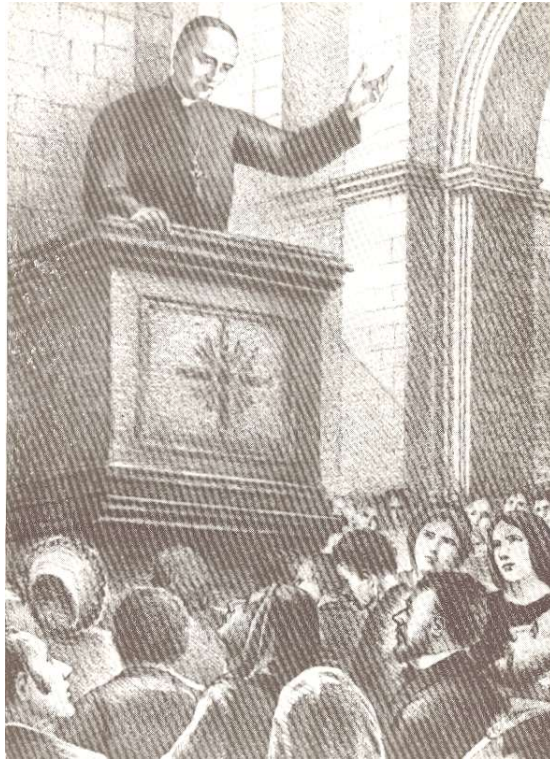


Reflections on:

The Stigmatine Apostolic Mission of Preaching



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In the Solemnity Feast of the Stigmatine Founder, 2015

Electronic Edition: Tereza Lopes [lay Stigmatine]

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The Feast of St. Gaspar Bertoni, Stigmatine Founder –
June 12, 2015
Reflections on:

“The Stigmatine Apostolic Mission of “Preaching”

Introduction: it may be noted that in the NT there are four separate accounts of Jesus’ final Commissioning His Apostles in the light of His Passion and Death, Resurrection and Ascension [cf. Mt 28; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20]. In the accounts of both, Luke and John, the Apostolic Commission is bestowed personally by Christ in the light of His Sacred Stigmata – in Luke, the emphasis is on the hands and the feet and in John, the Stigmata are presented as the hands and the sacred side.

A. The Great Commission in the NT

1. Matthew’s Rendition

16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you [f]always, even to the end of the age.” [Mt 28]

And make disciples! A disciple is both a learner and a follower – a disciple takes Jesus as his Teacher and learns from him, and a disciple also follows Jesus. The Master is not giving a command that will merely secure nominal adherence to a group – but one that will secure wholehearted commitment to a Person. In those days, a disciple did not enroll in a school, but signed up with a teacher, rabbi - Jesus’ disciples are people for whom a life has been given in ransom [20:28] and who are committed to the service of the Master. The Rabbi, Jesus, not only took time to teach His disciples but He also died for them and rose again. Those who are disciples of such a leader are committed people. The Apostles are called to make disciples of all nations – which points to a worldwide scope for their mission. [*quocumque*]¹.

Jesus has now been vindicated in Mt, not only as a future hope, but a present reality. Christ has risen – the scope of the Apostolic Mission is now no longer just to

¹ Cf. Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*. PNTC Grand Rapids/Leicester Eerdmans/Inter-Varsity 1991, pp 746, ff.]

'the Lost Sheep of Israel' but now it is to all nations – the imperceptible mustard seed is now a mighty tree.

Jesus' vision to the heavenly enthronement has led naturally to a mission that encompasses the entire world. The terms all the nations [are already present in Mt 24:9, 14; 24:32. It is not enough that the message be heard – it is a challenge to make disciples, by baptizing and teaching².

2. Mark's Presentation of The Disciples Commissioned – a rather broad Apostolic Mission is envisioned:

14 Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen. 15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. 17 These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."... [Mk 16]

3. Luke and the Peace-bearing Stigmata: the minds of the Apostles were opened by this encounter:

36 While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and *said to them, "Peace be to you." 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 While they still could not believe *it* because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; 43 and He took it and ate *it* before them.

44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are

² The Gospel of Matthew. NICNT Grand Rapids/ Cambridge U.K. 2007, pp. 1107, f., 1114, ff.

clothed with power from on high.”... [Lk 24]

4. John’s Account of Jesus commissioning His Disciples:

19 So when it was evening on that day, the first *day* of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and *said* to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace *be* with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and *said* to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, *their sins* have been forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they have been retained.”... [Jn 20].

