

Lonergan, Loyola, Spiritual Direction, and the Arts

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In the summer of 1999, I was asked by Jerry Graham, a Jesuit finishing his theology studies, to correspond with him via email on issues related to Ignatian spirituality, aesthetics, and the generalized empirical method of Bernard Lonergan. Since I've had a long-standing interest in these areas I was flattered to be asked.

Our conversation began with Jerry posing questions about how to teach the art of spiritual direction. He had read my book, *Lonergan and Spirituality: Towards a Spiritual Integration*, and thought that the idea of "spiritual integration" would give trainees in spiritual direction a good overall foundation. Since that book is out of print, I thought I should give a brief résumé here of what I mean by spiritual integration.

Lonergan, preoccupied with the ways people can be different from one another, proposed that there are different realms of meaning. Everyone has some measure of common sense, but only some venture into other realms -- the realm of natural science, the realm of the human sciences, the realm of historiography, the realm of aesthetics, the realm of mysticism, and the realm that relates these realms to one another, philosophic interiority.

All these realms are spiritual -- not in the sense of religious spirituality but in the sense of the full range of non-material functions of the human spirit. So, given the many different combinations of realms that any individual may be familiar with, I proposed that the human spirit has a task of integrating them. Hence, "spiritual integration" refers to the task incumbent upon each of us to understand what each realm is about and to avoid importing methods from other realms inappropriately. For a more detailed summary, see [Appendix](#).

Here is a table of the questions Jerry and I discussed, arranged by theme. You may want to read them from beginning to end. Or you can click on the question of your choice, and, when finished, click on the "®" at the end of each answer to return to this table.

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APPENDIX

Loneragan and Spirituality

Spiritual Integration

Q. From reading your book, *Loneragan and Spirituality*, I have assumed that you consider "spiritual integration" to be the goal of a formation program in spiritual direction. Could you explain what that integration entails?

A. I think I should first explain what I mean by "spirituality." Although the idea of union with God forms a common thread, I see three fundamentally different ways people use the word.

A first group equates spirituality with poignant feelings of love and awe, the rush in the heart, the waves of calm, and spiritual consolation. They exclude other events in the mind and heart about practical and domestic matters. Union with God occurs in raw experience—a view reinforced by William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. The spiritual mentors among them devise exercises that might stimulate such experiences, and, when the directee doesn't have them, the mentors feel disappointed—something the directee easily interprets as a judgment on his spiritual worth.

A second group rejects raw emotion as the basis for spirituality and looks instead to the lofty thoughts, values, and principles that should guide human behavior. Union with God occurs in conforming to the set of ideals named "religious," drawing lessons from the Bible, and taking the advice in spiritual handbooks like *Introduction to the Devout Life* or *Imitation of Christ*. Mentors in this group recommend meditation and spiritual reading as the font of one's spirituality—whatever gives insight into how become more spiritual.

A third group rejects neither raw emotion nor lofty ideals, but, knowing the importance of making a real assent, subjects these experiences and insights to validation, verification, discernment. Moreover, they take union with God to be an invitation to accept an accomplished fact. It is news, as the etymology of *gospel* suggests. It has been passed on from generation to generation through creeds and preaching, all aiming to elicit this real assent.

As you can see, these are not just differences in words, but differences in the ways people think of the events of their minds and hearts as "spiritual." The narrower their thinking, the more frequently spiritual events will escape their notice and the fewer questions will occur to them about it. Since the dimensions of anyone's spiritual world is determined exclusively by the questions that happened to occur to them, each way deeply affects how they assess where they stand with God.

Obviously, spiritual guides who are aware of these differences are in the best position to effectively guide others. Guides who are unaware, however, will settle for common words and unwittingly overlook how differently their directees think actually about their religious lives.

Ignatius, for example, shows astute care in dealing with the first two notions of spirituality. He did not automatically prize spiritual consolation; he devised rules for scrutinizing it. Nor did he exalt spiritual ideals. In the *Exercises*, he avoided the sermons of Jesus, and skipped the moral lessons and lofty ideals of the Pauline epistles. Instead he has the retreatant "recall the history" of a gospel event—that is, realize that these things really occurred in our history. God really did this. Even the meditations on The Kingdom and The Two Standards, despite being parables, are presented as what is really going on in the rise and fall of kingdoms, nations, families, friendships and persons. Mentors here focus on whether or not their directees are making real assents, as opposed to experiencing emotions indiscriminately and settling for mere notional assents—no matter how 'religious' the notions and emotions appear to be.

The view of the first group might be called "naïve realist," the second "idealist," and the third "critical realist." But I don't mean that the people with these basic horizons are philosophers. For the most part, the meaning of "union with God" found among these groups are just assumed and never examined, let alone defended by an examination of what knowing is.

(I suggest Lonergan's article, "Religious Experience" in *Third Collection*.¹ He shows how religious experience is only a part, an infrastructure, of the total move toward religious commitment. He explains how it relates to the symbols in our consciousness. He underscores how vulnerable it is to misunderstanding. And he points out how we often don't even notice when we have a religious experience.)

Of course, there will be all kinds of variations within each of these three groups, depending on personality and upbringing. Those in the naïve realist group seldom really understand each other because they are unaware of what understanding is in the first place; they settle for common descriptions of emotional experiences. Likewise, idealists so dote on understanding schemes and concepts that they overlook all kinds of evidence that doesn't fit their preconceptions.

Even members of the third, critical realist, group will find difficulties understanding each other, but their misunderstandings can be overcome by learning what each other's questions are. Questions, though, can occur in different realms of meaning. So there are secondary differences in what they may mean by spirituality, depending on what other realms of meaning they are familiar with:

All have remarkably good common sense because they show prudence and wisdom in their everyday lives. They can accept ignorance, but not stupidity. They know the difference between correcting the errant ways of others and forgiving their malicious ways. They are familiar with the practical dimensions of spirituality.

Some enter the realm of theory—for example, psychology, theology, economics, anthropology, even physics and chemistry. They are accustomed to asking how things work, not just how to work things. They study and sometimes get academic credits toward becoming a professional. They live in a richer world than naïve realists because they take meaning and values into account and avoid trying to explain everything in terms of how things feel. They live in a more concrete world than idealists because they intend to find the actual patterns at work in life rather than find evidence for patterns they think ought to be there. Being critical realists, having discovered for themselves how knowing and deciding actually work, they studiously avoid making claims beyond the limits of knowing and deciding. Traditionally, they have investigated the spiritual dimensions of psychology, but more recently, thanks to Teilhard de Chardin, there's a trend toward seeing evolution itself as a spiritual force in the universe.

Some enter the realm of scholarship and gain the ability to ask about the common sense of another culture. They have learned how to decipher the information gathered about other peoples without projecting their own cultural assumptions on it. They know how to spot what is strange in how others conduct their

lives and how to assemble that strangeness into a plausible, cogent worldview. Unlike naïve realists, they do not assume that historical knowledge is like a mental videotape. Unlike idealists, they do not assume that historical periods follow a predictable pattern. With critical realists, they aim to understand the available data and to express that understanding as plausible explanations subject to revision rather than the final word. They learn about the spirituality of people very different from themselves by bringing to their studies their personal grasp of how minds and hearts work.

Some enter the realm of aesthetics by specializing in music, art, sculpture, poetry, drama, landscaping or architecture. While they immerse themselves in inspirational works and experiences, they discipline themselves to sift the profound inspirations from the shallow. Their works are more than raw sensibility that naïve realists go for, and more than conceptual constructions or didactic lessons that idealists love. With critical realists, they evoke awe at what reality is and might be. They knowingly and cunningly stir hope in others, whether or not the artwork conveys any ideas.

Some enter the realm of the psyche and explore how their personal dreams and imaginings reveal the symbols that shape their attention and interests. They also explore cultural symbols and their effect on the operative values in a society. (Bob Doran and Bernie Tyrrell have explored this realm quite thoroughly.) Naïve realists think just symbolically, which never reveals to them the simple fact that their thinking is symbolic. Idealists expect that symbols carry automatic meanings, regardless of the person in whom they occur; they find it difficult to accept that a cigar may be just a cigar. Critical realists rely on their personal experiments with symbols, insights, knowing, appreciating and deciding to understand the psyches of others, both in individual therapy and in group consciousness. They bring to spirituality the intellectual frameworks that aesthetics brings more directly in images, textures, ambiances, and sounds.

Some enter the realm of religious devotion and speak with God in silent communication. William Johnston comes to mind. They are not carried away, as naïve realists often are, by profound consolations or desolations. Nor, like idealists, do they think of God in concepts. They bow to the mystery of divine reality that is infinitely distant yet infinitely close.

Finally, some enter the realm of philosophic interiority, in many cases following Lonergan's lead. They study the knowing processes of each realm, clarifying their exact merits and shortcomings, relating them to one another, coining the terms that really explain what is going on in consciousness, and regularly scrutinizing themselves to verify that the operations suggested by others in this realm really occur. These may be called the Critical Realists, although anyone who has moved beyond common sense into any further realm has at least met some of the problems of method and categories to whose solution Critical Realism is dedicated.

It is because of these many possible variations that the human spirit has a need to integrate them all. This is what I mean by "spiritual integration." As people learn about science, read history books, compose a sonata, explore the psyche, analyze theological opinions, assess ethical positions, or deepen their love of God, they run into different kinds of meaning, each of which requires its own methods. If "spiritual" encompasses everything about the human spirit, and if that spirit can differentiate in any of three basic horizons and all of seven or more realms of meaning, then, "spiritual integration" means an ability to recognize these basic horizons and to move intelligently among these realms of meaning.

Learning to be a spiritual mentor, then, is no small task. A mentor familiar with more realms is able to enter the worlds of more people. A saint unfamiliar with theology will not understand a theologian, while a critical realist will understand many theologians better than they understand themselves.

Of course, these aren't the only ways the spiritually mature differ from each other. The Myers-Briggs Personality Profile distinguishes 16 ways people move from experience to decision. The Enneatype system distinguishes a group of nine compulsive ways of dealing with our desires and fears, or 27 ways if subtypes are included. But I think these differences apply only within the realms of common sense and the psyche. Compared to differences in the realms of meaning people have entered, they are a lot easier to understand and, of themselves, they present no challenge to a person's basic horizon on what union with God means to them.

This insight into the three major meanings of spirituality was a breakthrough for me. It wasn't until I was in my late 40s that I discovered that I was an idealist when it came to spirituality. I had the firm conviction that "spiritual" had to refer to some normative set of

activities that holy people do. Of course, this view was fraught with problems. For example, who says that these are *the* spiritual activities? I'm embarrassed to think of how often I taught directees these activities as ways to reach God, instead of helping them understand and reach real assents about what God is reaching in them.

