the 16th century, and Llulism was very much present among the professors of the *Estudi General* of the city, A significant number of the benefactors of Ignatius were important members of one of the Lulian circles gathered around the outstanding Llulist Joan Bonilavi. Agnès Pasqual and Isabel Roser were the ones who introduced Ignatius into this circle of friends.²

This group of lay people on a spiritual search were in harmony with the inclinations of Ignatius, also a layman. Very probably it was thanks to the oral communication and the reading of works that had been supplied by them – since they had at their disposition an exceptional Lulian library – that Ignatius had contact with Lulian thought which helped him to formulate some aspect of his spiritual experience. There have been many studies done about the influence of the thought of Ramón Llull in drawing up the book of *Spiritual Exercises*.³ Most of these are centered on the method of prayer of the three potencies, on expressions in the Principle and Foundation or in the Contemplation to Obtain Love. Despite the diversity of opinions concerning the concrete repercussions of the influence of Llull, it is undeniable that the context made it possible.

2. It is clear that there was a series of persons and families that formed part of this Llulian circles: Bernat Sapila, Frederic de Gualbes, Elionor Ferrer, Isabel Recasens, Estefania Recasens, Guiomar d'Hostalric, Hipólita Rois de Montcada, Aldonza de Cardona, Isabel de Josa.

3. It is enough to underscore the studies of J. de Guibert, M. March, J. Sabater, J. M. Benítez Riera, all of which are cited in the study of Note 1.

The *Devotio Moderna* and the Books of Spirituality

Despite the impossibility of reaching any conclusive statements, scholars maintain that “it is incontrovertible that in Barcelona Ignatius could read or know about some books that were published in that city and that spoke a language with which he was familiar.”⁴ In addition to the libraries of his benefactors, Ignatius could also have been familiar with those of Santa Maria del Mar and Santa Maria del Pi. The catalogs demonstrate that books printed in Barcelona in Castilian were very rare. One of them, written anonymously, but with a Catalan author and bearing the imprint of the firm of Amorós, had the title *Brevíssimo atajo e arte de amar a Dios, con otro arte de contemplar e algunas otras reglas breves para ordenar la piensa en el amor de Dios* [A very Brief short-cut and art of loving God, with another art of contemplation and some short rules to order the thought on the love of God].⁵ It is a breviary of contemplation and it is the only one of its kind printed in Castilian in Barcelona. It probably circulated through the city as one of the first books of the reforming movement, the *Devotio moderna*, which for its contemporaries was synonymous with modernity. It has three parts: a “short-cut to acquire perfection in the contemplative life”; an “art of contemplating”; and several serious exercises to order one’s thoughts to the service of God, which contained some rules for ordering “thought”. The Christocentrism is clear, and it is focused on the contemplation of the passion of Christ. The affinity of the focus, contents and expressions with the Exercises is important. It is easy to imagine that a book of this type would be recommended by his spiritual friends, considering also that when he arrived in Barcelona, Ignatius was not fluent in either Latin or Catalan.

Erasmism

The penetration of Erasmism in Barcelona during the years of Ignatius’s stay in the city was limited to families who were well-off with noted names like Miquel Mai and Frederic de Gualbes, and also to the circle of professors at the *Estudi General*, Martin Ivarra and Arnau de Sant Joan. There was not a clear

4. J. RUBIO, *Humanisme i Renaixement*. Publicacions de l’Abadia de Montserrat (Barcelona, 1990), p. 109.

5. Cf. J. RUBIO, *Notas sobre los libros de lectura espirituales en Barcelona entre 1500 y 1530*, in AHSI, 1956, p. 321.

separation between the cells of followers of Lull and those of Erasmus, Mai was a fan of the religious reform that was promoted in Barcelona, along with Duke Ferran de Cardona, the Zuñiga-Requesens couple and the “maestro racional”⁶ Francesc Gralla, all of whom were patrons of Ignatius. The library of Miquel Mai contained more than 2000 volumes, including more than 50 of the works of Erasmus. It was the largest collection of all the libraries in the city. Among many other volumes, it had six editions of the *Enchiridion militis christiani*, the first one published in 1506, and two editions of the *Colloquia*.

Differently from his familiarity with Ramon Lull that Ignatius never mentioned at all, some memoirs of Ignatius himself speak to us about his reading of Erasmus and the negative effect that it produced in him.⁷ However, the influence of the *Enchiridion* seems to be evident in the Principle and Foundation of the *Exercises*, as well as at other points in the Ignatian text.⁸ The texts do not coincide regarding the moment of contact with Erasmus by Ignatius. Câmara places it in Alcalá,⁹ but Ribadeneira and Polanco state that Ignatius read it in Barcelona.¹⁰ The recent publication of the immense library of Miquel Mai, which contained the books by Erasmus whose influence is perceived in Ignatius, probably confirms the option of Barcelona. This is an objective bit of data that is consistent with the motivation that Ignatius offers for his reading: he was counseled to do so by pious and learned men in order to learn the Latin language.

Conclusion

In Barcelona, Ignatius entered a network of friendships where the concerns about spiritual renewal were alive. As in any relationship, the influence was reciprocal. Let’s remember that when he arrived in Jerusalem, after having been in Barcelona for only three weeks, the only letters that Ignatius wrote

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6. “Maestro racional” was a post within the political and fiscal organization of the Crown of Aragon, the person who was responsible for the treasury of several kingdoms.
 7. Cf. Pedro RIBADENEIRA, *Vita Ignatii Louolae. Textus Latinus et hispanus*. Book I, Chapter XIII, *Fontes Narrativi* IV, pp. 173-175.
 8. Cf. P. CEBOLLADA, “Loyola y Erasmo. Aportaciones al estudio de la relación entre ambos.” *Manresa* 62 (1990), pp. 49-60.
 9. *Fontes Narrativi*, I, 585. Luis GONÇALVES DE CÂMARA, *Recuerdos ignacianos. Memorial de Luis Gonçalves de Cámera*. Mensajero-Sal Terrae (Bilbao-Santander, 1992), p. 93.
 10. Juan DE POLANCO, *De Vita P. Ignatii*, Chapter V, No. 37, *Fontes Narrativi* II, p. 543.

were to “spiritual persons” of the city (Cf. Au 46), a sign of the impact they had had on him. Upon returning to Barcelona, through his relationship with the people in the Lulian and Erasmian cells who were attracted by the spiritual renewal of the *Devotio moderna* present in the city, Ignatius had some contact with authors who helped him to formulate his spiritual experience. At the same time, Ignatius helped them to strengthen their own Christian life, their spirituality and their initiatives to aid others.

When in February 1528 he arrived in Paris, and until the end of the academic year 1528-1529, he returned to the study of Grammar along with the youngest students because he probably had not learned very much as a Latinist. However, in Barcelona, besides the spiritual progress that he had experienced there, the influence of the religious culture was considerable. Because if at Montserrat Ignatius’s encounter with the *Devotio moderna* had been providential for the spiritual experience that he had formed into the Exercises, his stay in Barcelona accomplished the same thing. Besides the *Devotio moderna*, the Llulian and Erasmian circles, the promoters of a needed spiritual renewal, offered him elements that were gradually integrated into the profound mystagogy of the Exercises. Afterwards, in Paris and Venice, with his studies in theology, Ignatius concretized and developed what had begun to gestate in Barcelona.

For this reason, the well-known words of Ignatius to Jaume Caçador (“It seems to me, and I don’t doubt, that I owe to the city of Barcelona more of a debt than to any other town in my life”¹¹) take on a broader meaning, because they are not limited to expressing gratitude for the material help he had received, but also they recognize the intellectual and spiritual gifts that he found there and which led to his growth.

11. *Epp.* I, 96; *Obras de San Ignacio de Loyola*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos (Madrid, 2013), p. 660.