Here Jn’s interest³ is in both the conferral of His own Apostolic Mission and the sending of Holy Spirit. Perhaps the primary significance here is the stress on the integral Stigmata sorrowful dimensions of Good Friday, and the ‘glorious dimensions of Easter night] is that they establish a continuity between the resurrection and the crucifixion - this explains the Paschal Joy of the Disciples.

There is manifested here both the sovereignty of God and His will to save humanity. Scholars denote the broad Modalities of Mission: direct proclamation, Prophetic Challenge, Witnesses of the Gospel, Mission as a personal and social transformation, conversion.⁴

B. ‘PREACHING’ ACCORDING TO ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

[I] Gregory the Great, Preacher

1. Gregory the Great was Pontiff, an exegete, a writer and master of spirituality [‘**the Spiritual Father of the Middle Ages**’!] – and, in today’s terms, an ‘evangelizer’. He is indeed an extraordinary mix of a **classical orator** and a **Preacher** - a **Diplomat, Doctor, Pastor, Shepherd**. As is clear, **his idea of preaching must be understood in the back-drop of the entire pastoral action of the Church**. He speaks of an [‘**New**’] **Order of Preachers: not limited to Dominicans, of course, but including all Shepherds, Pastors, Doctors** - rendered totally apt for the ecclesial challenge for the ‘**New Evangelization**’ - this mission is composed of the People of God elected for this

³ R. Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI*, Anchor Bible Vol. 29 A, pp. 1018, ff.

⁴ D. Senior, CP & C. Stuhlmüller CP, *The Biblical Foundation of Mission*. Maryknoll: Orbis 1983, pp. 332, f.

by the Christian vocation, and the levels of the fructifying of the seed of the divine word.

2. The Church, prior to her **Nuptials with the Divine Word**, she was a **'little one'** [Infant], when fresh from birth, she **was unable to preach the word of Life**. Hence, it is said of her, **'My sister is a little one, and she hath no breasts.'** [Ct 8:8]; in this way that Holy Church before she made progress by accessions of virtue, was not yet able to yield to the breasts of preaching to the weak ones her hearers. But the Church is called **'adult'** when being wedded to the Word of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, by the office of preaching she is with young in the conception of children, with whom by exhorting she travails, whom by converting, she brings forth. For all the Churches, which constitute the one Catholic Church, are called young maidens, not now aged by sin, but young ones by grace, not barren by old age, but by the age of the soul fitted for spiritual fruitfulness. [Mor. 19, 12; 19 – p. 86, f.]: As it was in the days of my youth, when secretly God was in my tabernacle [cf. Jb 28:4 = erroneous].

[II] Gregory's Broad Use of the terms: "PREACH/ PREACHER"

1. **The Semantic breadth of the word Preacher/ Preaching:** these terms usually indicate the public exposition, or explanation, of the Christian doctrine by voice in a formal, liturgical setting. For Gregory, there is a clear distinction in this between the **"NT Prophets"**⁵ and the evangelizers of the Church **'doctors'** [teachers]. By 'Prophets', he says, we do not mean those who were among the old people of God, but rather those who have risen up in the holy Church after the after the Apostles In later time, which is now, the holy Church has both evangelists and doctors they do not teach nova, sed noviter, by uncovering the deeper meaning of God's word in the present circumstances.

2. Since the Gospel is said to be 'good news' we call evangelists those who announce to the **unlettered people** [cf. Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus*] the good message of the eternal homeland. These terms seem synonymous: **preachers/ doctors/ pastors/ rectors**. Such a person is one who has been blessed with a familiarity with the sacred texts, and has acquired a unified outlook to be presented in an orderly, comprehensive, integral manner⁶.

⁵ Cf. Niels Christian Hvildt, *Christian Prophecy. The Post-Biblical Tradition*. Oxford Press 2007.