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Spiritual Praxis

Q. Also from reading your book, I have taken it for granted that you consider a growth in "spiritual praxis" to be the basic training for a spiritual director. What I wonder about is how you see a person going about learning that spiritual praxis.

A. Regarding the word *praxis*, I'm following Lonergan, who follows Aristotle to some extent. It means the creative work of paying attention, getting insights, realizing what's going on, taking responsibility, and loving. It also means letting the healing forces of religious love soak into consciousness, allowing in the faith to uncover our blind spots, the charity to free us to reach out to others, and the hope to fire up our courage.

People unfamiliar with the term *praxis* can confuse it with *practice*. If *practice* usually means observable behaviors, *praxis* means the spiritual events behind those behaviors. While we experience *praxis* as an inner exigence to make sense and make good decisions and allow inner healing, we experience *practice* as implementing this inner work by communicating to others and putting our decisions into action.

In the concrete, *praxis* is always a working *against* our own biases. Lonergan describes authenticity as "ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity." He also described it as "the kind of knowledge thematized by ascetical and mystical writers when they speak of discernment of spirits and set forth rules for distinguishing between pull and counterpull."²

Lonergan also describes *praxis* as "the kind of knowledge by which people live their lives." So it is not some technique or recipe. It is what goes on in us all the time. However, just because it's going on in us doesn't mean we're actually learning how to do it well. It's one thing to live existentially, but quite another to understand what goes on inside as we're doing that. So the growth comes primarily as we investigate the knowing process itself, put names on specific elements of it and

understand how all its elements interrelate. As you know, Lonergan's whole effort in *Insight* was to explain how knowing works basically, and then to trace the limits and requirements of knowing in the realms of common sense, science, historiography, mysticism, aesthetics and philosophy.

What is more, even after we've discovered how the norms in our consciousness work, we still have to follow what those norms dictate. There are affective, moral and intellectual conversions required. There are the constant pulls of the biases of neurosis, egoism, unquestioning loyalty, and preference for the quick answer. So *praxis* is not just knowledge; it is work.

For a religious person in the realm of common sense, it means thinking in terms of "pull and counterpull" or "God's light and Lucifer's torch" or "good angels and bad angels." At Montserrat, Ignatius had access to numerous rules for spiritual living, but he distilled his lean "rules for understanding movements" from this abundance by restricting his focus to inner experiences and minimizing mention of conceptualized virtues and pious practices.

But for this same religious person in any of the other realms of meaning, *praxis* means approaching the realm expecting to find evidence of unauthenticity. Again, Lonergan: "It starts from the assumption that authenticity cannot be taken for granted. Its understanding, accordingly, will follow a hermeneutic of suspicion as well as a hermeneutic of recovery. ... The use of this method follows from a decision ... comparable to the claim of Blaise Pascal that the heart has reasons which reason does not know." ³ To uncover unauthenticity in these other realms of meaning, we still need to understand our inner "movements." But we also need a fair amount of experience in those areas and some understanding of their procedures and limits if we are going to spot the peculiar twists of unauthenticity that appear there.

Praxis is not a technique for directing others. For spiritual directors to learn it, the essential work is through a personal discernment of their inspirations. To learn to convey it to others, though, it is not enough to carry it out with the spontaneity of good will. A person has to carry it out with the intelligence that seeks to understand inner experience. That inner work is incomplete unless the director sees the world through that hermeneutic of suspicion and hermeneutic of recovery. With regard to every movie, every magazine article, every bishop's statement, every policy in the workplace, every event reported on the news—the list is endless—the basic question is, Is this an expression

of unauthenticity? And to the degree that it may be, the further relevant question becomes, What might heal this unauthenticity?

(Maybe a way to train candidates for the role of spiritual director would be to talk about a movie or TV program from this perspective. The assumption is that writers and directors are like everyone else; they struggle with the contrary pulls in consciousness and what their audiences see is probably going to be a mixed product of both authenticity and unauthenticity. Discussing this together would accustom candidates to this double hermeneutic.)

As you can see, with this approach, there is a shift away from the typical "spiritual direction" session that discusses a directee's personal inspirations. It involves moving toward a shared analysis of community values, public policy, ecclesiastical pronouncements, and cultural expressions. Then, following this hermeneutic of suspicion, there's a hermeneutic of recovery in which the director and directee discuss what healing and redemption is possible. But isn't this what ought to go on in people convinced of God's love? Too much discussion of personal inspirations can convey the impression that knowing what God is calling us to is very difficult business, as if God is reluctant to give us a clear message. On the other hand, people who believe that God is already at work in them, will look together at the social and cultural dimensions of sin and redemption because they're anxious to get this Kingdom going.

So *praxis* is more than just personal growth in the spiritual life. It is even more than helping others grow in their spiritual lives. In a cosmic view of world process, *praxis* is part of a larger, divine movement. It is God's love for the world poured forth in our hearts. It means becoming a person who is a light and an invitation. Spiritual direction sessions will gradually move from a concern to obey God faithfully to a concern to collaborate with God well. It's the movement described in spiritual classics as from the illuminative way to the unitive way, but seen from the perspective of world process. The focus is less on how well directees act in line with God's will and more on how effectively God can work for others in them. It's a shift of focus from the harvester to the harvest.

Mentors can help a person with this *praxis*. With Naïve Realists and Idealists, mentors need to focus on truth. Even though their directees will discuss images, feelings and ideas when they meet, mentors should take care to listen for their questions about what is true and what is truly good.

This focus on truth hit me some years ago. I realized that if God has already achieved union with me, then I need not “strive for perfection,” as if that union would result from my striving. I don't mean to discount the “strive for perfection” ideal in Ignatian spirituality. But I don't think he meant it as the highest ideal. It shows up chiefly in the Constitution material on novices, along with “obedience.” Materials for vowed religious focus more on prudence, wisdom, maturity, discernment, preaching the Word, and helping others find God. In any case, I doubt that many people today really understand what the “strive for perfection” ideal meant for Ignatius. It certainly wasn't about getting a good grade when you die.

I also realized that I would pray better with my eyes open. I used to shut them to ward off all non-religious thoughts. But my Catholic, Thomist tradition kept telling me that the whole universe is data on God's love. What counts is my simple affirmation, “Yes, Lord, I believe it is true.” My prayer became quite different: “Even should all my ideas about you disappear, all my religious feelings turn sour, all my imagination focus on self-indulgence, it remains true that you love us, that you sent your own Son as your perfectly incarnated presence in our history, and that you send your Spirit as your perfect guide to our hearts.”

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Desolation or Depression?

Q. What is the difference between desolation and depression, and how does one tell the difference?

A. Fortunately, we have technical definitions of both terms. Ignatius defined “spiritual desolation” to help people to know which inspirations to follow and which to shun. In fact, he used the term “*spiritual* desolation,” rather than just “desolation,” to underscore the fact that his definition was technical. His goal was the practical business of making sound decisions, and his definition seems to refer to transient experiences, not chronic affective states. He also defined “spiritual consolation” for the same purpose and as describing transient experiences. He crafted these definitions for people familiar with the realm of religious love. People whose lives have been godless and immoral, he says, experience the pull to transcendence as stinging the conscience and the counterpull to unauthenticity as pleasantly corrupt.

Many people misunderstand Ignatius' definitions. For example, feeling giddy, excited and high are spiritual desolations—not good times to

make a decision. They are nothing at all like feeling desolate in the non-technical sense. Likewise, feeling sorrow and sadness and guilt over the sufferings of Christ are spiritual consolations—good times to make a decision. (I would include feeling sad over *anybody's* sufferings here, since any genuine care a shared care with Christ.) But someone in this state can appear to an outsider as needing consoling.

“Depression” was defined by Freud to help people get over a particularly difficult kind of sadness. It's the sadness that endures for weeks, months, even years. It's persistent, in the sense that even after achieving some relief through therapy, in most cases it returns. Like Ignatius, Freud's goal was practical, but where Ignatius accepted spiritual desolation as part of life, Freud aimed to get rid of depression. Where Ignatius regarded spiritual desolation as transient, Freud regarded depression as chronic. And where Ignatius crafted his definition for men and women familiar with the realm of religious love, Freud crafted his for practically anyone.

Unfortunately, besides the typical misunderstanding of technical terms by the commonsense mind, the psychological community itself is rife with mutual misunderstanding. So, among the significant disagreements on all kinds of technical issues in psychology, there are opposed ideas about depression. Many psychologists deem all *transient* feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or discouragement as bad. What's more, many haven't realized that feelings are our initial responses to values, and it's the values that count toward the good life, not the painfulness of the feelings. Their goal is an abiding state of a cheerful disposition, and their method is to suppress or sublimate negative feelings. By disparaging negative feelings, they actually distort the psyches of those patients whose horrendous lives give them good reason to feel sad, frustrated and discouraged. As a result, besides living in really awful situations, patients also feel bad because they feel they shouldn't be feeling bad.

For the clinically depressed—people whose sadness is chronic and crippling—both medicine and psychoanalysis have been effective, but they don't eliminate the transient negative feelings. Joanne Greenberg's book, *I Never Promised You A Rose Garden* (1984), is a poignant story of a woman freed from psychosis but discouraged to find that psychic health is still full of transient feelings of sadness and discouragement.

The clinically depressed also need help in making decisions. That is, they can't put off decisions until their healing is complete. While I've had very little training in dealing with depression, I have had directees

who were somewhat depressed. I advised them to get professional help, and some did. But we continued our mentoring sessions anyway. Ignatius' rules for discerning among transient inspirations still helped them weigh the different qualities of contrary inspirations. I believe it also helped them put their feelings at arm's length, as it were, which I'd like to think helped them move out of depression.

I'm not saying that Ignatius' rules for weighing inspirations can cure depression, but they assume a model of affectivity that many psychologists could well learn. Instead of identifying with their feelings ("I'm just a hopeless person"), talking helped objectify the feelings ("I'm a person assailed by feelings of hopelessness"). Ignatius knew about the technique of stepping back from inner movements. He referred to both inspirations and temptations as "coming from without."⁴ This is an important stance to take because I'm less likely to put myself down just because I have bad feelings, and less likely to puff myself up because I have good feelings. The symbols of good and bad angels perform a powerfully therapeutic function here. Sure, they're "only symbols," but they represent the very mysterious processes by which we are pushed and pulled by contrary forces. When we got enlightened and banished angels and devils from the modern world, we forgot how mysterious our lives are to ourselves, lives where the urges both to do better and to do worse arrive without our control. We assumed that good and evil originate within ourselves and thereby exposed ourselves to bad emotional weather.