A Network of Human Relationships

Glòria Andrés

Introduction

If Manresa was for Ignatius his primitive church, Barcelona was the place where he established a genuine network of friendships, both social and spiritual, consonant with his great facility for making personal relationships. In reality, his “great, noble and generous spirit” stood out for “knowing how to deal with the spirits of men, especially in pacifying differences and discord” according to his secretary and confidante J. A. de Polanco.¹² Additionally, in Barcelona, he initiated also an incipient relationship with a community which, even if it did not have a long life, surely left a mark on an Ignatius who was searching for concrete applications in his life.

Nevertheless, before taking a closer look at the people with whom he had relationships during the long period of the two years that he spent in Barcelona, we have to remember that Iñigo had already spent some 20 days there when he was preparing his journey to Jerusalem (Cf. Au 35).

During his first stay, while looking for spiritual persons, he visited several monasteries (Cf. Au 37) such as Sant Jeroni in Collserona, the hermitages scattered in the area of Sant Genis dels Agudells, like the hermitage of Sant Cebrià y Santa Justina in the Vall d’Hebron, and various monasteries in the city where he became aware of the little faithfulness to the monastic vocation that was being lived there, a fact that later inspired him to urge their reform.

We obtain familiarity with the world of Ignatius’s relationships in Barcelona mostly through the letters that he himself wrote to people in the city whether it might be from Patis, Venice or Rome. We also have the testimonies of people from Barcelona that were gathered for the processes of his beatification and canonization.

12. J. DE POLANCO, *Summarium Hispanum*, No. 5-6, FNI I, pp. 155-156.

Reviewing the letters that are conserved, we realize the very special relationship that Ignatius had with Barcelona. If we reread this correspondence, our attention is drawn to the fact that of the first twelve letters that have been conserved, eight were sent to people in Barcelona, with some of whom he would maintain a correspondence for the rest of his life.¹³

Some Outstanding Names

Agnès Pasqual

The first person who stands out is Agnès Pasqual. Born in Manresa, she first met Iñigo on March 25, 1522, as he was coming down from Montserrat. Married for the second time to Pere Pasqual, a cotton seller in Barcelona, she had a house in Manresa and another in Barcelona that was more modest with a storefront on a corner of Cotoners Street very close to Santa María del Mar. Agnès had been a widow since 1521. Her brother Antoni Pujol, along with Joan(et) Sagristà Pasqual, his wife and his daughters were the nuclear family of Iñigo in the city since it was in their house where he was lodged the entire time that he resided in Barcelona. During his stay in the city, Iñigo not only studied, he felt the call to help the people who were experiencing need. For that reason he begged for alms not only in Santa María del Mar, but also by visiting the houses of the well-to-do in the city, sometimes accompanied by Agnès Pasqual, and at the same time the places that were frequented by disreputable people.¹⁴ The visits to the houses of the well-to-do, in addition to serving as a means to get help for the poor with whom he dealt, made possible the establishment of a wide range of very warm relationships with people who collaborated with him both in his formation and his activities. The first letter that is conserved, written from Barcelona, is addressed to Agnès Pasqual. In it we can already grasp the way that he had to relate to his friends, always looking for spiritual growth without forgetting about practicalities.

13. 1a. To Agnès Pasqual, December 6, 1524; 2a. To Agnès Pasqual, March 3, 1528; 4a. To Isabel Roser, November 10, 1532; 5a. To Agnès Pasqual, June 13, 1533; 6a. To Jaume Caçador, February 12, 1536; 7a. To Teresa Rajadell, June 18, 1536; 8a. To Teresa Rajadell, September 11, 1536; 12a, To Joan de Verdolay, July 24, 1537.

14. M. A. SÁEZ GARCÍA, *Poder y autoridad femenina en el siglo xvi. Isabel de Josa* (1490-1564). Centro de Estudios Políticos y constitucionales (Madrid, 2022), pp. 47-50.

It seems fitting to me that I should write this to you because of the desires that I have seen in you for the service of the Lord. [...] And so, for the love of our Lord, let us strive for Him because we owe Him so much that we shall tire much sooner of receiving His gifts than He in giving them to us.

The letter continues by speaking of a Portuguese man, Calixto de Sa, who shared with Iñigo that first desire for a common life, but which did not get very far:

A pilgrim named Calixto is in Barcelona, to whom I greatly wanted you to communicate our affairs, because in truth it may be that you find in him more than what appears to exist.¹⁵

A short time after arriving in Paris, Ignatius wrote her another letter which was very relaxed with a very affectionate tone.

Considering the good will and love that in Christ, our Lord, you have always felt toward me, and in your works that you have shown to me, I thought I should write this letter to you, and by means of it to let you know about my journey after I left you. With fair weather and the good health of my person, through the grace and goodness of God, our Lord, I arrived in this city of Paris on the second of February, where I am now studying until it pleases our Lord to ordain something else.¹⁶

Finally, Agnès was one of the people who coordinated the aid that Ignatius received from Barcelona for his studies in Paris.

Isabel Roser

She was the wife of Joan Roser (or Roses). She met Iñigo during his brief stay in Barcelona on his way to Jerusalem. On that occasion, while Iñigo was attending Mass in the Iglesia dels Sants Just i Pastor, his way of being present at the celebration caught the attention of Isabel who, when she left the church, pressed her husband to invite him to the house to eat, so that she could get to know a person who had seemed to be special and to converse with him. From

15. *Epp.* I, 71-72. *Obras*, pp. 651-652.

16. *Epp.* I, pp. 74-76.

that point, there began a relationship which was maintained until Isabel's death in 1554.

There are thirteen extant letters sent from Ignatius to Isabel Roser between 1532 and 1550. Already in the first one, dated November 10, 1532, during the time of his studies in Paris, there can be perceived the good relationship that they had. Iñigo commented on matters of health, of the coordination of donations given by several people who had offered to help him in his studies, and he even gives her spiritual advice. In this first letter he commented:

If I do not do what God our Lord obliges me to do for all my benefactors, then may his righteous and just justice not pardon me; so much more with the debt that I owe to your persons [...] I owe more to you than to all the other people that I have met in this life.¹⁷

The second letter, dated December 19, 1538, is also very long, and constitutes an essential testimony concerning the first period of Ignatius in Rome:

I gave myself entirely to giving and communicating spiritual exercises to others, both inside and outside of Rome. [...] All the others were preaching in the Italian language and I only in Spanish. For all the sermons there was a large crowd of people, and considerably more than we thought would attend. [...] I can only say that there are four or five who are determined to be one of our Company, and they have persevered in that determination for many days and months. We do not dare to admit them, because this was a point brought up by others, that is, that we should not recruit others and that we seemed to be forming a congregation or a religion without obtaining apostolic authority to do so.¹⁸

In a postscript, Ignatius sent a final judgment of absolution so that it could be passed on to Jaume Caçador, the future bishop of Barcelona:

For the archdeacon Caçador I am sending (because it is in Latin) the same declaration that was given here about us, which he will communicate to you.¹⁹

17. *Epp.* I, 85; *Obras*, p. 656.

18. *Epp.* I, pp. 137-144.

19. *Ibid.*

After her husband died in 1541, Isabel Roser felt called to share in the mission of Ignatius and become a member of the Society of Jesus. In order to get what she wanted, she went to Rome with two companions, Francesca Cruyllas and Isabel de Josa. Ignatius was opposed to this, but she had recourse to Pope Paul III who authorized her petition and obliged Ignatius to accept it thus creating a feminine branch of the Society. Finally, at Christmas of 1545, through a solemn profession of vows, Isabel Roser, Francisca Cruyllas and Lucrezia de Brandine, an Italian who had joined with the others, became a part of the Society. On the other hand, Isabel de Josa, for unknown reasons, abandoned her proposal. The limitation on apostolic mobility that supposed her being under obedience to some female religious, and some misunderstandings and suspicions of Isabel because of her economic aid to the Society, made the viability of this female branch extremely difficult. In the Spring of 1546, the Pope freed the Society of having “responsibility for women with a vow of obedience”. Ignatius himself notified her of the decision in a letter dated October 1, 1546:

It is true that for the greater glory of God I want to satisfy your good desires and have you under obedience as you have been for some time up to the present. [...] But not finding in my power the strength to do for it as I desire, because of my frequent infirmities and concerns about other things for which I have my principal obligation to God, our Lord, and [...] seeing, in accord with my conscience, that it is not fitting for this least Society to have special responsibility for women with a vow of obedience [...] it seemed to me for the greater divine glory to withdraw and separate myself from this care of having you as a spiritual daughter under obedience, but having you rather as a good and pious mother that you have been for me many times. [...] I remit you to the most prudent judgment, ordering and will of the holiness of the Sovereign Pontiff so that your soul may remain peaceful and consoled for the greater glory of God.²⁰

Finally, Isabel Roser returned to Barcelona in 1549 and entered the monastery of Santa María de Jerusalem where she lived until her death. Nevertheless, it seems that her spirit continued to be deeply united to that of Ignatius, as can be seen at the end of a long letter that was surely his last:

20. *Epp* I, pp. 424-425.