⁶ The very broad apostolic program of St. Ignatius of Loyola is summarized in this Formula: To Preach in Poverty. [cf. Gunther Switek, S.J., *Praedicare in Paupertate. Estudios sobre el concepto de pobreza según Ignacio de Loyola*. Roma: Centrum Ignatianum 1972.

a. **Catechists** are those who have chosen to believe in the Pasch, and to speak in harmony with their local bishop, so that through them the catechumens might beat a ready path to the Church. In this mission the Catechists are to enkindle their solicitude and to encourage them by the admonition of their exhortation, so that they might yearn for the eternal Easter, so that they will prepare believers with fervent desire to persevere and be truly 'faithful'.

b. In all of this, the verbs used are to **preach**, and at times, to **teach** – the nouns are interchangeable, too: **Preachers, Doctors**. There permeates through all this **the ideal of ordinary teaching, institutionalized in the ordinary daily life of those willing to accept it**. Gregory interchanges '**Herald**' [*praeco*] and '**Preacher**' [*praedicator*]. A great figure here is St. John the Baptist, in accord with the Prophet Isaiah [40:3]: ***A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God!"*** Gregory's principle was that the Incarnate Word of the Father makes progress in this world in the mission of preaching.

3. The Prophets of old, **experts in the divine eloquence**, sometimes were called 'doctors' – even though they knew their presence was passing, they looked ahead to what was coming. The terms used for their work, as well as that for the NT preachers are such as: **manifest, to show, predict, preach** [*praedicere/ praedicare*] – verbs derived from a Greek word like *didache*. John the Baptist was more than a Prophet [cf. Mt 11:9] because as he went along, he prophesied, also by showing the truth, he manifested it through his life. He went along paradoxically in the spirit and power of Elijah – he is as one who went before the Redeemer:

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."
10 And the disciples asked him, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 11 He replied, "Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things;
12 but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands." 13 Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist. [Mt 17].

17 With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." [Lk 1].

19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." [g] 21 And they asked him, "What then?

Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." 22 Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

4. **'Prophecy'** is closely associated with **'to preach'** – perhaps Gregory's opening lines in his Homilies on Ezechiel might shed light on his deepest thought:

'Before speaking of Ezk the Prophet - with the inspiration of Almighty God - I must first reveal the tenses and the modes of prophecy so that when the approach thereto is laid bare, virtue may be better understood.'

Prophecy has three tenses: the past, of course; the present and the future. This must be understood because 'prophecy' loses its etymology in two tenses. Since it is called 'prophecy' is predicting further events, when it talks of the past or the present it loses its justification for its name, in that it does not prophesy on what is to come, but either relates what was done or is happening.

For we speak of the three tenses of prophecy if we quote the evidence of Holy Writ:

- prophecy concerning the future: Behold a virgin will conceive and bear a son. [Is 7:4];
- prophecy concerning the past: In the beginning, God created heaven and earth. [Gn 1:1] For a man speaks of a time when man was not;
- a prophecy about the present is when Paul the Apostle says: But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believes it not, or one unlearned [*Rudes*] he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.. [cf. 1Co 14:24, f.].

Indeed, when it is said: the secrets of his heart are made manifest, it is truly shown that through this mode of prophecy the Spirit does not predict what the future will be, but reveals the deeper meaning of what is now. How, then, may it be called 'prophecy' which lays bare no future event but reports the present?

In this case, attention must be paid to what is rightly described as prophecy, not because it predicts future events, but because it uncovers hidden truths. Just as time, indeed, conceals the future all manner of things from our eyes,

thus occasion withdraws it from our sight in the present. For as a coming event lies hidden in future time, a present thought is latent in a secret heart.

Thus prophecy is present when something is concealed not by the spirit but by the absent word, which however is laid bare by the Holy Spirit. And the spirit of the Prophet is present when his body is not. Thus, Giezi had journeys far from the Prophet when he received the gifts of Naaman the Syrian, he to whom the Prophet said: Was not my heart present when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? [cf. 4 K 5:26].⁷

5. St. Gregory makes very clear: therefore, the term '**prophecy**' may be used **not only of the future** – which manifests the future – but also of the present, **by uncovering more the hidden graces of the present**, while saying nothing of the future. It is to be noted that the word 'prophecy' is rightly said not so much because it always predicts future events, **but because it uncovers what is hidden, its deeper meaning.** There is a great coincidence [sacramental baptismal identification?] between the "**Prophet**", the "**Preacher**" and Jesus Christ. For all the more reason, **all the Church's preaching needs an ever more intense relationship with divine revelation – the Preacher/ Teacher is called to be the 'voice' of divine revelation.** All are called to be **with Christ: "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father.** [Jn 16: 25]. This is a manner of speaking, of communicating God and His Plan just as He indicates the Church to do. In reality, **whispering God's word, imitating Christ's deeds**, action and contemplation are terminal phases of one and the same process. The stages of this one process are marked by the ascent of the believer towards the sublime, and by the corresponding process of the interiorization of the divine word.