So how do you tell the difference between desolation and depression? I'm suggesting that once we understand the technical meanings of the terms, the differences are clear. Spiritual desolation is to be expected; it is normal. Clinical depression is to be eliminated; it is abnormal. Spiritual desolation is transient; clinical depression is chronic. And spiritual desolation is relevant only to people familiar with the realm of religious love; clinical depression is relevant to anybody. Finally, I want to point out that I'm focusing on the technical meanings here because any effort to sort out non-technical, commonsense meanings of these terms is fruitless because the common sense of people differs all over the globe.

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Desolation or 'Dark Night of the Soul'?

Q. What is the difference between desolation and the "dark night of the soul?"

A. I should first explain how limited my understanding is here. It's based on a long-ago reading about the "dark night" in John of the Cross, on some personal experience of spiritual darkness, and some self-attention in the style of Lonergan.

It seems to me that John used the term to mean something different than either "spiritual desolation" or "depression." That is, the "dark night" is neither the transient moods of confusion, anxiety, and so on, nor is it the chronic state of feeling hopeless, alone and miserable. He seems to have meant *a state within a conceptualized scheme of spiritual progress*. It's important to recall that the whole idea of conceptualized states dominated the spirituality of the middle ages. So when people thought they may be in the "state of grace" or in the "state of mortal sin," they took this as God's understanding of where they stood, spiritually. Neoplatonic philosophy, with its affirmation of existing ideal forms, provided the theoretical framework. So, for John, being in the "dark night of the soul" was part of the movement from the purgative to illuminative to unitive states, where each state was imagined as existing even if no one was in it. He believed that experiences of feeling God's absence were in fact part of a metaphysically hard-coded journey toward God.

Still, this "state" had its experiential aspects. You were in it when your prayer seemed fruitless, your faith seemed dry, and God seemed absent. John's purpose, I think, was to encourage people who found themselves in this state. He wanted to assure them that God's silence and the waning of consolations was, in fact, God drawing them closer. Ignatius' purpose, by contrast, was to help people make good decisions. Where John wanted to teach a theology of mysticism for the sake of assuring people that God was with them, Ignatius wanted to teach a strategy of mission for the sake of helping people serve others.

John spelled out two phases of the dark night—an active phase where you forgo satisfactions (sensate pleasures and even some indulgence in your spiritual emotions), and a passive phase where God withdraws those satisfactions and you can't recover them no matter what you do. He explains it in terms of the five faculties of the soul that can be found in Augustine—sensible pleasure, imagination, understanding, memory, and will. As any student of Lonergan knows, there are problems with a psychology based on faculties like this. Also, what Augustine meant by "understanding" and "memory" is quite different than what we mean, and John's meaning may differ from both. I don't know if anyone has attempted this, but it would make an excellent master's thesis were someone to translate the spiritual teachings of

John into the terms that are more verifiable in experience through the empirical method recommended by Lonergan.

Maybe I can sketch out at least some broad outlines of John's mystical theology by expressing, in terms verifiable in experience, what he said about the passive phase of the dark night of the soul. (I'm skipping over the active phase of asceticism and mortification.) What has happened in the dark night is that three otherwise normal supports to our faith have fallen away. First, our feelings—our initial responses to value—no longer move us toward God and seem unresponsive even toward things obviously good and beautiful. Second, our understanding draws a blank and remains confused about what God is doing. We are tired of analysis anyway, and meditation is a trial. Third, our imagination about religious matters runs dry. Religious music, art and architecture seem like nothing more than petty human creations. All that is left is judgment—judgments of value and judgments of fact. Is it correct or not that God is close, loving, redeeming? Is it good or bad to care for others? Is it better or worse to spend time in prayer? Is it true or false that all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well? Yes or no?

It is a frightening experience when spiritual darkness first begins to creep up. But our fear is based on a misconception of what part of us is the locus of faith. I had mentioned earlier how some think our faith is based on the sensitive experience of being lifted up. Others put it in the grasp of a worldview that comprehends sin, grace, and redemption. With both of these, devotees often look to a book or religious leader or self-help technique, or method of prayer. When these go dry, it's no wonder that people think they lost their faith. But faith is neither the uplift nor the insight. It's the value judgments born of religious love. It lies in saying Yes, it is good to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength. It is good to love my neighbor as myself. I may have been brought to the question of God's love by my experiences of being lifted up, of getting a religious world view, of relying on authorities and practicing religious discipline. But I did not say Yes because of these supports. I said Yes because love so moved me. None of those forces that brought me to the question of God's love is equivalent to letting that love move me to this real assent.

Although we should be wary of making decisions if we're experiencing God's utter absence, I do believe that in this dark night we come to know God's transcendence. The very impotence of our feelings, insights, imaginations, institutions and religious disciplines points to a

God always beyond their reach. We almost have to be Arians for a time, under the spell of God's utter transcendence, before we can appreciate the gifts that the Son and Spirit are to our history and hearts. And it is essentially through our love and judgment that we receive the gifts. At those times when God comes to us exclusively through our hearts' love and our minds' judgments, without the more palpable levels of affect, image, and insight, we come to respect the mysteriousness of life more deeply. For example, to human judgment, the evolution of such spiritual beings as ourselves is a marvel. To human judgment, it's a mystery that we can hold as permanent the meaningfulness of friendships that were temporary. Our judgment stands in wonder about the life of the dead. Our minds are confronted, again and again, by the possible literalness of Jesus' statement, "If you did it to the least of these, you did it to me."

Prayer here has no name that everyone agrees about. Although I have sometimes used the term *contemplation* for it, that term means something quite different for Ignatius, and different again from Merton. By whatever name, there is a way of prayer in which we rest in a judgment, a simple assent, a bare acknowledgment that X is true or Y is good. As I mentioned earlier, this came home to me some years ago when I realized that I don't have to close my eyes in prayer. Somehow, praying with my eyes open symbolized for me a letting go of my understanding and turned me to plain evidence. Everything I see is data on God's love. This very human house, with its mismatched furniture, bad plumbing, and disheveled occupants, is God pouring out divine love. What is at hand and what we seek with all our hearts are the same. I formulated this in a brief prayer to pass out to my students: "You whom my heart seeks, you the ones given: The same. The same." The effort in this kind of prayer is to move from a notional assent to the meaning of the words to a real assent to the meaning of one's life.

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A Worldview That Incorporates Prayer

Q. How do you define prayer?

A. I'd define it as raising the heart and mind to God. But that's a rather blunt answer to a serious question. Given the centuries of wisdom available to us on prayer, I had to ask myself why we still ask the question. One strong possibility is because there are new questions coming up that the tradition never thought of. They arise because a

key part of the universe has changed. So prayer today will be something different than it was in earlier times. I hope to show that it's not something alien to earlier experiences of prayer but something better because it includes the earlier while going beyond them.

Unfortunately, my response will have to be rather long. This is because it can't be a simple insight to add to what we already know about life. It involves a revision of everything we know.

For centuries, philosophers focused their attention on the elements in humanity that didn't change. But it is only recently that philosophers like Heidegger, Rahner, Lonergan, Voegelin, and Ricoeur have explored what does change. The startling realization here is that the human species is not fixed. The very manners in which we think, choose and care are evolving. So a major reason why we no longer understand how prayer fits into the larger scheme of things is because the larger scheme itself has shifted.

In the last hundred years or so, for example, human knowing evolved to a stage where we realized that definitions don't easily help us understand our experiences. We call ourselves "rational animals," for example, as if a fixed faculty of reason is what makes us human. But this very rationality is undergoing development. The scientific revolution has impressed on everyone that knowing involves understanding how things work, not where things fall in conceptual schemes. So our thinking is much more focused on understanding experience than on clinging to truth. Also, we have discovered that that being rational does not sum up what makes us who we are. There are unnoticed unconscious processes and cultural forces whose influence is far more powerful than conscious reflection. There are revolutions going on in the human sciences today, as philosophy, ethics and theology debate methods as much as content. We have realized that diverse literary forms in the bible require diverse methods of interpretation and, as a result, we are far less certain about our world. We face ethical questions that cannot be solved by appeal to the Ten Commandments or natural law. We now take the idea of human rights for granted, even though the modern notion of rights is only a few centuries old. We have learned to think on the level of macro-economics and gross health statistics. We can demonstrate the existence of subatomic wavelets that are impossible to picture. We constantly raise our estimates of the probability of intelligent life elsewhere than earth and can only wonder what the Incarnation means in this colossal universe. As our surroundings become strange

to us, it is not just our knowing but our knowing about knowing that hustles to keep up.

If the very meaning of "understanding" has evolved then so will our "understanding" of prayer. When I was a young man, I understood what to do when I pray and I understood that I ought to pray, but I didn't understand what prayer actually did. I casually assumed it let God know what we wanted and awaited some divine response. I never entertained today's empirical kind of question of how prayer functions in life.

Another reason why we no longer understand how prayer fits into the larger scheme of things is that secularism has put a ceiling on the scheme. We have demythologized the God who sends rain when we ask for it. Our symbolic apprehension of the everyday world has been stripped of angels who guard us, God up in heaven who watches kindly, devils who prod us with temptations, evildoers who agonize in hell, and blessings that protect our boats and throats. We rely on psychology and medicine to cure our ills. When we don't rely on guns to resolve international disputes, we appeal to rational self-interest, not on the common and familiar experiences of longing for beauty, order, truth, goodness, company and the absolutely transcendent.

To get an understanding of prayer that is both empirical and open to divine mystery, then, we first need to understand how being fully human and fully graced actually function. How they work. Lonergan calls this kind of insight grasping an "intrinsic intelligibility." That is, we need to understand how we're made, how all our capacities for knowing, deciding and loving fit together. So I think the question is not really how I define prayer but how I can understand prayer in a way that fits with everything else I understand today.

Anyway, that's a long introduction to my reply. I'd like to sketch out some outlines of the larger scheme as Lonergan has proposed. I'm relying mainly on two articles of his, "Healing and Creating in History" and "Mission and the Spirit." I recommend these⁵ because they provide this important backdrop, not only to questions about prayer, but questions about anything related to doing better as humans.

First, our "world," our "universe," is far larger than galaxies and outer space. There's a philosophical naïveté among physicists who attempt a Theory of Everything and yet will not affirm the reality of meanings and values. "Everything" includes the meanings and values that make up civilizations and direct the flow of history. But there are no human meanings and values outside of human minds. We created them and

we revise them. We ignore them and we long for them. There are no institutions, corporations, clubs, nations, families, or friendships that do not rely on minds and hearts for their existence, and any breakdowns of these communities are essentially breakdowns in what people mean and what they hold dear.

Meanings and values emerge in history through our creativity. There is clearly some force in us that constantly notices room for improvements to living. We have a spirit of inquiry that seeks to understand how these improvements might be realized. Because that spirit also wants to live in reality and not just in ideas, it tries to distinguish correct understanding from misunderstanding. Then it will not rest until we put our ideas into effect and checks to be sure that the anticipated effect is really better. And the same spirit in everyone else involved checks it out as well. And if the idea doesn't work for the commonweal, but only for me, others take steps to come up with a better idea.