It is with great relief that I am letting you know about all that has happened and to confide to you that often my spirit speaks to yours. Might it please the divine goodness that my spirit would resemble yours, that would do my soul good.²¹

Teresa Rajadell

During his stay in Barcelona, Iñigo was deeply involved in the reform of some monasteries of women religious both inside and outside of the city. When he visited them, he realized that they were living in a way that was not evangelical. Religious life, and especially that of the monastery of Santa Clara, had already undergone some reform. The monastery, founded in 1233 as a monastery of the Clarisas, was reformed in 1427, embracing the rule of St. Benedict.

As was the custom in the monasteries of women religious, the distinguished daughters of the Catalan nobility had their own servants who lived with them. They had arrived at the point where they would celebrate their solemn profession with a dance in the monastery, a fact that easily allowed the entrance of secular persons (men). During the time of Iñigo, there were inside of that monastery a small group of some eleven nuns who wanted a canonical spiritual reform. Teresa Rajadell was the soul of this group of women, together with the prioress, Jerónima Oluja.

In Ignatius, Teresa found a teacher and Ignatius had found in her a person for him to help in her desire to live the consecrated life in depth. There are four letters to Teresa Rajadell that have been conserved, and two more that were addressed to the same Teresa and to Jerónima Oluja together. The letters addressed to Teresa are a true example of how Iñigo put into practice what he had experienced, discovered and written in his book of the *Exercises*. And in the collection of letters, there is revealed a fine naturalness and closeness in treatment of the women. The first of these letters, dated June 18, 1536. is especially long. In it we find a very explicit testimony of the way of proceeding of the saint when he detailed for Teresa a commentary and application of the rules of discernment with some notes about scruples:

And as to the first point, the usual course that the enemy takes with those who love and begin to serve God our Lord is to place impediments and obstacles before them and that is the first weapon with which he manages

21. *Epp.* Mixt IV, p. 150.

to wound. [...] Later the enemy attempts it with the second weapon, that is with boastfulness or vain glory, letting the soul understand that there is much good and holiness in it, placing it in a much higher place than it deserves. [...] Thus, he manages to get us not to speak about the good things received from our Lord. [...] So, in making ourselves humble, he manages to bring us to a false humility, that is to say, to an extreme and snobbish humility. Of these your words bear apt witness. [...] This [consolation] shows us and opens the way for us that we should follow, fleeing from the opposite thing. This does not always remain in us but it is more likely to walk always its own orderly path, and all of this for our benefit.²²

The center of this correspondence with Teresa Rajadell and Jerónima Oluja is the difficulty of reform. They wanted to live under the protection of the Society as is shown in the letter of the prioress Jerónima Oluja to Ignatius, sent from Barcelona on January 10, 1549:

Very dear and much-loved Father in Christ our Lord. I believe that Your Paternity has already been informed by our father the Licenciado,²³ whom our Lord in his infinite mercy has willed to be in Barcelona, about our tribulations and needs [...] I cannot help being importune in begging again for what you wish to counsel and recommend about how we can obtain being ruled, sent and subject in every way in obedience to you and your holy Society.²⁴

The request for protection was rejected by Ignatius and communicated to the two of them in a letter dated April 5, 1549:

By the letters that I have from there sent by various persons, I see how God our Lord has visited difficulties upon them, giving not a little occasion for exercising the virtues which divine goodness has given to them, and to demonstrate the solidity of those virtues in the difficult things. [...] May it please Jesus Christ, who has done and suffered so much for all of us, to give copious graces so that their suffering might be fruitful. [...] Although in our Society, as one of the many obligations which it holds especially dear in our Lord, there may be the will in accordance with our profession to console

22. *Epp.* I, pp. 99-107; *Obras*, pp. 662-666.

23. This was certainly Fr. Araoz, one of the first Jesuits who resided in Barcelona.

24. *Epp.* Mixt II, pp. 30-32.

and serve you, the vicar of Christ has closed the door on our taking on any governance or superintendency of female religious. [...] So then, I believe that this remedy does not please God our Lord in any way, and I hope in his infinite goodness, that a more suitable way be found to come to what you desire, and all of us desire in our Lord, His peace and special consolation.²⁵

But Ignatius did not give up completely. Through the new bishop of Barcelona, Jaume Caçador, he urged from Rome a third attempt at reform which again was unsuccessful.

Jaume Caçador

Born in Vic in 1484, Jaume Caçador was at first the archdeacon of the cathedral of Barcelona and later, bishop of the same diocese between 1546 and 1561. In a long letter, written by Ignatius from Venice on February 12, 1536, we can see as always, that way of proceeding that was so characteristic of him, mixing the care of souls (especially those of the nuns of the monastery of Santa Clara) with practical items.

Having read the letter written by you on January 5, not only did I find pleasure in it, but it also caused me to feel a lot of pain, seeing in it such adverse things. [...] Regarding this, five or six things have occurred to me, to which you might respond. [...]

First, Isabel Roser has written to me that by next April she will make provisions for me so that I can finish my studies. [...]

Third. Regarding the health of Fr. Claret [...] I wish only that you help him in dealing with his inner health and with the disposition of everything else that God our Lord has given him in this life.

Fourth. The desire that you have to see me there, preaching in public, is certainly the same desire that I have and which lives inside me [...] once finished with my studies which will be a year from this present Lent. I hope that I will not be detained [...] because it seems to me, without a doubt, that I have a greater burden and debt with the city of Barcelona than with any other town in my life.

25. *Epp.* II, pp. 374-375; *Obras*, pp. 761-762.

Fifth. I find to be certain, and it is a general rule for myself, that when I meet with another person, although he may be a great sinner, I am the one who gains more and finds it to be to my advantage, to communicate the things of God our Lord.

Sixth. Regarding what you have written to me about the monastery of Santa Clara [...] it is true that I would very much like to be among those sisters if in some way I could make an impression on the foundation of their exercises and way of proceeding. [...] We can only cry and pray for the greater health of their conscience and of all the others. His divine goodness wished to put things in order and not allow the enemy of human nature to receive such a victory against them, since with his most precious Blood he bought them so dearly and rescued all of them.²⁶

Later, on November 9, 1546, Jaume Caçador, now a bishop, wrote to Ignatius to make him aware of how the difficult reforms of the monastery of Santa Clara were going, the fruit that comes from the *Exercises*, and other news.

I received your letter with great consolation having heard not only about your health but also about the exercises and the fruit that has been produced and that even more is to be expected from the Society. A short time ago I received a letter from Señora Roser which was written in May and telling me how she had been admitted to your company [...] for the reform of the monasteries of nuns in that city and throughout the Principality. They have a great need for that and more cannot be said [...] seeing how profanely they live. Making them take the correct road is more difficult than performing miracles. Formed persons are not to be found, so who will reform them? [...] I find myself too weak to take on that great responsibility. Being weak, your prayers will help me, and I do not cease making you a participant in mine.²⁷

These letters that are so intimate, addressed to Ignatius in Catalan, are a sign of the great confidence and naturalness to which this relationship had arrived and the friendship between the bishop and the pilgrim.

26. *Epp.* I, pp. 93-99; *Obras*, pp. 658-661.

27. *Epp.* Mixt I, pp. 321-323.