C. The Mendicant Orders⁸

In the Days of Francis and Dominic there had been cry for Gospel preaching, preaching of the Gospel that was authenticated by word and by example, by living in poverty. While in the popular mind, one might think Preaching more of Dominic and Poverty more of Francis – but, it is not either/or', but rather 'both/and'.

⁷ Cf. Theodosia Gray, *The Homilies of Saint Gregory the Great. ON the Book of Ezekiel*, in English Translation. Homily 1, pp. 12-13.

⁸ Cf. Joseph F. Cromwell, SJ, *Impelling Spirit. Revisiting a Founding Experience: 1539. Ignatius of Loyola and His Companions.* Chicago: Loyola 1997, pp. 150, ff.

1. **St. Francis of Assisi**: he had already heard in his vision the Lord telling him to go and repair His Church which is totally destroyed. He was much inspired by the biblical injunction:

... proclaim the Good News. The Kingdom of heaven has come near. Sure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, nor silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. [Mt 10:7, ff.].

Francis was committed to peaching in poverty but with an entirely different approach than that of Dominic. Even his manner of preaching embodied a sort of poverty. He was more interested in inspiring rather than enlightening. He seemed to come across more as God's Herald, or of a speaker at a public meeting. The Franciscan Order was thus described:

'This is a religious order of truly poor men of the Crucified One, and an order of preachers whom we call Friars Minor ... They have no monasteries, or churches, no fields, or vineyards or herds of cattle, no house or other possessions, not even a lace to lay their heads. They attract many to the contempt of this world not only by their preaching, but, by the example of a holy life and spotless conduct. These, having abandoned all their own possessions, have put on the habit of the Friars Minor.'

2. **St. Dominic**: he, too, found himself thrust into a situation best described as preaching in poverty.

D. IGNATIUS AND HIS COMPANIONS ⁹

In one of his informal letters of Spiritual Direction, St. Ignatius described the very broad apostolic program of the Jesuits, as Preaching in Poverty¹⁰. Ignatius wanted to bring the Person of Jesus to those open to God's word. As part of their program, the Companions refused stipends for their apostolic mission. For Ignatius, the message was *quodcumque Verbi Dei ministerium – quocumque in the world*.

In the Jesuit tradition¹¹, the 'Apostolate of the Pen' and the art of evangelical conversation would fit in here! ¹²

⁹ Cf. J. Cromwell, o.c., pp. 146, ff.

¹⁰ cf. Gunter Siwek, *Praedicare in Paupertate' estudios sobre el concepto de Pobreza según S. Ignacio de Loyola*. Centrum Ignatianum 1975

¹¹ cf. William J. Barry, SJ, *Our Way of Proceeding*. Jesuit Sources 1997

E. STIGMATINE PREACHING in the Original Constitutions

Introduction: this ministry is often found often in the *Original Constitutions* of St. Gaspar:

PREACHING, a privileged Stigmatine Apostolate

- assisted by personal contact	278			
- excites to fervor	47			
- tiring	217			
- fruit implored	162			
- general, easily forgotten!!	278			
- instructions	163/1 & 3			
- ministry of P. [one of the apostolic 'experiments']	38	72	163	182
- necessary for eternal life	182	278		
- offences to avoid	200			
- honorable	217			
- public, useful	163/1	182		
- private	47			
- rule for preachers	310			
- study & p., central duties	45			
- useful	182			
- various types	163			

It is also frequently found in the original Jesuit Constitutions.¹³

1. Along with the Eucharist preaching is the most basic priestly exercise. Preaching is understood in the Jesuit tradition is the most universal and efficacious of the all means ordered to the sanctification of one's neighbors. For this reason, our Savior sent His Apostles on His Mission, throughout the world, telling them to preaching the Gospel to all creatures [cf. Mk 16:15, par.] St. Paul gloried in the fact that he had not been sent to baptize, but to evangelize. The 'least' Company of Jesus considered itself to be modeled on the Apostolic College and it can be said that high on its list of apostolic services will always be found preaching, evangelizing. In fact

¹² Thomas H. Clancy, SJ, *The Conversational Word of God*. Jesuit Sources 1978. [As with Fr Bertoni, once the 'End' is established for us CF # 1, the *MODUS* immediately explains how this is to be achieved, CF # 2.