Gradually, as good ideas are implemented, situations improve, more things make sense, the proportion of routines and habits that don't make sense diminishes, and the likelihood of noticing yet more room for improvements increases. So in communities that work well, even the slow come up with good ideas, while in communities that work poorly, even the swift are confounded by the welter of senseless acts and unintelligible situations.

In all this, the human spirit is seeking God everywhere and always. Often not knowingly, since few people realize that in trying to make things better they always reach for the absolute best. And not always directly, since our attention is usually focused on what we're trying to improve. Moreover, our spirit seeks God not by any decision to do so, but by having received a force that wants the best. But sometimes we pray the prayer of recognition when we let our hearts reach toward the absolutely unimprovable in a direct manner. And sometimes we use the prayer of gratitude when we give thanks for that force that moves us to improve things. This is raising the mind and heart directly to God. It's easy to do, as long as we have no immediate concerns to carry out the good we want.

Clearly, though, creativity is vastly overrated. How is it that so many communities never work well? To Lonergan's mind, it's that we often really do not want to understand, or at least not fully understand. While our instincts favor personal survival, pleasure, and camaraderie, our intelligences often dictate self-sacrifice, delayed gratification, compromise for the greater good and alliances with people who seem

strange. Everyone in the world feels this tension between raw instinct and reflective intelligence. The result is not that some people follow sheer instinct and others sheer intellect, though. This should be obvious given the brilliance with which some people make a mess of things. Rather it's that everyone's brilliance is biased, slanting his or her intelligence in certain areas.

Lonergan often cites four areas where we really do not want to understand. Neurotics can be quite intelligent, but when it comes to understanding certain feelings about certain things, they draw a blank. So they behave in ways that neither they nor their friends understand. Egoists too can be very intelligent, except where it involves understanding what will benefit others. So others have to make exceptions when dealing with them because egoists will not always give in to the most intelligible idea. Entire communities can be self-centered, refusing to entertain ideas that may benefit another community at their expense. We see this in the incoherent mishmash of laws about campaign financing, health care coverage, and tax shelters. Finally, everyone finds it hard to think things through completely. So when situations are complicated, we tend for the "quick and dirty" solution—and a year later quickly cover that dirt.

Fortunately, this larger scheme also has a saving dimension that can heal the biases that cripple our creativity. It's no surprise that the name of this dimension is *love*. But to understand empirically how love fits into the larger scheme, we need to see how it repairs the damage done by bias.

Actually, the scheme here is rather simple and easily verified. Isn't it true that people in love more promptly take on responsibilities for those they love? Aren't they more positively disposed toward *everybody*? Don't they almost automatically forgo self-satisfactions for the sake of doing what is really better? If so, then being in love heals from above a lot of resistance to the urge to be responsible.

Likewise, people who are genuinely responsible, who put objective values over subjective payoffs, are usually more realistic about what is really going on. Because they don't want to waste time on unrealistic ideas, they possess an edge on being reasonable. A liberated sense of responsibility has healed resistance to living in reality instead of myth.

In the same way, reasonable people are more functionally intelligent. They are not afraid to ask why and how. I have found that middle-IQ kids from good families are functionally brighter than high-IQ kids from dysfunctional families. Love, responsibility and reasonableness

has liberated them from hindrances to the spirit of inquiry that wonders why and how.

Finally, people who are functionally intelligent gather all the data they can. They don't want to overlook any experience, and clues, any anomalies, lest they end up with dumb ideas. They are far less likely to suppress the images and feelings rising from their own consciousness, and quicker to spot these in others. Love, responsibility, reasonableness and intelligence has freed up their ability to pay attention to what they experience.

Being in love with God works the same way. The first disciples of Jesus wouldn't have seen eternal worth in him were they not already in love with God. They would never have acknowledged him as God's Word in Person had they not seen eternal worth in him. They would never have understood how eternal life involves a dying to self and how the crucifixion was God's means of salvation had they not acknowledged him as Son of God. They would never have noticed the poor, children, prostitutes, Samaritans, or the crippled had they not understood that self-death shows itself in charity.

In this perspective, God seeks our entire spirit everywhere and always. Being in love with God reveals values like self-sacrifice and truths like the life of the dead. It reveals the worth of Jesus to eventual disciples and the truth that God wills all to be saved. By making clear what really is damaging to us, it illuminates what sin is and the many ways it undermines life. Such values and truths shape how we spend our time, what routines we build into our personal lives and what policies we support in our political lives.

Although being in love with God functions to heal the wounds of creativity in the same way as being in love with friends, we don't pray to friends. Unlike friends, God is both the ultimate *term* of our love and its ultimate *source*. To God as ultimate *term*, we pray wordy prayers of praise and silent prayers of love. To God as *source*, we pray prayers of gratitude when God pours out the gift of healing love into human hearts.

But, more to the point of how God heals, we pray the prayer of petition to God as *source* when things need redeeming. In a static view of the universe, we petitioned God to intervene in the world to help people. It was a kind of *efficient* causality. But now that we realize *how* God heals, namely through the gifts of love in our hearts and of Christ Jesus in our history, our prayer envisions healing as a *formal* and *participative* causality. We pray that God flood hearts with love,

and with the corresponding gifts of faith and hope. We pray that faith in these hearts will recognize Jesus where he is hungry, thirsty, naked or imprisoned. And that hope will sustain these hearts until help arrives. In other words, when we pray that our world be healed, we are acutely aware that it is through the mediation of real people, with real minds and hearts, that all healing comes.

The upshot of this for me is that while I pray that God improve certain situations, I pray in nervous anticipation because I know I have to be alert to any movements of love in me by which God sends *me* to heal.

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Is Contemplation Essentially Value Judgments?

Q. Concerning your circle of praxis, it does not seem to correspond to the four levels of cognitional process. If I'm right, meditation encompasses both understanding and judgment of fact. Contemplation is essentially about a judgment of value. This was never clear to me before. Am I in the ball park?

A. First I should point out that for Lonergan the cognitional process has only three levels—experience, understanding and judgment. Do these and you have knowledge that something exists, or can exist, or will probably have such-and-such effect, or are satisfied that an explanation is correct—each depending on the question posed. You are cognitively self-transcendent. But then there's moral process, which occurs on a fourth level, the level where we're conscious of what's good or better, what's worth doing and worth undoing, what's incumbent on us to do or not do. It involves feelings, but goes beyond feelings to judgments about what really should be done, and beyond these value judgments to the decision to act accordingly. Do these and you're morally self-transcendent. You author something good, which is quite different from recognizing something as true or possible or correct.

My circle of praxis corresponds directly to these four levels. It wasn't my invention. I mapped Lonergan's eight functional specialties in the human sciences onto religious consciousness. It's what we do when we observe, think, realize, and decide—before a choice and after. By using the common words, *noticing, meditating, contemplating, and deliberating*, I'm suggesting implicit definitions. That is, I'm trying to give explanatory power to these words by relating them to one another in a pattern, and then inviting the reader to verify that these operations do occur in this pattern in their own consciousness. I realize

that the result is a technical definition of *meditation* and *contemplation* that is more restricted than how most spiritual writers use those terms, but I think it will help people understand their religious lives.

DECISION TO ACT

<i>Responsibility</i>	Deliberation	Deliberation
<i>Judgment</i>	Contemplation	Contemplation
<i>Intelligence</i>	Meditation	Meditation
<i>Attention</i>	Noticing	Noticing

SITUATION

But your question whether contemplation is essentially about a value judgment is a good one. I didn't think it through clearly enough when I proposed the circle of praxis. Here's the problem as I see it today. I think anyone can notice the difference between thinking about God, playing with ideas, analyzing a Scripture text, etc., and making a real assent that something is really so *or is truly good*. I wanted to restrict "meditation" to prayer that wonders why and how, that seeks to understand, to put two and two together. And I wanted to restrict "contemplation" to the prayer that makes a real assent—for example, to the fact that God loves me, or that Jesus forgiving Mary Magdalene is really good. This puts understanding with meditation and judgments of fact with contemplation. Where does that leave judgments of value? Technically, it belongs on the fourth level, in the prayer of "deliberation." But practically speaking, real assents to truths about God are difficult to make without also recognizing how good these realities are. It's that poignant moment in prayer that I want to define by the term, "contemplation." I want to include any real assent, whether to a truth or to a value, as long as consciousness has not rushed on to deliberating what ought to be done. So I'm combining an initial operation at the fourth level with a final operation at the third. Both are judgments.

Contemplations of values, however, are quite different from deliberations about action. Both involve value judgments, but the real assents involved in contemplation feel quite different from the value judgments we make during the prayer of deliberation. The value judgments during deliberation are about what might be, while the value judgments made in contemplation regard what is. In

deliberation, we usually express our judgments as “probably” good because we haven't produced it yet, while in contemplation there's nothing “probable” about what already is. In deliberation, we seek light on evaluating our past, our present situation, the possibilities that lie before us, but we labor under the light of discernment, of sorting out pull and counterpull. It's work. In contemplation, we have come to rest because an entire group of feelings has retired from nagging us on what might be. Indeed, the sensitive operator at the first level finds a term here in the beauty of what is.

As you can see, I'm still struggling with this. In any case, my “circle of praxis” is not meant to separate what occurs together. It's only meant as an ideal type to help think about the many processes of spiritual living.

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Judgments of Fact and Judgments of Value

Q. I realized from what you said that I have not understood very well the difference between a judgment of fact and a judgment of value. This has been something I missed in my understanding of Lonergan. Could you explain the difference between the two?

A. I think you can find the difference by noticing how our wondering works. Human wonder is not a simple, undifferentiated wonder. We have quite distinct kinds of questions. The kinds of questions leading to judgments of fact are “whether” questions, questions about what's true, what's actually going on, questions about reality. We wonder what's true all the time. I wonder if the Tigers won last night. I wonder if I'm catching cold. I wonder who left the pen in my office. I wonder if the theory of evolution is correct.

No matter how I answer to these questions, a further, quite different question arises about value: “Is that good? ” If the Tigers won, a Tiger fan will say yes, otherwise, no. If I'm looking for an excuse to stay home from work, I may say catching a cold is good but my boss will say it's bad. We can always phrase value questions with a “should” or “ought,” but we express factual questions with any of the many conjugations of the verb “to be.”

In practical choices, we blend these wonderings so fast that we don't notice the difference between them. When a mother tells her child, “That's *dirty!*” she conveys a fact with her words and a value with her tone. In the sciences, though, particularly the human sciences, it is

very important to distinguish the two. It is one thing to know what is going on and quite another to say what's worthwhile. Freud may make the factual judgments that his patient always comes late and is depressed, but he makes a value judgment when he decides which problem should be addressed first. Biologists may correctly state that fetal tissue research has sped up the process of curing Parkinson's Disease, but whether this research should go forward is a question about value. Spiritual directors not only help directees understand what is going on in their lives, they also help them evaluate the past and evaluate their current options.