This was a young man who after the death of Ignatius would enter the Society of Jesus. Only one letter has been conserved from Ignatius addressed to him from Venice and dated July 24, 1537. It seems that they had a good relationship because in the introduction it says:

I wrote to you about two years ago, but I have not had a letter from you nor any news until now. About three months ago Isabel Roser told me about your health and your doctrine that is so good and sound. At the same time, she told me that you had written to me and that you greatly desired to hear from me.²⁸

In this letter is found the expression “friends in the Lord”. It was the only time that it was used by Ignatius, but afterwards it would be used a great deal by his followers:

From Paris there arrived here in the middle of January nine friends of mine in the Lord, all are Masters of Arts, and well versed in theology. Four of them are Spaniards, two French, two from Savoy and one from Portugal.²⁹

Included among the friends were the Spaniards Francisco Javier, Diego Laínez, Alfonso Salmerón and Nicolás Bobadilla, the Frenchmen Pascal Broët and Jean Cordure, the Savoyards Pierre Favre and Claude Jay and the Portuguese Simon Rodrigues. It is a letter full of familiarity and cordiality with Joan Verdolay, but at the same time a revelation by Saez García of “in the Lord”, a profound link between Ignatius and his companions in Paris, a human and spiritual friendship at the same time.

The Wide Network of his Relationships

Even though we might not have letters addressed personally to them, we must mention other people with whom Iñigo established good relationships. Among the visits to the monasteries of the city to pray and to have spiritual conversations, exactly as has been said, one of those that he visited fre-

28. *Epp.* I, pp. 118-119; *Obras*, pp. 669-672.

29. *Ibid.*

quently was that of Sant Maties, of the sisters of St. Jerome, located in the present-day Plaza del Pedró. This monastery had a relationship with the husband of Isabel Roser. Pere Ferrer, who in managing the estate of the father of Isabel Roser, distributed money to various nuns in the family who belonged to that monastery. There were also in this monastery nuns who were anxious for reform like Brigida Vicent, Esperança Grau and Antonia Estrada who “knew father Ignatius and treated him with familiarity,” and who received from him several relics when he returned from the Holy Land.³⁰

By means of the first letter to Agnès Pasqual, dated June 13, 1533, we know the names of other people who were present in Iñigo’s life in Barcelona:

So, then, I write also to Sepilla, who in a letter she wrote me offered herself wholeheartedly to help me, generously saying that I should write to her for what I needed. When I left there, the wife of Mosén Gralla made a generous offer to me to help me as much as she could in my studies and she has always done so. At the same time, I received offers from doña Isabel de Josa and doña Aldonça de Cardona, and the latter has helped me generously. I am not writing to these three so that I do not seem to be importunate, but I ask you to recommend me much to them and also to doña Gralla. I think that when you tell her about me, she will want to participate in the alms given to me. In this matter and in everything else, do whatever you think is best and I will consider it well done. I will always be happy because I will always be in your debt and in the future will be under an obligation to you.³¹

Some of the people who are mentioned, among others, are Bernat Sever Ferrer, his wife. Elionor Sapila,³² their daughter Estefanía, and their granddaughter, the nun Estefanía de Rocaberti who brought together around her a spiritual circle with a marked Ignatian footprint.³³ And also Isabel de Requesens who was one of the people who provided Ignatius with what he needed

30. *Scripta* II, p. 334.

31. *Epp.* I, pp. 90-91.

32. “A woman named Zapila [...] a very rich woman, [...] seeing Ignatius begging for alms, said to our blessed Father how she regretted his situation. [...] Our blessed Father, with great gentleness and modesty responded that it was true, that he was the worst man in the world. At this response which was so gentle and humble [...] she felt sorry [...] and she ordered him to be given a large quantity of bread and other things for his trip, and from that time she remained devoted to the saint.”

33. M. A. SÁEZ GARCÍA, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

during his stay in Barcelona,³⁴ Guiomar d'Hostalric, Aldonça de Cardona and Isabel de Josa.

Joan Pasqual, referring to the visits that Ignatius received while he was convalescing in his house, said:

All the best people in Barcelona visited him in the house, both ladies and gentlemen, and they all gifted him with many things, especially the ladies mentioned above, and the one who gave him more than anyone else was Isabel de Josa.³⁵

Isabel de Josa, already a widow, met Iñigo during his second stay in Barcelona. Both she and Isabel Roser understood in a special way the spirit of Ignatius in service to the poor that went along with his desire to help souls. As I said above, in 1543 they traveled to Rome to be near the nascent Society of Jesus. Later, Isabel de Josa, a woman with a notable philosophical and theological background, as well as a great capacity for undertaking things, began an independent apostolic life, different from the option taken by Isabel Roser.

The Authentic Ignatius

In Barcelona, in addition to the studies that were later to take him from Alcalá and Salamanca to Paris and Venice, Ignatius began to weave a network of personal relationships and friendships that would be broadened for the rest of his life. They were relationships in which friends helped each other in both spiritual things and in practical and material things; they are integral friendships of those who are walking together, who help each other to grow, to mature and whom they will accompany for all their lives, each one from their own state and vocation for the greater glory of God. As Hugo Rahner said, “if we do not take that friendship into account, we would disfigure the picture of our saint.”³⁶

34. *Scripta* II, p. 638.

35. *Scripta* II, p. 93.

36. Hugo RAHNER, *Cartas de Ignacio de Loyola con mujeres de su tiempo*, José García de Castro, SJ (edit.), Mensajero-Sal Terrae-Comillas, Bilbao-Santander-Madrid, 2023, p. 642.

The Spiritual Life of Ignatius

Lluís Ylla

Introduction

The spiritual life is lived beyond observation. It forms a part of what is secret. We have signs of it by one's way of looking,³⁷ by one's behavior, by how one lives. Perception is based on the facts, by the way of life, more by what we radiate than by what we say or write. The Ignatius who was wounded at Pamplona, who at Loyola put his whole life back together and started his journey, and the Ignatius who climbed up to Montserrat and came down to Manresa, who later passed through Barcelona to go to Jerusalem, who when he was not able to stay there returned to Barcelona to study, found himself fully engaged in a spiritual search. He felt he had "a generous soul inflamed by God" (Au 9), profoundly captivated by what he had discovered.

The Ignatius who arrived in 1523 for the first time in Barcelona and who returned in 1524 to study was a man who was especially devout, centered on what was inside of him, on the experience that he had had since his conversion at Loyola that had been molded and illuminated at Manresa. He had already begun to elaborate his own comprehension of Christianity, of the Gospel lived in the Church. We have some references to it from when he was in Manresa and during his stay in Barcelona where he gave exercises and exposed his thoughts. Shortly after finishing his studies in this city, he explains in his Autobiography that in Alcalá "he occupied himself in giving spiritual exercises and in expounding Christian doctrine" (Au 57). What he had already propounded and transmitted in Barcelona was the fruit of a long maturation and distillation of the experience where we could find traces of the devotional practices of his infancy and youth in Loyola and Arévalo,

37. Araoz will say that at the end of a few years "from time to time his face would shine" while the priest preached the sermon at Sants Just i Pastor. *Quaedam de S. Ignatio quae non sunt impressa*, FN III, pp. 205-206.

of the great interior experiences of Pamplona, Loyola, Montserrat, Manresa, Jerusalem, of the numerous spiritual encounters, conversations (Cf. Au 37, 54) and readings which he had enjoyed.³⁸

The young adult Iñigo who returned to Barcelona in the middle of March, 1524, was a man who had lived half of his life.³⁹ Nonetheless, he returned having lived through a new sunset to his ambitions when he could not remain in the Holy Land. As we would say today, “he had to reinvent himself” without any great external points of reference that he could use. But he had the clear desire to “study for a time in order to be able to help souls” (Au 50).

Ignatius on a Search

This time Barcelona was not going to be a place to pass through on his way to Jerusalem (Cf. Au 8), but rather a place to stay for a length of time that in March 1524 was still to be decided. He returned to a place that he knew with the objective of studying. His search, so open-ended when he had come the year before, now had a more concrete orientation. His goal of “helping souls” required him to be formed and to be formed presupposed some concrete studies, beginning with grammar.