¹³ Cf. CSJ ## 70 [the 6th principal 'apostolic experiment']; 80; 280; 402. cf. Jose Manuel Aicardo, *Comentario a las Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesus*. Tomo IV. Madrid: Blass. Chapters 3 [In General – pp. 331, ff.] & 4 [Types of Preaching: sermones, homiliae, lectiones], pp. 431, ff.

the Ignatian Mission was seen to be ***Preaching in Poverty*** in the Founder's own words, as **a synthesis of his Constitutions, and as a reflection of the soul and life of St. Ignatius**. Apostolic Poverty was seen to be the mother that brought the mission to life toward a new life of perfection. And thus, in the external life of the Apostle there needs to be the desire to preaching and this is what gives life to the evangelical laborer in imitation of Jesus Christ. The early dispersal of the Company through the vineyard of the Lord was to preach God's word - *they preached **everywhere**, with the Lord's help* [cf. Mk 16:20]. The early 'columns of the Company' distinguished themselves for their ministry to preaching.

2. The formation for preaching occupied the Jesuit Founder's in compiling his ideal of the 'Six Apostolic Experiments, or Experiences' [cf. CSJ ## 64, ff.]. Candidates who entered already priests were to apply themselves to these varied 'experiments' throughout their formation – as would all candidates for the Jesuit life, depending on their juridical status. These two numbers provide some understanding:

CSJ 69 - 14. **The fifth experience is that of explaining the Christian Doctrine** or a part of it, in public to boys and other simple persons, or of teaching it to individuals, in accordance with what the occasion offers and what seems in our Lord more profitable and suitable to the persons.

CSJ 70 – 15. In a sixth experience the candidate, after having been tested and found edifying, **will proceed farther, by preaching, or hearing confessions, or by laboring in both together in accordance with the times, places and capacity of all.**

Through these six apostolic 'experiences', the Company would get to know the aptitudes of the candidate. In an apostolic religious Community, anyone can see the importance that these experiments had [30 day retreat; hospital service; a month's pilgrimage; lowly and humble domestic services; teaching catechism; preaching and hearing confessions]. As far as the preaching goes, in the early community, often there were few listeners for these sermon practices of new preachers.

2. St. Gaspar Bertoni also has a similar formation structure in his ***Original Constitutions***:

THIRD PART
THE SECOND FORMATION
Chapter I
The Time after Novitiate

40. Those who are still to apply themselves to the required studies, must first become well versed in the Humanities and in the study of languages for at least two years.

Then, they will learn the philosophical disciplines over a three year course.

Afterwards, Scholastic Theology will be taught to them for four years.

Lastly, two or three more years are granted to them for the private study of the Fathers and for reviewing the more serious areas of study.

41. Those who entered already endowed with the necessary doctrine, upon having completed their Novitiate, will be perfected in it. They will also be formed in applying this through their ministry toward their neighbor.

42. In this time, through varied and new experiments and testing, each will show himself to be formed, so that his piety, humility and prudence will be evident to all, especially to the Superiors.

[These experiments intervene in that period after Novitiate, prior to Perpetual Profession].

FIFTH PART

THE PROMOTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE

Chapter 1

Those to be promoted to the Priestly Office

69. They will not wear any clerical garb until after high school has been completed.

70. They will attend class until their twenty-fifth year, and only then receiving Minor Orders.

71. They will apply themselves to the study of those doctrines and liberal arts which are cultivated among us, and in which their own native talent is the most inclined, until their thirtieth year. In this time, they will be initiated into Sacred Orders and into the Priesthood.

72. While not omitting any study of those matters in which they are the more proficient and which are the more necessary, **gradually they will be exercised in preaching in our own churches, in teaching catechism to children and to the unlettered, in hearing confessions of children and adolescents.**

73. Then, they will be assigned to the hearing of confessions of men of all walks of life, and to giving sermons also in the churches of the city where they dwell, in giving retreats and the like.

74. Sometimes they will be given to the Missionaries as their helpers, and at times they will hear the confessions of women.

75. Then they will more often hear the confessions of women, and serve ordinarily in the work of the Missions.

76. Finally, they will accept the task of directing the Missions, and will give themselves over totally to the salvation of souls.