This can be quite helpful in vocation decisions. In my early years in the Society, I remember conversations with various Jesuits about how we can really know what God wants. It wasn't until I was able to distinguish factual judgments and value judgments (thanks to Lonergan) that I could answer that question. I had been expecting that "knowing what God wants" would be a judgment of fact. Like knowing what my mother wants for Christmas. She may value this dress or those scissors, but my knowledge of her wish is just factual. So I was set up for disappointment when I pressed God for answers to my question, What is it you want, God? Then it hit me that I should not be expecting to make a judgment of fact on the state of God's mind. I should be making a judgment of value prompted by love for God. I should have been saying, Give me your own love to love what's best, God. Although Ignatius often used the expression, "seek the will of God," which suggests a factual judgment, he avoids it entirely in the *Exercises* passages on making a good choice and discerning movements. The whole point of discerning movements is to assess which inspirations are coming out of religious love, from above downward, as it were.

The key failure of liberalism, I believe, is that it doesn't take value judgments seriously. It regards them as sheerly factual. You hold this to be good, and I hold that to be good. These are just facts. There really is no way to reach agreement, except that we shouldn't get in each other's way as we each pursue what we want. Tolerance is the watchword. *Vive la difference!* "Celebrate diversity!" Educational systems focus on "values clarification" but not "values inculcation." Dogmatic theology is out; religious studies are in. Counselors help me see what I really want, but they freeze at the thought of telling me to behave myself.

Liberalism ignores a pervasive intention we all have about doing better. In any single day, there must be thousands of times when we

say to ourselves, "That's better"—I better get up, I better put my slippers on, I better close the shower door. What we intend here is something "really" better, not just what we happen to select. What we aim for is not mere preference, as if I could have easily stayed in bed, or walked barefoot, or let the shower splash all over the bathroom floor. Our notion of value—the anticipation we experience when we ask what's better—is not restricted to what I prefer; it includes what anyone in my situation should prefer.

Lonergan locates factual judgments on the third level of consciousness, the level where we know reality. But that level incorporates the previous two levels. Being attentive brings data to us. Being intelligent involves insight into how the data may hang together. Being reasonable means passing a judgment on the correctness of our insight—insights, as Lonergan was fond of saying, being a dime a dozen. Being reasonable means being concerned about not just sensation (first level), and not just ideas (second level) but about reality (third level).

He locates value judgments on the fourth level of consciousness, at its entrance, as it were, since at this level, the operator, Be responsible, has action as its term, not just opinion. If by being reasonable we know our situation, by being responsible we go on to evaluate it and take action to make it better. Being reasonable is cognitive self-transcendence, being responsible is moral self-transcendence.

It is this four-leveled structure that governs how Lonergan proposed the sciences should distinguish its tasks. There are two phases: retrieving the present situation and moving into the future. Retrieving the situation starts from Research (attention to the relevant data), to Interpretation (get insight into the data), to History (make factual judgments on what is going forward), and to Dialectic (make value judgments on what's been going on, as well as on the value of believing your sources). The second phase moves back down, starting from Foundations (my personal value commitments, my affective, moral and intellectual conversions), to Doctrines (what I hold to be true; principles), to Systematics (how all the truths and values might hang together; policies), and to Communications (adapting the message to the media that comes as data to others; practice.)⁶

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A Note about Method

Often people seek understanding by asking for definitions—of prayer, of desolation, of grace, and so on.

The main point I'd like to make here is that I will not give a idealist's answer but rather a critical realist's answer. An idealist—or, if you will, a conceptualist—expects that prayer, desolation, grace, etc., are concepts that refer to specific, distinguishable experiences. What could be more obvious, right? But concepts don't refer to anything. It's people who do the referring, through the mediation of their insights, the conceptual expression of those insights, and the linguistic terms they use to convey those insights to others. It's actual minds getting insights into experience that lie behind all talk about prayer, desolation or grace.

Also, each of these minds lived in a culture where words shared with other cultures carried nuances and associations that were alien to other cultures. So we have studies comparing Paul's and John's meaning of grace, as well as hundreds of doctoral theses on the meaning of "grace" for a people X in time Y. As Lonergan once said, insights have dates.

So concepts like "desolation," "depression," and "dark night" don't stand for anything without specifying who meant it, and when. It's people using the terms who stand for something, and different people mean different experiences by the term. This is why I started with the meaning of Ignatius on spiritual desolation, with Freud on depression, and with John of the Cross on the Dark Night.

That's only the beginning, of course. The reason we ask about these terms is that we want to understand our present experience. But present experience is massively pre-patterned by cultural influences, our biological makeup, and the long string of choices we made that brought us to our present place. "Maybe this cluster of experiences is what others call 'desolation'." "Perhaps what I've been doing is what the saints called 'prayer.'" "Could it be that what I feel when I walk out into the morning air is, to speak without metaphor, an 'invitation'?"

To understand present experience, then, we certainly should bring to bear the wisdom of past sages who struggled with similar experiences. Their integrity helped illuminate the dynamics of spirit that, in many dimensions, are transcultural. But we also should bring an awareness of how the scientific revolution and the emergence of historical-critical

methods have shaped what we mean by 'understanding.' Today, we naturally think in empirical, inductive modes that no one prior to the 17th century would understand. And we naturally think with a hermeneutics of suspicion and recovery that no one before the 19th century German historical philosophers and psychiatrists would understand.

Finally, with Lonergan's work, there is emerging a third major shift in how understanding can work to enhance our living together. By analyzing what happens when we know anything and by justifying the kind of objectivity we can achieve, he established a personal base for anyone to develop transcultural categories that help explain reality. Sure, we conceptualize them, but these concepts emerge from insights into events that we can verify as being universal among anyone who claims to know anything. I'm thinking of the events of appreciating beauty, paying attention, getting insights, formulating ideas, verifying ideas, assessing the worth of things, making decisions, making life commitments, falling and staying in love.

It seems to me that the term 'spiritual' can be defined in a transcultural way if we use it empirically to refer to any non-material occurrences in human consciousness. That is, my whole psyche is spiritual. So my spiritual life covers all my looking, hearing, tasting, smelling, wondering, understanding, weighing evidence, realizing, deliberating, feeling, reaching conviction, feeling assured, deciding, regretting, loving. That doesn't mean that I understand how my psyche works to deliver knowledge and prioritize options. That takes the kind of interiority analysis that Lonergan led his readers through in *Insight, Method in Theology*, and a number of articles.

So I would widen the meaning of "spiritual" beyond its usual religious connotations. I want to use the term to refer to the 'together' person described by Aristotle, or the 'prudent' person described by Aquinas. It is definitely not restricted to thinking and deliberating about God. It's about all my conscious moments. If God floods our hearts with love, it's not all meant to be returned directly. Most of it we have to return by the indirect path of loving others.

So, today, we aim for a functional understanding of the spiritual life—how it works in a world of massive economic structures, political movements, and technological change. And we begin by suspicion—of the stories others tell and of the suggestions of our psyches. Fortunately, the age-old practice of resisting temptations and Ignatius' wisdom on discerning inspirations have reinforced the praxis of discerning pull and counterpull, both in ourselves and in all the

products of our culture. And we seek to ground the terms we use in an analysis of what we do when we know, decide, and love.

I hope that makes sense. I've tried to put in a few words the enterprise that Lonergan has begun and to show its relevance to living more deeply and fully in a changing world.

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Training in Spirituality

Program Design for Lay Spiritual Directors

Q. If you were going to design a two year formation program for lay spiritual directors, what would your program look like? and why?

A. I have a few practical ideas. First, I'm uneasy with the term, 'spiritual director' because it connotes someone who will give me directions. It's also so deeply tied into clerical and monastic religious traditions that it can alienate some potential lay leaders. I like to think of spiritual direction as something I have (in the sense of a particular spiritual orientation), not something someone gives me. So for a program title or the main line in an ad, I suggest something like "Learning to guide others in the spirit." Or "Becoming a spiritual guide." (The term "mentoring" may be a little trendy, even though I have used it myself to avoid the "directive" connotations of "director.")

Second, I support the idea of credentialing. While individuals may "discern" over the two years of your program whether they feel called to this ministry, the program administrators may recognize something that the student doesn't—that he or she lacks the resources to carry it out. The Spirit works through both individual discernment and the judgment of the larger community. When I was a novice director, I had to dismiss a particular novice despite his honest and prayerful objections that he felt called. My staff was in agreement that he lacked the basic resources for a life of ministry in community. Of course, anyone completing your 2-year program can hang out a shingle advertising their services; it's beyond your control. But I do think it helps the larger church community if 'credentialed' has real meaning.

Finally, I think the people who need what is ultimately delivered should be involved in designing the program. Perhaps a yearly meeting with representatives from local parishes, schools and hospitals—the institutions where spiritual guides can make a living. A kind of board of trustees. Put to them the questions, "What are the outstanding

spiritual needs among your people today?” and “What should a spiritual guide learn in order to meet these needs?” Regular meetings like these will give you the directions, along with the felt commitment and ongoing contact with your audience, which can keep a good program alive.

Turning to program content, I’d like to suggest some essentials.

1. Theology courses should focus on history, dialectic, foundations and doctrines. I’m listing these according to Lonergan’s functional specialties, but that doesn’t necessarily mean separate courses. For example, I could see combining history and dialectic, and combining foundations and doctrines.

History: Participants need to realize that different eras and cultures had quite different views of Jesus. Jaroslav Pelikan wrote a good book on this—*Jesus Through the Centuries*. The *National Catholic Reporter* asked artists to paint a Jesus for the new millennium and received about 1,600 entries! (The winner was an androgynous underclass Jesus in Dominican robes—a Jesus of both sexes equally, a Jesus of the poor, a Jesus of spiritual depth.) Also, the history of spirituality is important, provided that the various schools and movements are presented as solutions to problems of their day and not as timeless ideals directly applicable to any situation. This will help participants scrutinize the adequacy of their inherited spirituality for the needs of today. It will help forestall spiritual dogmatisms that canonize specific practices and viewpoints.

Dialectic. Dialectic is about encounter of different horizons. Here, participants need to understand how the question of God occurs in today’s culture. As always, there’s the question of how God can allow evil. But there are new questions that arise from our discovery of how big the universe is, how minute its smallest parts, how long it has been going on before consciousness emerged, how we have lost our sense of ritual, how deep and complex the unconscious realm is. There are also questions about ultimate meaning that atheists agonize over. There are new moral questions, especially in the areas of economics and health care. The more participants really understand questions like these, the better able they’ll be to encounter other persons at the heart-to-heart level.