But, to be formed for what? With this goal of helping souls, did that not mean, as for so many people with similar goals, becoming a religious or a priest? In his Autobiography he stated when he was in Salamanca:

When the pilgrim in Barcelona thought about whether to study and how much, his whole thing was whether after he had studied, would he enter religion or would he just wander about the world (Au 71)?

He knew some of the religious orders and congregations and also the diocesan church of the time. It is possible he had contact with them in the court of Castile, at Loyola, in Montserrat and at Manresa. Ignatius knew the Benedictines, the Cistercians, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Hieronymites etc. He had the idea of entering one of them (Cf. Au 12) “And taking stock of his situation concerning what he would do when he came back from Je-

38. *Vita Christi* and *Vidas de santos*, the *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* by Cisneros, the *Imitation of Christ*, etc.

39. Ignatius began his studies in Barcelona when he was thirty-three years old. In the 16th century life expectancy was between 25 and 35 years.

rusalem so as to always live a life of penitence, he considered entering the Carthusian monastery in Seville.” He also could have continued in an ecclesiastical career.⁴⁰ We do not have any evidence that he thought about entering any congregation during the time he resided in Barcelona nor that he sought to be incardinated in any diocese. His concern was centered more on the interior life which he had discovered than on religious and social knowledge or structures. When he intervened to correct the bad example that he saw in some religious women, it seems that he did it more so that they would live their religious vocation with fidelity and “to suffer more in it” (Au 71) than as a question of organizational reform.

Later, as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus in Rome, in an organization that did not stop growing within a universal Church with all the complex and contradictory aspects of institutions, his interests in those aspects will have more relevance in his life. But the Iñigo of Barcelona was a person who wanted to change his life, who was in the process of changing his life, and was looking for a greater availability to the action of God, avoiding detours from what he thought he should be doing. Nevertheless, he did not “go off on his own”. He placed himself humbly in the Christian tradition and was assiduous in prayer, going to Mass frequently, confessing and placing himself under obedience to his confessor.

He is Helped and Helping

In Barcelona, when he returned from the Holy Land, he was again welcomed into the house of Agnès Pasqual where they accommodated him in the small bedroom of their son. He had a small table for studying and he slept on the floor or on some wooden planks, without either mattress or sheets.⁴¹

In Barcelona, Ignatius received help from many people – men, and especially women – who offered him their patronage for his studies and his material life with alms in kind and in coin, and he accepted “all that his humility permitted him”.⁴² Master Ardèvol taught him free of charge (Cf. Au 54).

40. Concerning his familiarity with the ecclesiastical world and the possibility of having received the clerical tonsure, see C. DE DALMASES, *El Padre Maestro Ignacio. Breve biografía ignaciana*. BAC (Madrid, 1986), pp. 11-12; 29.

41. We have today, preserved in the church of the Palacio de los Requesens, what is believed to be a small mattress that he used and the little wooden table.

42. *Scripta* II, p. 89.

In 1525 he was helped and received the care of some millers and of the people in the Pasqual house when a slave gravely mistreated him and he had to remain convalescing for 53 days without being able to move, as we will explain below.

Ignatius received and gave away. He did not accumulate anything. From the process of his beatification, we know that what he saved by his fasts and abstinences, as well as bread and delicate food he received, he distributed among the poor. In front of the house of the Pasqual family genuine lines formed of people who were going to receive alms from Ignatius.⁴³

To Learn, to Dedicate Himself to Spiritual Things and to Do Good for Souls

When Ignatius says that, when he returned from the Holy Land, his desire was to go to Manresa to meet with a Cistercian monk, “a very spiritual man”, with the intention “to learn how to be able to give himself more easily to the Spirit and benefit souls even more” (Au 54), he allows us to see how his life in Barcelona would be: to learn, to dedicate himself to spiritual things and to engage in an apostolate.

To Learn: Studies, the Spiritual Experience

In 1524, Ignatius decided to return to Barcelona to study. He had understood that his desire “to help souls” required him to be formed and that “it was necessary to have an abundance of learning” along with “the anointing and blessing of the Spirit that our Lord communicated to him”.⁴⁴

This necessity was soon to be confirmed when later in Alcalá and Salamanca he realized that without a recognized philosophical and theological formation the Church authorities would place difficulties on his directing his exhortations to the people. “You are not learned”, he was to hear from a friar in Salamanca (Au 65), and a little afterwards he was taken to prison on suspicions about his teaching. Despite not being condemned for anything, he felt as if “they had closed his mouth” (Au 70) because of his lack of studies.

But his goal was not study just for the sake of studying to follow an academic career, but rather he wanted to study for what he had been seeing as his mission, “to help souls”. His study was something spiritual. It was possibly for

43. *Scripta* II, p. 638.

44. Pedro RIBADENEIRA, *op. cit.*, Book I, Chapter XIII, n. 10-11; *FN* IV, p. 169.

that reason that before he decided to begin his studies in Barcelona, he sought out a friar that he had known in Manresa, “a very spiritual man” (Au 54).

In Barcelona he began to study in earnest. His formation at Loyola and at the Castilian court seems to have been very basic and he needed more. But it probably was not an easy decision to turn to studies while already an adult and in the midst of young people who probably looked at him with curiosity and who sometimes laughed at him.⁴⁵ He studied “with complete diligence” (Au 54), that meant memorizing declensions and conjugations. But little by little he felt that his desire to study was being slowed down by spiritual feelings and reflections which, for a spirit as reflective and imaginative as his, arose beginning with the exercises in grammar. Ignatius explained it this way:

But one thing was impeding him and that was when he began to memorize as it is necessary to do at the beginning of learning grammar, there came to him new understandings of spiritual things and new delights. This happened in such a way that he could not memorize as much as he hated not being able to put the thoughts aside (Au 54).

For Ignatius, this was an interior struggle, but dealing with it by discernment, he realized that these understandings and these delights were more like pious loafing around than not studying,⁴⁶ a temptation that he had to overcome. Having committed himself, he assured professor Ardèvol that he would use all his will in order to get benefit from the study, and so it was until he had completed the formation that had been proposed to him. For Ignatius, studying was not only an intellectual activity. It was an activity of the whole person and everything that the person does can be an activity for the greater glory and praise of God.

What he began to experience in Barcelona would be turned into doctrine or spiritual knowledge that Ignatius shared later on in letters and instructions. In a letter written in 1547, Ignatius wrote to the students at Coimbra with the intention of orienting for them the impulsive love of youth. He told them:

The fourth way of helping one’s neighbors which can be extended to many people consists of holy desires and prayers. Although your studies don’t give you much time to make very lengthy prayers, those who make all their

45. Cf. *Scripta* II, p. 815.

46. R. GARCÍA VILLOSLADA, *San Ignacio de Loyola. Nueva biografía* (Madrid, 1986), p. 263.

activities into a continual prayer, entering into them only for God's service, can make up in desires for the time not spent formally praying.⁴⁷

Study that only wishes to be service to God is prayer. In fact, the faithful secretary of Ignatius in Rome, Polanco, when editing the Constitutions that were to be observed in the schools of the Society of Jesus (1549-1550), wrote, on the request of Ignatius himself, concerning the formation of the Jesuit students:

All their study and works should be understood as prayer, lifting them up and offering them for the sole service of God our Lord.⁴⁸

In 1552, when Ignatius was the Superior General in Rome, he wrote concerning temporal things to the Jesuit Manuel Godinho who was overwhelmed by the responsibility of being the procurator of the school at Coimbra, saying to him:

Regarding responsibility for temporal things, although in some ways it seems and indeed might be distracting, I do not doubt that our holy intention of directing everything with which you are doing for the Divine glory makes it spiritual and very pleasing to His infinite goodness.⁴⁹

Also dealing with study, the Constitutions say:

All should hold to this complete judgment, that the best work that you can do in the schools, and that which is most pleasing to God our Lord, is to study well, and just as in prayer and contemplation at their right time God is served according to the charity in which they are done, so too God is served greatly by study in any department when the study is done purely for the love of God.⁵⁰

After a few years Ribadeneira, someone who knew Ignatius well, wrote in a text where he was gathering some facts about him:

47. *Epp* I, 509; *Obras*, *op. cit.*, p. 732.