[And these experiments intervene in that period of time just prior to priestly ordination - and sometimes **priests still in formation for the Fourth Vow** would be applied to some of these 'experiments'— and the Spiritual Coadjutors assumed for St. Ignatius the direction of the various **Apostolic Missions**, such as: rectorships of works, or presidencies of Universities.]¹⁴

4. In the same way, men were prepared as catechists, on the best means of teaching Catechism, the fifth of the 'experiments' [cf. CSJ ## 410, 411]. In the Jesuit tradition, proclaiming Christian Doctrine, or teaching catechism was thought of as a special manner of 'preaching'.¹⁵ St. Gaspar Bertoni offers this idea in his **Original Constitutions**:

163. The 'Professed' are to be dedicated to any ministry of the Word of God whatsoever¹⁶, such as:

- 1. Public preaching, or instructing God's people with catechetical teaching, either through public classes, or by private tutoring;**
- 2. Through a pious sharing of views and conversations on sacred matters, sometimes offering fraternal correction, and at other times offering**

¹⁴ Cf. CSJ ## 12; 421; 557; 558; 798. cf. Nadal, *De Instituto ...*, pp. 467; *Scholion*, pp. 114, ff.; MI, *Constituciones*, Vol. I, p. 274; Vol. II, pp. 193-196; Ganss, English Translation of Jesuit Constitutions, pp. 96, ff.; 209, ff.

Cf. P. deAldama, pp. 180.

¹⁵ Cf. Aicardo, Vol. 4, p. 334

¹⁶ A phrase from the Formula of St. Ignatius, n. 1. This whole section is copied from Suarez, p. 572 b.

encouragement for virtuous living and a greater frequency of the reception of the Sacraments.

3. This fraternal exchange will at times involve **teaching others the path of perfection**, and then offering the **exhortation** to live it.
4. The 'Professed' are to be **engaged in giving Retreats**.
5. They shall also **promote Church organizations**.
6. They will exercise a devoted dedication to the Sick, and especially to the dying.

St. Ignatius wrote:

CSJ # 410: - 6. They should likewise bestow appropriate study upon the method of **teaching Christian doctrine** and the adapting themselves to the capacities of children or simple persons.

CSJ# 411: - F. It will be helpful to have a written compendary explanation of the matters necessary for the faith and Christian life.

In Fr. Ganss' English translation of the Jesuit Constitutions¹⁷, he offers these ideas: Few things better illustrate Ignatius' sensitivity to the needs of his times than the importance he attached to the instruction of children and simple persons in the rudiments of Christian doctrine. The early Jesuits' esteem for this work already in 1539 can be seen in MH, **Constitutions** I [pp.10-11, 43-45], and in the Bulls **Regimini** and **Exposcit**. This ministry is present also in CSJ 528. The Jesuits competently countered the appalling religious ignorance of those times, remembering it was a period of many new catechisms, both Catholic and Protestant. Luther's had an enormous impact.

5. The pressing need that St. Ignatius experienced to spread the faith deeply motivated him to work on the knowledge of the local languages where the Society lived. This was the subject matter of his New Year's Day Letter the year he died – he saw this as befitting the edification and advancement of the local populace that all those assigned to a place would know well the language spoken there. He legislated that the local language would be what would be spoken in the house. He thought it should enter each one's prayer life – wherein one would offer to the studies and work of each one. Special language studies were inculcated so that each could preach well in the local language. There was a common, or general solicitude in forming preachers throughout the early Company.

¹⁷ St. Ignatius of Loyola. *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, pp. 203.

6. Advice for preachers:¹⁸ these were compiled by the first successor of St. Ignatius, Fr. Laynez. The first purpose of this ministry is not to earn money, nor to acquire one's own personal honor and glory. The missionary is called to be a 'fisher of men.' [cf. Mt 4:19]. His challenge is to orientate the minds and hearts of his listeners toward, for Jesus Christ. **Preaching has within it as an exercise of the Apostolic Mission the means for its success.**

a. The first means, of course, is the great love of God – which Jesus manifested when He conferred on Peter the role of the Primacy of the Good Shepherd. It is this love of Christ that needs to permeate the hearts and minds of His Apostles, called to be His preachers and to share in His Persona mission received personally from His Father. In this ministry, no one is to make a 'clone' of himself, but he needs to share his own interior motivating love for God and His People brought to us by Jesus Christ. It is the love of God alive in the heart of the preacher that will enable him to be the 'salt of the earth' [cf. Mt 5:13], to season this salvific message.

b. Some of the qualities of this love in the heart of the Lord's Missionary are listed as follows:

- utmost purity of intention – one comes for his own glory, but only that of the Father; we have come to serve!
- a certain constancy, fortitude for the challenges inherent in this ministry – the fear of non-acceptance, rejection, failure – physical commitment that is required. This can be of some comfort to struggling preachers: there is need of trust, hope – that this is indeed God's work, His Church.