Foundations: Participants need to deal with how the human spirit is structured—what knowing is, what good means, and how

God's grace and the Incarnation affect that structure. The aim is to free them from naïve realism and idealism. This was my general aim in *Loneragan and Spirituality*. But by "deal with" I mean much more than mere knowing. I mean the existential task of undergoing an intellectual conversion, which means reaching real assents to what goes on within, and radically shifting my priorities accordingly.

Doctrines. I'm emphasizing doctrines over systematics here because I believe that what we believe and what it means is more directly important for spirituality than what conceptual frameworks are the most consistent and logical. The key doctrines would be about grace, Trinity and the Incarnation. Again, since these are real, a course on it would aim for real assents. Without these real assents, any effort in systematics becomes just a game of logic.

2. Practicums in Spiritual Guidance.

I found it quite difficult to guide novices on their "experiments"—the short-term assignments to work in hospitals, parishes, retreat houses, schools, etc. When we met to discuss their experiences, they described events at length while I felt at a loss to pose a relevant question. The problem, I see now, is that I didn't know what the relevant questions were. Only in retrospect have I realized some of them. Whether this distance has given me clarity or just superficiality, I can't say. For what it's worth, then, here are a few thoughts for your trainees:

Some of the relevant questions are about the trainee's psyche. The psyche is important because it's such a large part of the data on grace. Experiences of consolation and desolation are psychological events. So are acts of faith and commitments. They can be discussed in their own right as events linking the deepest part of ourselves with other people. That would include reflection on phobias, ambitions, compulsions, etc. Trainees will need to learn basic counseling techniques, of course, but first they need sufficient understanding of their own psyches to avoid the problems of unnoticed transference and manipulation.

Then there are the theological questions. I used to conduct "Theological Reflection on Experience" seminars at Regis College in Toronto. A participant would present a "case," which was a personal experience of ministry that they wanted to explore more fully. After a 10-minute presentation, we focused first on

what is good here, then on what is bad, and finally on what is redemptive—in three distinct steps. I was following Lonergan's "three approximations to concrete reality."

Usually the person presenting the case focused on problems, so it seemed important first to step back and take a larger view of the values and meanings present. So in the first step, I tried to draw out the faith, creativity and good will of the people in the situation. In particular, we usually discussed the values and commitments and good will of the participants. We took a functional approach that sought to explain how these positive elements tended to improve the situation.

In specifying what is bad, it is not enough to talk about what people did and what they caused. It is very important to include the biases of the people involved. It's always going to be there, although it may not always be easy to pinpoint the exact nature of the bias. Also, it's important to reflect on how the consequences of what people do include not only barring people from access to what they need but also in intensifying biases among all participants, including that of the perpetrator. Sometimes we ended up drawing a diagram that showed how a covert bias generated a cyclic evil. (For example, a battered woman ends up battering herself emotionally.)

In specifying what is redemptive, the outcome depends on the kind of case presented. In cases where no further action is possible, the discussion moved toward recognizing how grace actually worked or was blocked. In cases where further action is possible, the discussion helped the presenter make a decision and expressed the decision in terms where the work of God in Word and Spirit are understood. In the back of my mind were the heuristic expectations that all grace is the meeting of the inner word of divine inspirations with the outer word of divine meanings and values—originating in Jesus and evolving in the Christian community.

I don't mean to canonize this method, but it may give you some ideas of how to illuminate the theological significance of experiences. I see participants meeting in workshop settings to discuss concrete cases drawn either from a personal critical incident described by a participant, from an experience of

guiding someone else, or from literature. The purpose of these seminars would be to habituate participants in seeing God at work in the concrete.

Finally, there's an affective dimension that's important. People in a program typically form a community with each other and with the program administrators. Friendships are made that last for years. Often, participants look to a program in spirituality as a way to meet new people, especially people with the same religious ideals and goals. Most of this happens automatically, of course, but I think that administrators of programs need to attend to these needs among the participants and to examine the relationships they are forming with them.

3. The imprinting by staff.

The example of how the staff gets along, prays, counsels, and plays is a powerful teacher. What you do speaks louder than what you say. So it's very important for a staff to reflect on God in its own life, using the same methods offered to participants.

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Supervising Future Spiritual Directors

Q. How do you see supervision working? Do you consider your three question process (What is good? What is bad? What is redemptive?) as a way for spiritual directors to do supervision of their own work?.

A. If the unexamined life is not worth living, then self-supervision is essential for spiritual directors. What counts, of course, is the questions I use to supervise my own self.

I do think that spiritual directors could use this three-step process fruitfully, but I'd want to add an important observation. The three questions are not pulled out of a hat. They come from an insight into what a *situation* is. What many people overlook is that every situation is a living interaction of creativity, bias and healing grace. That's why the three steps can help clarify what's really going on.

So, in a first step toward understanding a situation, we look at the process and results of human creativity. We ask "What is good here?" It's not only the external and material conditions I live in. It's also the meanings and values held by everyone in the

situation. It includes any proposals floating around to improve the situation by fostering the creative process and supporting the obvious lines of development. While knowing a situation includes my own meanings and values, knowing my own is quite different than knowing everyone else's. I don't just "know" my meanings and values, I hold them to be true; I'm committed to them; they are normative for me in a way that the meanings and values of others are not. That is, part of the situation is precisely my assessments of it and commitments to changing it.

In a second step, we look at the question of bias. Besides knowing what others hold and holding what I hold, I also have to ask about people's integrity in holding what they do, including my own. This is the hermeneutic of suspicion, in which I don't just assume that everyone is innocent of our very human penchants to hoard time and money, to make a name for ourselves, and to dominate others. I don't assume that everyone is free of compulsion nor that everyone is farsighted and prepared for the long haul. I don't assume that people will put integrity first and loyalty second. These penchants have their products in external conditions that make no sense, which makes it hard on everyone else, but they also have their products in habituating the perpetrator to living destructively and encouraging others to follow suit.

This naturally raises the question for the third step: What is going on, now, that is healing this situation? Grace, we know, is always double because God has given the divine self to us, and God is doubly-processing. Grace comes directly as love flooding over in our hearts, giving us an eye for the truly good, the hand to lend to others, and the guts to endure troubles. It comes indirectly, through others, as the meaning and worth of Jesus in our history. Grace meets grace as that eye for the good sees divine goodness in Jesus and his followers, as that hand reaches out to others in a common charity with Jesus and his followers, as those guts endure the cross with Jesus and his followers. So, practically speaking, we can ask, Where is love at work here? (Wherever it is, we can recognize it by how it frees people to be more responsible, reasonable, intelligent and attentive.) And we can ask, What divine meanings and values are present here? (Wherever it is, we can recognize it by association with doctrines such as "It is better to suffer evil than to do it," or "Unless the seed fall to the ground ..." or "The Lord is very near; there is no need to worry" or "Happy are the poor ..." and so on.

Again, though, I want to caution against using these steps as rules. For pedagogical purposes, they're useful for helping people think theologically about *situations*. As I have said, I have used them in 1-2-3 order in seminars on "theological reflection." But the end result should be a habit of mind and a worldview, not a technique. They are useful in the sense that Ignatius' Two Standards is useful: They help us see God in all things.

While these steps help us see God in all things, discernment helps us discriminate between false gods and the true. It's part of the hermeneutic of suspicion necessary to know what's really going on in a situation. While the focus of these steps is to understand the present, the focus of discernment is to move into the future. There are thousands of questions that can come up during discernment, but fortunately our questions can be grouped by kind.

A good first question is whether I really know what my directees have been going through. Did I really hear everything? Did I really enter into their world and see things the way they did? Or was I distracted by other concerns? Are there certain concerns that keep pulling me away? Is my distraction something about my role or self-esteem? Or maybe about some project I've left undone?

Then I can reflect on what I understood. Was there anything they said or did during our meeting that still puzzles me? Is there something about their psychological dynamics that I should remember? Do I understand them not only psychologically but theologically as well? Do I tend to see the same pattern in a variety of people, when in fact there have been quite different dynamics going on and I've only been projecting? Am I familiar enough with the realms of meaning that my directees live in that I can help them assess the issues of integrity and responsibility that they face there? (For example: literary or artistic honesty; political and economic critiques grounded in theory rather than common sense.)

From there I can ask, Do I feel that I've really entered into their world? Do I feel confident that I see things the way they do? Have I uncritically taken their statements as true, or rather more critically as just evidence on which to assemble a complete view? In my experience, a major part of spiritual direction is complete when I really have entered their world and they, for their part, have no doubt that I have. But it's very important to make sure that my understanding is on the mark. Many an experienced director will confess that love of understanding and neglect of reasonableness has caused many a painful misunderstanding of a directee.

Then come the Should questions. Very often, they need no advice at all. What they should do is clear to them. It would be far better to expend the effort to reach this point and *not* give advice, even if they wanted it, than to skip over the earlier questions and give them advice you think they need to hear. If nothing else, my insistence on really knowing what has been going on says to them that it's important to identify feelings, the objects of feelings, good and bad inspirations, reliable and unreliable beliefs, and so on. By the same token, however, there are times when I would be irresponsible if I didn't voice some cautions or correct some errors.

A final set of questions regards my relationship to the directee. Although few relationships reach what we ordinarily call a friendship, it isn't enough to be an advice-giver or teacher. The best gift is to be company in the struggle, particularly if I can be there for the directee without any ambiguities stemming from my own needs.

As you can see, the relevant questions flow from the structure of consciousness. And although I've suggested these as questions to pose to myself, I don't see any difference if a supervisor poses them to a trainee in spiritual direction.

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What is 'Doing Justice'?

Q. The Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Portland wants to look at constructing a "five year plan." What seems more important to me is to look at the process by which the JVC pursues the human good and to construct a "five year plan" for how to continue to experience what they want, how best to implement a plan for the recurrence of that, and then how to correct and challenge what exists in terms of higher values. In short, what would you advise an organization that wanted their "Mission and Planning Board" to do a "Five Year Plan?" They want to progress in terms of social justice in the city, but find themselves conducting board meetings and planning in a way that seems indistinguishable from big business or Kiwanis.

A. I haven't thought this through nor discussed it in any depth with anyone, so I can only offer a few random remarks.

First, about "mission" I think it's important that everyone know and feel who is doing the missioning. Big corporations have diluted the word to the thin soup of "vision" or "purpose." Very abstract. In Christianity, the expression was utterly concrete and powerful. It was Jesus, preacher, healer and friend of the poor sending disciples to

preach and heal and befriend the marginalized. The upshot here is that the people on a "mission" board should know and feel the life and concerns and difficulties, as well as the advantages and liberties of the poor. Their authority as board members should be based not on having been appointed to the board but on being someone who can authoritatively speak for the *anawim*. People who receive their directives should feel that these are heartfelt desires of the people on the board, and not just some plan that the board dreamed up.