48. MHSI. *Regolae Societatis Iesu* (1540-1550), p. 22.

49. *Epp*. IV, 127; *Obras*, *op. cit.*, p. 814.

50. MHSI, Co II, 182.2; Cf. Co, pp. 361, 340.

He did not want the members of the Society to find God only in prayer, but also in all their actions, and that they might be considered as prayer and in this way, it proved better than many meditations.⁵¹

So, this way of thinking about studies is already glimpsed during his years of formation in Barcelona where Ignatius obtained spiritual benefits from his classes as a student of Latin amid his times of prayer, of religious practice and of an incipient apostolate.

After the winter of 1525-26, it seems that Ignatius expressed to his friends and to Master Ardèvol his proposal to move on to higher studies in order to be able to be ordained a priest. They surely encouraged him, but for that he would have to go to the university.⁵² Ignatius explained it this way:

Having finished two years of study, in which, according to what they said to him, he had taken good advantage, his teacher said that now he was ready to study Arts and that he should go to Alcalá (Au 56).

But he wanted to assure himself that he had a sufficient basis and he went to be examined by another person.

But he still had himself examined by a Doctor of Theology who advised him to do the same thing. And so, he left for Alcalá by himself although he now had some companions, I believe. (Au 56).

To Dedicate Himself to Spiritual Things

Sacramental and Ascetical Life

The manner of life of Ignatius in Barcelona was that of a person who accepted all things from the Spirit and lived oriented by faith in Jesus Christ.

51. P. RIBADENEIRA, 1567. At MHSI, 26. In order to find God in studies, Ignatius proposes the way of the affective will and the way of knowledge (Cf. J. C. ROUGES, *El estudio hecho oración en la enseñanza de san Ignacio*. Librería editorial Castellvi (Santa Fe, Argentina, 1960), p. 98 et seq.

52. R. GARCÍA-VILLOSLADA, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

He attended Mass every day with great devotion,⁵³ he received communion frequently, he went to confession, and he went to churches to listen to the sermons. He spent time in prayer; he went to pray at the hermitage of Sant Cabrià, to Sant Genis dels Agudells in Horta, to the crypt of Saint Eulalia in the cathedral under the main altar, to the monastery of Santa Clara. At night, as the son of the Pasqual's explained, he spent a long time in prayer and kneeling.

Ignatius struggled with himself. He was conscious of the life he had lived, and he repented. He had come from a comfortable life proper to the nobility, a life of sufficiency and wellbeing, from which it was easy to look down on people. The recollection of his bad behavior as a youth produced pain in him. Joan Pasqual, the son of Agnès Pasqual, in whose room Ignatius had slept, explained how at night he listened to the prayers and the crying of Ignatius because he had been "so bad and perverse."⁵⁴

Even though the wound at Pamplona had brought him far down, we know that from his first stay in Barcelona he had struggled with the temptations to superiority that "so greatly afflicted him" (Au 36).⁵⁵ Did he continue to struggle with these when he returned to Barcelona to study? The penances that he did show us that he forced himself to be humble, disinterested, generous (Cf. Au 55).

Ignatius struggled internally and wanted to live the forgiveness of God. He confessed frequently, initially to a Franciscan friar, Fra Diego de Alcántara, also the confessor of the mother of Joan Pasqual, and later with Father Pujalt. His penitential and ascetical practices, his insights and the pleasures he took in spiritual things that he understood as temptations (Cf. Au 54-55) speak to us about his interior struggles.

On the other hand, he did the Christian ascetical practices that he knew: fasting, mortification, the use of the metal chain, etc., actions that are not easy for us citizens of the 21st century to understand. Ignatius lived soberly. He ate little of what he had obtained begging from door to door and not at a

53. "Quaedam de S. Ignatio quae non sunt impresa", *FN III*, p. 205.

54. "He spent most of the night in prayer, [...] crying and sighing and saying, 'My God, how infinitely good you are, and you are so to suffer for someone as bad and perverse as I!'" *FN III*, p. 192-193.

55. Speaking about vainglory, Ignatius confessed that "for two years he had been working on this vice so that when he was embarking for Jerusalem in Barcelona, he did not dare to tell anyone that he was going to Jerusalem". Luis GONÇALVES DA CÂMARA, *Memorial* 98, *FN I*, p. 585. B. HERNÁNDEZ MONTES, *Recuerdos ignacianos, op. cit.*, p. 111.

table, but rather up in his room in order to hide the fasts and abstinences that he practiced.⁵⁶ He fasted for many of the days, except on Sundays. As a penance, he made holes in the soles of his shoes and the holes gradually widened until, when winter came, the only thing left was the part on top (Au 55). He used a metal chain with points that pricked the skin. At times he used it with such rigor that his confessor forced him to stop it and to sit down at the table to eat with the Pasqual family who was lodging him. Despite his behavior as a poor man among poor people, he was never able to hide the fact of his aristocratic origins and his formation as a noble.⁵⁷

In Barcelona, Ignatius lived devoutly, that is, the whole day, everything that he experienced, his behavior, what he did he managed to include in his intention to seek the will of God. We can say also that he lived in recollection. After some years when the Jesuits had a very marked apostolic orientation, they would continue to prioritize the same apostolic practices. For example, their sermons and preaching were more than instructions and conferences. They were designed to move people to devotion and towards religious practice and feeling.⁵⁸ We find this attitude in that Ignatius who begged and prayed in the streets, who patiently and with great charity and humility withstood the insults of the students, who did not express a complaint or anger or displeasure after being mistreated and struck when he returned to the monastery of Santa María dels Angels. He lived the same asceticism from day to day with the same recollection, whether it was at a meal or in the way that he dressed or when he rested. Of course, he also remained in that recollected state in all the many hours he spent in churches praying, attending Mass or confessing, and in the interior consolation that he found in all of it.

Spiritual Conversation

When he arrived in Barcelona for the first time, Ignatius looked for opportunities to converse with people about what he had discovered with his interiority and which at that moment had given him meaning in life. But he didn't find what he was seeking, and he lost that desire to speak with spiritual peo-

56. *Scripta* II, pp. 638-639.

57. Estefania Rocaberti says: "Entra en la casa de dita sa besava (Eleonor Capila) la qual se mira molt de fit lo dit Pere Ignasi [...], li aparegue que era una persona ben nada, conforme la bona cara que tenia y les carns de les mans regaladas". *Scripta* II, p. 680.

58. John W. O'MALLEY, *Los primeros jesuitas*. Mensajero-Sal Terrae (Bilbao, Santander, 1993), pp. 135-137.

ple when he left Barcelona (Cf. Au 37). But also, people sought out Ignatius to speak with him. This happened in those weeks in 1523, and it was repeated and increased during the second sojourn. People that he had been getting to know visited him in the home of the Pasqual family to speak to him.

In fact, the extensive personal relationships in Barcelona would be the ideal place for him to practice spiritual conversation in which Ignatius, from the time at Manresa, had developed a certain method. Let us see how he explained this himself:

The pilgrim had this custom since the time he was in Manresa that when he ate with someone, he never spoke at table except to respond briefly. But he was listening to what was said and taking in some things of which he could take the occasion to speak about God, he would do so when the meal was finished. (Au 42).

And he spoke “when about one virtue or another, he would praise it; when it concerned one vice or another, he disparaged it” (Au 65).

During his second sojourn in Barcelona, and staying in the home of the Pasqual family, we know that Ignatius had good conversations with their son to whom he explained “things about our Lord”. He counseled him to receive the sacraments frequently and to love the Law of God and the will of His mother.⁵⁹ Ignatius, who also felt the desire to help souls (Cf. Au 26, 90), wanted to help by example and with conversation and spiritual exercises.⁶⁰ He established human relationships of a high quality and depth as we have seen in the chapter titled “A Network of Human Relationships”, relationships that became spiritual in an integral sense, as we have expressed previously. And as he himself admitted:

He always had these desires to communicate to his neighbor what God had given him, discovering through experience not only that what he communicated never lessened, but rather grew much more.⁶¹

59. *Scripta* II, p. 90.