... If you had been of this world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. [Jn 15:19, f.]

- authentic zeal: this needs to be communicated with some enthusiasm for the message.
- a share in the Paschal mystery in Christ, no distinction between the Person and His Mission- as we share His Mission, also His life;

¹⁸ Cf. Aicardo, Vol. 4, o.c., pp. 566, ff.

- hope in the outcome, expressed in the language of Hope: Prayer: in or to enkindle the flame of divine love in one's listeners, much prayer and personal sacrifice are needed.
- integral truth: **the office of Preacher is also that of the teacher** – the core of the message is that gospel enjoined: go out and preach the gospel to every creature [cf. Mk 16:15]. It is an aspect of the word of God that is being shared, and Paul's message to titus might be recalled: ... ***we are justified by His grace, so we may be heirs according to hope of life ever lasting...*** [Tt 2:7]
- ***non oportet studere, sed studuisse!*** This old adage for students reminds the lecturer that he needs much familiarity with the Scriptures, the fathers of the Church – the rich modern Magisterium. With regular referral to them, one's discourse attains depth, breadth.
- practical points that seem to date from St. Gregory the Great:
 - what do you want to say? The main point?
 - To whom are you speaking?
 - What is the liturgical season?
 - What is the level of your language, discourse, pronunciation, strength of voice?
 - How much time do you have? It is exquisite charity to keep to the times

You are just part of a program!

- more generally, you are part of the Apostolic Mission - the preachers are sent [cf. Rm 10: 15] – The Lord Himself has promised your listeners that He would send them Shepherds [Jr] – all mission in the Church is connected back to Christ's Mission from the Father [cf. Mt 10:16; 28:19; Lk 10:3]. In Jn's Gospel [20:21] we are sent from Christ showing His Glorious Wounds.

7. The Message: this is not comparable to class-room teaching – yet, not totally different. The speaker is trying to persuade the listeners of a truth to be lived. St. Gaspar Bertoni offered Mass for the success of the Apostolic Mission:

162. The 'Professed' are to be assigned to the administration of the Sacraments, especially of Penance and the Eucharist. They are to be committed to begging from God, even through the offering of the sacrifices of the Mass, in order to obtain from God the fruits of the Missions and the preaching and the Confessions.

As much as is possible it is helpful to try rely on whatever gifts one has - and to offer clear reasons for one's views, authoritative sources to support them. A good slogan for the preacher is ***cor ad cor loquitur!*** The sacred orator differs from the one delivering a 'profane' message – the former truly wants to delight, to move the heart to some apostolic action, to exhort one to deeper spirituality or to promote his conversion. The sacred orator speaks in the Name of God – his message is one pertaining to eternal truths, or salvation. There is a difference of opinion regarding humor – it is said that St. Jerome never used it – John Paul II, Blessed Marmion - and many other sacred orators - often made strategic use of well-placed humor.

SUMMARY

[1] **The Apostolic Mission** is treated by **St. Ignatius** in Part VII, and by St. Gaspar Bertoni in Part IX of the ***Original Constitutions***. Under the 'Word of God', in his Constitutions describing the Jesuit Apostolic Mission, we read [cf. CSJ ## 645]:

CSJ # 645: In the Church, the Word of God should be proposed to the people unremittingly by means of **sermons, lectures,** and the **teaching of Christian Doctrine,** by those whom the Superior approves and designated for this work and at the times and in the manner which he judges to be most conducive to greater divine glory and the edification of souls.

CSJ # 648: Likewise, they will endeavor to be profitable to individuals by **spiritual conversations,** by counseling and exhorting to good works, and by conducting **Spiritual Exercises.**

[2] St. Gaspar Bertoni offers his understanding of the **Ignatian Expression: quodcumque Verbi Dei ministerium** - [explicitly found in CF 163]:

Chapter 6 Concerning the Duties of the 'Professed' Fathers

182. Their duty is **to teach not only in sermons, retreats, lectures, which are both necessary and useful for eternal life - but also to explain the rudiments of faith and morals to the uneducated and to children, in the Oratories, in public catechism lessons, as well as by private instructions.** For this is of great use to the Church, and therefore this ministry is highly recommended to them.