Second, about how the meetings are conducted, one advantage in running things like the Kiwanis is that they are usually more interested in seeing results than in discussing theories. They think in terms of return on investments. And they take a long-range view, knowing from business experience that quick and dirty solutions don't last and often just make things worse.

Having said that, though, the conduct of the meeting might be unlike the Kiwanis in several ways. For one, any deliberations should include discernment of inspirations. That is, besides the usual weighing of pros and cons, the board also weigh the quality of the inspirations. In Colossians 3:15, the author says, "Let the peace of Christ umpire in your heart." (The Greek word is rule like an umpire; there's a different word for rule like a king.) So there should be periods of common interior listening with the express purpose of tasting the movement that supports a proposal. (Haven't you been to a thousand Jesuit meetings that start with a prayer but lack this very specific request?) All this would happen, as I envision it, among people who already are familiar with discernment of inspirations and the Two Standards, and perhaps even the symbolic exercises I suggested above.

I'd like to note a caution about justice. People often presume that justice is met when wages are fair or opportunities are equalized. This is not the notion of justice in the Bible, nor even in Plato and Aristotle. These more classic notions focused more on the changes of heart that widen our horizons, giving us felt compassion and some determination to be inclusive in our loving. The *result* of this kind of justice may well be felt in wages and opportunities, but the notion of order and harmony that justice connotes lies essentially in the order and harmony of the soul, both in those who give and those who receive.

I have another caution: "Justice" is often too abstract to guide deliberations. As a concept, it suffers from the limitations of any concept. It's just thoughts, and the thoughts of one person can be different from the thoughts of another. So there are more futile discussions about "What really is justice?" The concrete meaning of justice can be found in our common desire for social and personal

order. It's an answer to the concrete question, "How might things work best among everyone?"

Lonergan has suggested a heuristic structure for the answer to this question in his "structure of the human good." Things work best when particular goods and services that are truly good flow regularly. And things work best when people adapt to better ways to ensure the flow of these goods. But to make the judgment about what is truly good and to be willing to change to these better ways means that people's hearts have to be committed to the objectively valuable and resistant to the many pulls toward the subjectively pleasant. So the "things" that need to work well are not just the flow of goods and services. It's also the efficiency of institutions, the operative social values, and the regular functioning of people's insights, wisdom, commitments and care.

Well, that may sound abstract, but it's actually not. What Lonergan is doing is identifying all the relevant questions that occur when we want to improve things, and showing how these questions all relate to each other. Once I understand that this is how my actual questions occur and interconnect, I can more intelligently make things better.

Maybe I can formulate some guiding questions for a Justice Committee in this perspective.

- (1) Are the goods or services we intend to facilitate really good?
- (2) Can we ensure that the recipients will be more inclined to use them in truly good ways?
- (3) If there's opposition to our proposals, can we move them to a change of heart and not just outmaneuver them?
- (4) Is it *we* who need the change of heart, either about what is truly good or about the cost of change?
- (5) Do we imagine ourselves as *haves*, giving to the *have-nots*, or rather as *anawim* sharing with the *anawim*?

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Art and Spirituality

Spiritual Direction and the Arts

Q. What is the relationship, if any, of spiritual direction and the arts?

A. First, I should make it clear what I understand spiritual direction to be.

What's key here is the meaning of 'spiritual.' I like Lonergan's approach because rather than assume that 'spiritual' is equivalent to 'religious,' he has you pay attention to your own consciousness and verify what he proposes about its spiritual dimensions. What I have discovered, and believe that others can verify for themselves, is that 'spiritual' covers different levels of consciousness ranging from fleeting, subconscious images all the way up to falling in love.

To be more specific, then, I see the human spirit as defined by six, progressively definitive routines. There are subconscious images and affects; then conscious attention to experiences, including the images and affects that rise to consciousness; then intelligent understanding of experience; then reasonable verification that one's understanding is correct; then responsible action as a result of value judgments; and then a host of influences coming from interpersonal relationships.

Naturally, how these six levels shape the individual person varies immensely across the globe and down the ages. Each person has a unique pattern of these routines, but the routines are all 'spiritual,' and they reveal an orientation, a path, a direction. This is the essential meaning of "spiritual direction." The derivative meaning is more common: "spiritual direction" is advice others give you on this direction of your spiritual routines. Spiritual directors who don't understand the essential meaning can inadvertently ignore how art, insight and real assents are part of the spiritual life. So they misunderstand the derivative meaning and, in a quite literal sense, don't know what they're doing.

Turning to aesthetics, then, I see art, sculpture, music, architecture and dance as working between the first and second spiritual routines. They bring some patterns of images and affects of the unconscious to consciousness. The human spirit relishes these because the pattern itself, without necessarily having any message or external reference, appeals to our potential for beauty. This is usually more clear in instrumental music than in art because art often depicts things we are able to see in a real setting, while instrumental music seldom can be heard in any other setting. Indeed, the really good art that depicts something else should be beautiful even to viewers who have no idea of what it's depicting. Just as musicians try to make every note beautiful, so the artists try to make every brushstroke beautiful. Every brushstroke has texture, shape, hue, brilliance, tone, and relationship

to nearby brushstrokes. Every single one of these aspects has to make sense. Likewise, each of the many passages in a sonata and each of the many shapes in a painting have to be meaningfully related to the whole piece. If they don't, it detracts from the virtual pattern of experience of the whole.

Beauty is the appearance of order. We turn to beauty because it represents in image form the harmonies we need in a good life. It stands for what might be. Or it reveals deeper dimensions of what is. Beauty always points beyond itself. Every beautiful thing is a statement that reality has potentials beyond our dreams. We pluck the same guitar strings ten times in a row because each pluck stimulates our hope for more harmony in life. We hang a Rembrandt print in our living room because each time we see it, we don't feel we've seen it all. And this is true. This is the reality in which we stand. We live in a universe whose meaning and dimensions far outstrip our understanding and creativity.

So I see the relationship between the arts and spirituality as the business of hope. It differs from charity, which is the power to love others. And it differs from faith, which is the gift to see values where logic and reason are blind. Hope is desire made confident by faith and gradually fulfilled through charity. In the meantime, hope nudges us toward the better, even though we cannot envision what "better" may mean down the line.

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Are the Arts Rooted in Flesh & Sexuality?

Q. At a meeting I recently attended, a Jesuit surprised everyone by asserting that there was no connection whatsoever between Ignatian spirituality and the arts! He cautioned even trying to connect them. Part of his reasoning was that Ignatius claimed that after certain events of his conversion, he no longer had any struggle with the "flesh," and that the arts are grounded in the flesh and sexuality.

A. It will be no surprise that I would take a different approach to the "flesh" and "sexuality," given that they are intrinsic goods to my marriage. But even before I had much sexual experience I would have had philosophical difficulties with saying that the arts are based in them. I believe that the arts are based in an impulse, a drive, what Lonergan calls an 'operator,' at the sensitive level that moves us toward beauty. Sex is a different drive, although obviously not independent of beauty. One key difference is that the drive to beauty

is almost completely indeterminate, open, plastic, flexible, and able to be realized in an infinite variety of forms, while the sex drive heads toward both friendship and children, which in turn are concrete elements of the Body of Christ.

Certainly, everyone has the task of testing whether the lure of the flesh and sexuality is good to follow in this or that concrete situation. In line with Ignatius' classic *tantum quantum*, we should use God's creatures insofar as they contribute to God's glory and avoid uses that head elsewhere. As a celibate, that meant something different than it does for me as married. But in both cases, they are part of our makeup. Both the celibate and the sexually active who are artists face the very difficult challenge of seeing within the huge swells of sexual urges the deeper, quieter pattern that is capable of moving us beyond ourselves. But surely there's a need for poetry and art that objectify the celibate commitment. Hopkins has it. Dag Hammarskjöld has it. Michelangelo's *David* surely invites its viewers to see a magnificence beyond the sensual.

Any objectification of that experience, though, should not focus on celibacy as a call but as an existential condition in which I can best follow my call, given available avenues. I don't think celibacy is a vocation. The image of celibacy, by itself, doesn't dominate our experience of inner transcendent movements. If it's there at all, it is the concrete historical and psychological conditions in which I can best respond to God's call to something positive, something active and loving. In my reading of Ignatius, he never spoke of being called to celibacy. Not even to priesthood. These dimensions of his life were instrumental to following a call to "save souls." In his day, you couldn't do that without becoming a celibate priest; such were the available avenues open to him. I happened to live with Jean Vanier for a summer, and believe that he never chose celibacy; he just found that caring for the handicapped was more constantly on his mind.

I haven't attempted any artistic expression of celibate love, but it seems to me that anything produced by a religious celibate today should portray how lean and spare the call to self-transcendence feels; how marvelously confident it feels despite the absence of a warm, sexy companion; how tenuous it all is, awaiting always both a further word on what may be more for God's glory and the next wave of horny desire.

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Aesthetic Conversion?

Q. Is there such a thing as "aesthetic conversion?"

A. I have seen this term here and there in Lonergan circles, but I'm not convinced that it explains an event like the conversions that Lonergan described. He portrayed it as an about-face, a switch from one way of living to another. It involves some kind of repudiation. But conversion is not the only way we change. There are many ways in which we just develop. We can enter a realm of meaning that we were unaware of before without repudiating anything. For example, when teenagers learn about science, they enter the realm of theory. They are not repudiating their common sense. Or as they take increasing responsibility for their lives, they are not repudiating a prior commitment to self-centeredness. They are just discovering the difference between self-centeredness and objective worth and then opting to subordinate the first to the second.

I think the same goes for aesthetics. Most of us grow up with some exposure to beautiful paintings, music, sculptures and architecture without realizing how they moved us. Then, once we try our hand at it, we realize what a wondrous and complex realm of meaning aesthetics is. There are terms to learn and a new self-awareness to acknowledge when we explore this new horizon.

Having said that, however, I do think that our affective, moral and intellectual horizons affect how we move in the realm of aesthetics. That is, affective, moral and intellectual conversions are important to the artist. Where hatred and egotism have closed off our personal store of the images of loving and doing better that might guide our art, affective and moral conversions open the doors. Intellectual conversion opens us to explore the very operations we perform as we do our paintings. It makes clear what to many artists is ambiguous. For example, Should I paint what I see? What *is* seeing, really? Should I envision what I want this art piece to look like before I begin? If I am being authentic and not just painting what sells, what am I relying on when I do this? How do my affective and moral commitments affect my art? What do I want to happen in my viewers? Can anyone really say that one painting is good and another is bad?⁷

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Aesthetic Processes and Lonergan's Levels of Consciousness

Q. Since we are talking about the arts, another issue has never been clear to me about Lonergan's account of the artistic process: Does he see it as having three distinct steps/levels (aesthetic experiencing, objectifying, idealizing) that correspond to the three levels of cognitional process? Or does he see artistic process as two leveled: experiencing and objectifying, where objectifying is one complex function that includes objectifying and idealizing the artistic insight?