60. Juan DE POLANCO, *Summariu[m] Hispanicu[m] Polanci*, n. 35, FN I, p. 170; A. ALBUQUERQUE, SJ, *Diego Laínez, SJ, Primer biógrafo de S. Ignacio*. Mensajero-Sal Terrae (Bilbao-Santander, 2005), p. 159.

61. Juan DE POLANCO, *Aummariu[m] Hispanici Polanci*, n. 24, FN I, pp. 163-164; A. ALBUQUERQUE, SJ, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

Discernment

From the time of his convalescence at Loyola, Ignatius learned to know himself and to discern, and he continued learning it. The decision itself to go to Barcelona to study after he was prohibited from remaining in the Holy Land was the fruit of a discernment. Not being able to remain in Jerusalem and arriving in Venice in the middle of January 1524, Ignatius was caught up in great uncertainty. So, he discerned in order to know what he was to do; We read in his Autobiography:

After the said pilgrim understood that it was the will of God that he not be in Jerusalem, he always thought to himself about what he would do (very graphically *quid agendum*), at the end he was more inclined to study for some time in order to be able to help souls, and he made up his mind to go to Barcelona (Au 50)

Once this decision was taken, he went from Venice to Genoa where he embarked on a ship on his way to Barcelona (Cf. Au 53). Once he was in this city, his will to study was contradicted by new insights concerning spiritual things and new delights (Au 54) while he was studying the declensions and conjugations. Interiorly a struggle was taking place from which he was not able to get out. He began to “reexamine and think and ask himself interiorly: My God, what is this?”. Ribadeneira tells us.⁶² “And so, thinking a great deal about this, he said to himself, ‘Neither when I begin to pray nor when I am in the midst of it do these vivid insights come to me’, and so little by little he came to recognize that all of that was a temptation” (Au 55).

So, discernment led him to realize that that was not a good thing. that it was a subtle and deceptive temptation. And to overcome it, he went into action:

And after having prayed, he went to Santa María del Mar, next to the house of the professor, having pleaded with him that he wanted him to come to the church for a little while to hear something. And so, seated there, he faithfully recounted to him what was happening in his soul, and what little benefit he had obtained up to that point because of that. However, he then promised that teacher saying: “I promise you that I will never fail to listen to you during these two years provided that I find in Barcelona bread and

62. P. RIBADENEIRA, *op. cit.*, Book I, Chapter XIII, n. 79; FN IV, cap. XIII, p. 79.

water with which I can sustain myself.” And since he had made that promise with a lot of intent to carry it out, he never again had those temptations. (Au 55)

Also, his attempts at the reform of some monasteries of women religious were the fruit of a discernment.

After much prayer and many tears that he shed, before our Lord he made a determination on this subject, asking Him for the willingness to tell them the truth and for the light of grace for them to receive it. With this determination, he decided to go every day to the monastery to preach to them and give them some spiritual talks, no matter whether there was rain, sun or any other circumstance.⁶³

“To Do Good for Souls”

Apostolate

From the beginning of his conversion, whenever he proposed to himself the idea of religious life, Ignatius felt the desire to reform whichever order he decided to enter. He was conscious of the need to reform some religious orders and the bad example given by some men and women religious. During all the 15th century, in some of the monasteries in Barcelona there existed a laxity of customs, there were disputes concerning privileges and confrontations between nuns, some desirous of reforms and others who were inclined to maintain the situations of comfort that were offered to them in a monastery that had been converted into a residence of privilege. In the period from 1524 to 1526, Ignatius maintained an important relationship with three of the eight monasteries that existed in Barcelona.⁶⁴ He went many times to the Hieronymite monastery of Sant Maties (the sisters of Penitence of Saint Dominic) or to the monastery of Santa Clara (Benedictines), and also to the Monastir dels Angels in which they had lost any religious observance and where Ignatius prayed and received communion so as to give an example. He attracted the attention of some nuns with his devout behavior, he preached, spoke with them and they grasped his virtue, and he encouraged them to

63. *Scripta*, II, p. 91.

64. C. DE DALMASES, *El Padre Maestro Ignacio*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-78.

prayer and to carrying on a more exemplary life in accordance with their vocation.

However, not everyone agreed with the reform and the renewal of customs. This involved some men who frequented the Monastir dels Angels and who decided to teach Ignatius a lesson or even to kill him because of his influence for reform. They made use of a slave to carry out their plan. One day as he was returning to the house of the Pasqual's, praying along the way, the slave came out to meet him and mistreated him, beating him until he was left for dead on the ground.⁶⁵

Ignatius carried on his vocation of service to others in many different ways. We see him praying for a man who had hung himself and seemed to be dead, but then was revived and went to confession before he died.⁶⁶ We also see him catechizing children who were playing in the street, giving spiritual direction to people who visited him, helping to reconcile people who had fallen away or offering help to abused women.⁶⁷ He had new experiences of giving spiritual exercises to young people and women.⁶⁸ His lifestyle and his profound desire to help souls awoke admiration among the people who surrounded him. Perhaps because of this witness and his desire to contribute to the exemplary life of the nuns and at the same time to do good for the poor and infirm, he was approached by people who wanted to accompany him and imitate him.⁶⁹ It was then that Ignatius tried to bring together people who would help him to accomplish his goal of reforming religious orders. From among them came his first companions: Calixto de Sa, Jose d'Arteaga, Lope de Cáceres and Juan de Reinalde, called Juanico. They would be with him for a time. Possibly he initiated them in the practice of the Exercises.⁷⁰

Confidence

The profound determination that he experienced, mixed with all his interior experience from the time of his conversion in which he obtained many

65. Cf. *FN III*, p. 194.

66. *Scripta II*, p. 399.

67. R. GARCÍA VILLOSLADA, *San Ignacio de Loyola, op. cit.*, p. 260.

68. Cf. I. IPARRAGUIRRE, *Práctica de los ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola en vida de su autor (1527-1556)*. Mensajero-IHSI (Bilbao-Roma, 1946), pp. 1-3.

69. J. GARCÍA DE CASTRO, "Los primeros de París: amistad, carisma y pauta", *Manresa* 78 (2006), pp. 253-275.

70. I. IPARRAGUIRRE, *Práctica de los ejercicios, op. cit.*, p. 2.

consolations, made Ignatius into an integrated person and one of great confidence. It was so when he arrived in Barcelona in 1525, confident “and that this confidence and enthusiasm and hope he wanted to have only in God. And this he expressed in this way, that he felt thus in his heart”. (Au 35). It was with this same attitude that he arrived in 1524 after a journey from Venice to Genoa that was full of adversities, threats and deprivations (Au 50-53). In Barcelona, his confidence was corroborated by the generosity of Agnès Pasqual who gave him lodging, by Isabel Roser, who helped him with his expenses, by Jeroni Ardèvol who became his teacher, by the people from whom he received alms, often seated on the steps of a chapel of Santa Maria del Mar and other places in the city, by the women who had taken to him “some small quantities of flour.”⁷¹

In July 1526, Ignatius left Barcelona confidently while facing an uncertain road. He also went with confidence and without fear facing a road that was again uncertain when a year and a half later, after having passed through Alcalá and Salamanca he left from Barcelona with a clear determination to go to Paris to study. He would say about this last departure:

He left [Salamanca] alone, carrying a few books on a donkey. When he arrived in Barcelona, all those that knew him attempted to dissuade him from going to France because of the great wars that were taking place, recounting to him very particular examples, even telling him that they were putting Spaniards in ovens. But he never had any kind of fear. Thus, he left for Paris alone and on foot (Au 72 and 73).