183. They will hear the confessions of all who approach them, especially those of the poor and children, and encourage all to a frequent reception of the Sacraments.

184. When the 'Professed' are sent anywhere, or assigned to reside in some place, no one will expect any provision for the journey, or for their residence, from the Bishop, or from the Pastors, but they will freely offer themselves and totally commit themselves to the task.

Chapter 7

The Principal Purpose of the 'Professed' Fathers

185. Although the purpose of this Congregation is to offer assistance to the Church under the direction of the Bishops, **through the various and proper duties of its vocation**; and since this seems at times to be an arduous and difficult undertaking, and, if it be measured against human weakness, one that is exposed to dangers - nonetheless, this proposal of our vocation, therefore, is not one that is imprudent and rash. This is so, firstly, because it is not based on human resources, but is to be carried out with the grace of the Holy Spirit, ***for He Who has begun a good work in you will bring it to perfection ... [Ph 1:6]***, if He is not hindered in this by us. For this is the special grace of this vocation, which is more powerful than all dangers and difficulties. Furthermore, through this plan, we do not propose to expose ourselves to dangers, nor to go to this, or that place, or to undertake one activity over another, but to follow the direction of the orthodox Bishop whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God [cf. **Ac 20:28**]. This means is sufficiently safe in not erring in the way of the Lord. Finally, the concern of the Congregation is to be both in disciplining and in forming its men, as well as in selecting them, and in sustaining and strengthening them.

186. Furthermore, no one will contrive to be sent in one place rather than in another, but each will allow himself to be transferred, although it is not wrong to show oneself prepared for some undertaking. For, **Isaiah [6:6, ff.]** offered himself and **Jeremiah [1: 6]** excused himself. However, Jeremiah did not resist God sending him, nor did Isaiah presume to go before being purified by the coal of the altar. As Gregory has said, no one should dare to undertake the sacred ministries without first being purified, nor should anyone chosen by a superior grace, proudly refuse to go, under the pretext of humility.

[3] A Share in the Prophetic Mission of Jesus Christ and His Apostolic Mission entrusted to the Church:

... Be comforted, be comforted, my people, says your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and call to her: for her evil is come to an end, her iniquity is forgiven: she has received of the hand of the Lord double for all her sins... [Is 40:1, ff. – Introduction to the Book of Consolation].

In the end, it is ***Dei Verbum!*** The message is an aspect of the inspired Word of God.

FINAL CONCLUSION

Pope Francis is of great help here¹⁹:

Person to person

127. Today, as the Church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbors or complete strangers. This is the informal preaching which takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home. Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey.

128. In this preaching, which is always respectful and gentle, the first step is personal dialogue, when the other person speaks and shares his or her joys, hopes and concerns for loved ones, or so many other heartfelt needs. Only afterwards is it possible to bring up God's word, perhaps by reading a Bible verse or relating a story, but always keeping in mind the fundamental message: the personal love of God who became man, who gave himself up for us, who is living and who offers us his salvation and his friendship. This message has to be shared humbly as a testimony on the part of one who is always willing to learn, in the awareness that the message is so rich and so deep that it always exceeds our grasp. At times the message can be presented directly, at times by way of a personal witness or gesture, or in a way which the Holy Spirit may suggest in that particular situation. If it seems prudent and if the circumstances are right, this fraternal and missionary encounter could end with a brief prayer related to the concerns which the person may have expressed. In this way they will have

¹⁹ Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Nov. 24, 2013, Christ the King.

an experience of being listened to and understood; they will know that their particular situation has been placed before God, and that God's word really speaks to their lives.

129. We should not think, however, that the Gospel message must always be communicated by fixed formulations learned by heart or by specific words which express an absolutely invariable content. This communication takes place in so many different ways that it would be impossible to describe or catalogue them all, and God's people, with all their many gestures and signs, are its collective subject. If the Gospel is embedded in a culture, the message is no longer transmitted solely from person to person. In countries where Christianity is a minority, then, along with encouraging each of the baptized to proclaim the Gospel, particular Churches should actively promote at least preliminary forms of inculturation. The ultimate aim should be that the Gospel, as preached in categories proper to each culture, will create a new synthesis with that particular culture. This is always a slow process and at we can be overly fearful. But if we allow doubts and fears to dampen our courage, instead of being creative we will remain comfortable and make no progress whatsoever. In this case we will not take an active part in historical processes, but become mere onlookers as the Church gradually stagnates...

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