Conclusion

Ignatius had a great force of will. He wanted to follow Jesus. The will also was converted into a “seduction” that would separate him from the path he was following up to that point to begin a new one. The Ignatius who arrived in Barcelona in 1524 is also a person who is dispossessed, in whom *doing* something, the force of will, the determination, which was very strong, counteracted allowing God to do it. Ignatius was not someone who lived with some elevated personal objectives and who had some spiritual practices besides. From the reading of his Autobiography and of his Diary, what others said

71. *Epp* I, n. 3, p. 91.

or wrote about him, we can imagine that he was someone who lived in the Spirit, very open to allowing himself to be guided by Him in everything. He had started out on a journey whose stages were unknown to him, but with great interior availability.

All of that had taken form in the first notes of the Exercises and constituted the spirituality which he would continue to express throughout his life. Ignatius thus placed himself within the great Christiann mystique with Biblical roots, based on the Trinitarian creed and on the Christian tradition where the whole person is invited to a transformation in the Spirit (Cf. Ro 12:1-2; Ga 4:19) and which we can briefly summarize in the phrase “to look for and find God in all things”. At the same time, his experience stretched and suffered the conceptual limitations offered to him by the theology and philosophy of his time when he tried to live the immense liberation of faith.

Could it be similar to that which was said by monks and which they defined as “living in continuous prayer”? Certainly that, but Ignatius emphasized a nuance that was properly his own: to seek and find God in all things, in all situations, at every moment, and also in the studies which he undertook in Barcelona. In his spirituality there resounds the injunction “when you eat, when you drink, when you do anything else, do it all for the glory of God” (1Co 10:31). Ignatius was convinced that “in God we live, we move, and we have our being” (Acts 17:28). At a moment in history in which the understanding of people as body and soul, something that was made the dominant paradigm by the preaching of the Scholastics, the spiritual dimension of the soul was getting smaller, and the duality between material and “spiritual” things was being reinforced, Ignatius insisted with great energy on the integral reality of the person. “God assumed our historicity and corporality in Christ Jesus, but not to remain in the state in which they are found, but rather to transform them from the inside out.”⁷² So, to speak now of the spiritual life is, in a sense, a redundancy. For Ignatius there is no spiritual life at the margins of daily life. All life is spiritual, or, said in another way, everything can be lived in God, “that they might have life and have it in abundance” (Jn 10:10).

Later in Rome we will see him as a man of government, of action, as a *spiritual man*. In Barcelona, nevertheless, we already find him taken up in long periods of prayer living everything as prayer and beginning to suggest spiritual exercises to various people and putting effort into the reform of reli-

72. X. MELLONI, *La mistagogia de los ejercicios*. Mensajero-Sal Terrae (Bilbao-Santander, 2001), p. 88.

gious congregations. Josep M^a Rambla concludes: “When Inigo left Cataluña, he did not yet know with clarity where he would be taken by the Spirit and the road before him was long. The tree would yet grow a lot, it would spread its broad foliage and would give abundant fruit, But at this moment it has good roots.”⁷³

73. Josep M. RAMBLA, *El Pelegri, Autobiografia de sant Ignasi de Loiola*. Claret (Barcelona, 1991), p. 33.

Epilogue

The life of Ignatius of Loyola speaks to us even today. In 2022, taking advantage of the 500th anniversary of his conversion, we were able to reflect broadly on the meaning of the wound and his radical change of life.⁷⁴ Now we are enjoying the opportunity to follow the footsteps of Ignatius, tireless seeker, student in the city of Barcelona.

The pages that you have read allow us to be witnesses to a life fully open to the action of the Spirit. Also to a period of the life of the saint apparently more discrete and as quiet as that of his study of Latin grammar during two years with master Ardèvol. As we have explained very well in these pages, all life is spiritual life, all activity and all action can be oriented to God and therefore be converted into prayer. Simone Weil, more of a contemporary of ours, reminds us that studies, when they are taken seriously, are one of the best ways to cultivate attention and that full attention is prayer. So, even today, despite our living distracted, trapped in the immediate and driven by screens we are also invited to live all of it as an occasion for an encounter with God and in God.

We still can say something more: the years of study that Ignatius began in Barcelona and would be taken beyond that, are clearly marked by his desire to help others. The pilgrim does not have a strictly academic vocation, nor one that is properly intellectual, but rather to study in so far as it allowed him to help souls better. Neither did Ignatius conceive of his studies primarily as a means to assure his individual sanctity or his personal salvation. For the pilgrim, the time of studies has a “for what purpose” that is very clear and defined. He passionately wants to share with everyone the gift he has been granted by the enlightenment at the Cardoner (Manresa) when he had seen everything new in Christ. He was never again the same person. In this way, Ignatius is an authentic apostle, so it is not strange that Ignatian spirituality, that has inspired countless men and women over the years, should have

74. Cf. L. RIUS (COORD.) *De la herida al corazón del mundo*. Cristianisme i Justícia (Barcelona, 2022), EIDES, n. 99.

an apostolic tendency and a missionary direction. It is impressive to see the enthusiasm with which Ignatius, despite being a student, absorbs himself in helping others in conversations and in works of charity, from his proximity to the most discarded of his time. To study to help others and at the same time to help others while you study.

Ignatius oozed authenticity because he had a credible lifestyle. His witness left a mark on many people who met him. It is true that the pilgrim had left behind the excesses of his time in Manresa and he realized that he needed some human mediations. He lived in Barcelona very frugally. He accepted help, but he did not accumulate wealth since he was completely decided to follow Jesus poor and humble. He lived from alms with those who needed it most.

It is also worthwhile not to forget that Ignatius, during the long years of his pilgrimage, was a committed layman. The religious vows with the first companions and the ordination as a priest came many years afterwards. Today, in our time of profound call for ecclesial transformation, marked by the synodal path, the witness of the pilgrim in Barcelona is a good example for all of us of a lay life that is fully committed.

To understand better the context and diverse influences that Ignatius received during his stay in Barcelona leads us to realize something that perhaps might be obvious, but is good to remember that all and each one of us form part of a tradition, that we are children of our time, that we have a context that makes possible our spiritual experience and it gives us the words and the capacity to formulate it. Ignatius would not be the one who left without considering the Lullian circles in Barcelona, without knowing about the *Devotio moderna*, and above all, without the people with whom he shared the path of life and who gave him so much support.

What a joy to find in the preceding pages so many proper names: Agnès Pasqual, Isabel Roser, Teresa Rajadell, Jaume Caçador, etc. A book on the life of the holy pilgrim by a Jesuit companion was entitled accurately. "Ignatius never alone". And there were so many women! It is right and necessary that they should become the protagonists. For too much time they were silenced, ignored or not sufficiently recognized.

Having understood better the deep value of friendship during his residence in Barcelona, we can ask ourselves how we cultivate familiarity and cordiality. How do we care for the art of friendship?⁷⁵ Or also contemplating

75. J. M. RAMBLA, *The Art of Friendship in Saint Ignatius of Loyola*. Cristianisme i Justícia (Barcelona, 2008), GUIDES, n. 10.

Ignatius after he had received a beating that left him convalescing for almost two months, we can ask ourselves how we allow ourselves to be cared for. It is evident enough that without recognizing our own fragility, without the calm assumption of our interdependence, without confidence in reciprocity and brotherhood, life would not be possible.

Friendships [...] perhaps they are not necessary to go along just getting by, but they are fundamental to live fully. What better way to care for them than to cultivate spiritual conversation as Ignatius did many times wherever he went?⁷⁶

Spirituality, studies and friendships: a kaleidoscopic look at the holy pilgrim and all the patterns of his life. Once again those of us who count ourselves among his companions on the journey, give thanks for his teachings because also today they illuminate and guide our lives.

Pau Vidal i Sas, SJ

76. J. M. LOZANO, *Spiritual Conversation*. Cristianisme i Justícia (Barcelona, 2024), Virtual Collection, n. 6.

'Guides', with this word Ignatius Loyola modestly expresses his great desire to help others. It is under this motto connoting service and simplicity that Cristianisme i Justícia and its Escuela Ignaciana de Espiritualidad-EIDES (Ignatian School of Spirituality) offers this series of materials.

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