This has always been confusing to me because objectifying the insight (for me) seems to require "frequent visits" to the intellectual operation (as you express it in "What Do I Do When I Paint? "). But idealizing seems to me to require "frequent visits" to the reasonable operation. That is, idealizing a poem always seems to me to be a matter of making artistic judgments. Revising a poem seems to be precisely a matter of making a series of versions of the poem—and making a judgment about which best embodies the experience of the original insight. This process always seems to me to be a matter of comparing versions of the same poem—either on paper or in my head. Each line or word of revision, in effect, creates a new version of the poem that requires a judgment to be made. This experience makes me want to think of the artistic process as having three distinct levels which correspond to the three levels of cognitional process—a kind of concretization or objectification of cognitional process. Do you see the artistic process as two or three levels, and what is the relationship of those levels to cognitional process?

A. These are good questions. First, though, I want to clarify the "frequent visits" remark I made in the article. The expression I used was "frequent visits to the intellectual pattern." I wasn't referring to any particular occurrence of an insight into an art piece but to the entire intellectual pattern of experience—the kind of attention you pay when you're trying to figure out the relationships between things, which is quite different from the kind of attention you pay to beauty. It includes the first three levels taken as integral components toward knowing anything. I did not intend to distinguish intellectual and reasonable operations there. Also, isn't the judgment you're talking about actually a judgment of what is better rather than a judgment of what is true? And if so, then it seems that the artistic process does not map onto the three levels of cognitional self-transcendence.

Regarding where Lonergan speaks of "idealizing" a form, I don't think he is thinking of the third level of consciousness. (His usual use of "ideal" and its cognates relates to the second level.) How art works on

people is quite immediate and elemental. Let me quote him: "Anything that is conceptual is also at least incipiently reflective. But the expression of the artistic meaning not only is on a more concrete level than the conceptual, but also it is without the reflexivity of conceptual meaning. The symbolic meaning of the work of art is immediate. The work is an invitation to participate, to try it, to see it for oneself. It has its own criteria, but they are immanent to it, and they do not admit formulation."⁸

Where he says that the meaning of art is not conceptual, I presume he means that it doesn't state any truths or affirm the adequacy of explanations. It doesn't answer questions of how, why, whether or should. Instead, he describes its meaning as invitational. Like the moon to lovers, it beckons, points, allures, yet it always remains more than our conceptualizations and resists our efforts to use it for mundane purposes. It is part of a universal process of vertical finality by which beings capable of self-transcendence are moved, nudged, impelled, drawn to accomplish that self-transcendence.

Aesthetics works in the order of symbols. That is, it gives us images and stirs feelings that represent our hopes without specifying what hope's fulfillment will look like. In the eye of the viewer, aesthetics stirs an awareness of the presence of meaning—but since that awareness underlies all human inquiry, aesthetics stirs in us the pure movement of self-transcendence itself.

I think this is why beautiful things can make us weep. Perhaps the "gift of tears" so celebrated in the middle ages as a gift in prayer is, and always was, the burst of hope released from our subconscious yearnings by the symbolic operator. It is the same process whether it occurs in a prayerful focus on God, listening to a really good poem, or hearing a poignant tale. Just last Sunday, Garrison Keillor, on *Prairie Home Companion*, told a story that brought me to tears, made more intense by my realization that this also is my heart's longing for God and the good of my neighbor.

Artists who know and recognize this movement, this draw, this pull toward self-transcendence, will try to objectify it in a way that helps others experience it. It's certainly true that artists focus on experience. And while I believe that artists have insights, the insights don't produce concepts, as they do in response to a question for intelligence. They produce images that are more or less adequate to the originating experience. When they go on to represent that image in paint or sound, then they make the judgments on whether the result is adequate to the experience. But that's a judgment of value, not a judgment of fact because their intent from the beginning was to make

something, not know something. The criterion is the same as for other judgments, namely the absence of further relevant questions. But these “questions” themselves are not conceptual; they are feelings, considered as initial responses to potential value. Of course, all this is my attempt to explain, in explanatory terms, what artists do when they look a line and erase it because they don’t “like” it.

Artists who only vaguely recognize this movement toward self-transcendence will be confused as to what they are consulting when they say they don’t like the line they just drew. The usual error is to go for mere intensity of feeling. Lonergan also lists exuberance, distraction, aestheticism and technique as uses of art that fall short of, or distract from, the highest function of art: “...when art is without this ulterior significance, ... it is separating objects from the ready-made world by way of exuberance, like the exuberance of a child, or by way of a distraction. Or it becomes aestheticism, just the enjoyment of the pattern. Works of art then supply the materials for exercises in one’s skill of appreciation. Or art becomes technique. The compelling form is there, but there is no sense of that ulterior *presence*.”⁹ I just marvel at how the non-artist Lonergan was able to articulate the artist’s subjective experience of these diversions so concisely.

But to answer your question about art and the levels of consciousness, I’d say that art bypasses the levels of cognitive self-transcendence, since it doesn’t answer any questions for understanding or verification. Rather it presents to consciousness an image that stands for some meaning yet to be grasped or produced. It runs along the shortcut from the first to the fourth level through the medium of symbols. If symbols are affect-laden images, and affects are initial responses to value, then symbols have the power to move us without any intervening thought. This is what enables us to respond so quickly to danger and opportunity. In *Insight*, Lonergan gave an example of a man coming home and discovering that his house had been burned down. While he presented the example to explain the notion of change, in normal life the man would have been alarmed immediately, without any insights or judgments of fact, because the symbol of “home” had been broken.

This has an immediate and vital connection to Ignatius’ world view and his practical wisdom on discernment. Remember the thought-experiment Ignatius suggested for weighing the quality of inspirations? If an inspiration feels like water penetrating a wet sponge, then it’s probably reliable. But if it feels like water smashing on a rock, then it probably isn’t. (This is completely the opposite for people dedicated to avoiding self-transcendence.) He’s weighing the value of a possible course of action by consulting his experience of the movement toward

self-transcendence. I have used this experiment in class to help students identify, locate, get familiar with, their personal experiences of resonance with the divine movement, the good angel.

I can imagine many other aesthetic exercises that accomplish the same thing. For example, you could have students talk about the sight or sound of anything beautiful. Lead them to understand how they are experiencing, first hand, the movement of all creation toward God. (In Lonergan's term, it's vertical finality.) Let them talk about this with each other so that gradually they discover that this movement, this draw, this pull, is a key experience to isolate and name in the spiritual life. (It used to be called operative grace.) It pulls against counterpulls of temptation, self-indulgence, the instinct to hoard, the wish to be a somebody, and the lure of dominating others.

Later, after you're confident that every participant has got the point and can recognize and isolate this experience, there are several ways you can help them link this experience to the rest of their psyches. To anchor it cognitively, lead them through the Two Standards exercise. It should help them to see that the most fundamental dynamic in the entire universe is precisely this pull and counterpull. It gives them a worldview where the pure movement plays the key role. To anchor this experience symbolically, ask them to objectify this experience—in poetry, drawing, song, architecture, dance—their choice. I would expect that that their attempt to objectify it will go further than any lecture in helping them know what art is.

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An Analogy Between Drawing and Defining

Q. About the arts. I found your clarifications about the artistic process very helpful. I think I now understand why artistic process does not correspond to cognitive process. I think I was thrown off by misunderstanding a remark by Lonergan in *Topics in Education* "This process of objectifying is analogous to the process from the act of understanding to the definition. The definition is the inner word, an expression, an unfolding of what one has got hold of in the insight. Similarly, the purely experiential pattern becomes objectified, expressed, in a work of art."¹⁰ I guess I still don't really understand what it means for the process of objectifying to be "analogous" to the process from the act of understanding to the definition. I guess the clue to me should have been Lonergan's statement "The process of expression or objectification involves not only psychic distance but ALSO an idealization of the purely experiential pattern."

A. I think Lonergan wants to point the reader to the experiential pattern as the ground and reference point of an artist's images. We hear artists talk about having an "idea" for a painting or poem, but few have any idea about what kind of "idea" this is. Some expect that the artwork should lead others to some insight into how things work, so they look to the kind of insights that respond to questions of how and why as the reference point of their images. Others expect that their work should carry some moral impact, so they look to their value judgments as their ground. Sometimes the best works do convey a correlation or a moral perspective, but what makes them best is the integrity of the experiential pattern, whether or not the artist was aware of this ground in any explicit way.

To explain how the experiential pattern is the ground, Lonergan compares it to the way a definition is grounded in and refers back to the act of insight. When I'm making a definition, I consult my insight to be sure my definition expresses what I grasped. So too, when I'm drawing, I consult my experiential pattern to be sure that the images I produce express what I experienced. (I'm using drawing as an example here; I think the analogy applies to all aesthetic expressions.) Both drawings and definitions are expressions of patterns—the pure patterns that we experience and the formal patterns that we understand, respectively.

I think this analogy can really help anyone understand what they're doing. Anyone who is confused about artistic and cognitive interiority will more often make errors in performance. Some logicians will test their proposed definition against traditional teaching, or against what they know authorities will find acceptable, rather than what they grasped in an insight. In the same way, some artists will test their proposed drawing against other popular images or against conceptual schemes that supposedly represent the structures of reality rather than the patterned experience that caught their attention. As I say, realizing this can help anyone catch themselves consulting the wrong source to test how valid their definitions or drawings may be.

What is also analogous is how definitions and drawings each involve idealizations. When I make a definition, I ignore accidental variables and stick to central features. And when I draw, I ignore irrelevant parts of the aesthetic experience and focus on main lines. In this sense, all definitions and drawings abstract from data. I have the impression from reading art critics recently that they've dropped the category "abstract" art and are saying "nonrepresentational" art instead, perhaps because they realize that all art is an abstraction that selects, refines, and "idealizes."

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Art and the Intellectual Pattern of Experience

Q. Could you clarify the difference between art operating on the level of understanding as opposed to making brief visits to the intellectual pattern of experience? Is this what Lonergan means by "analogous to?"

A. Lonergan discusses understanding in art in *Topics in Education* page 218. There's a good footnote there that gives what Lonergan had written in the margin of his lecture notes:

"[Artistic] expression supposes an insight into pattern of the experience—basic insight—commanding form that has to be expanded worked out developed; process of working out—completing adjusting correcting initial insight."

This comes shortly after his comment on how the artistic process of objectifying is analogous to the process of making a definition, so I suspect that he's continuing his point that in both a definition and an art piece insight grasps a pattern, and then experiments with possible expressions of it, under the light of further insights, until the expression elicits something close to the same experience.

But this analogy to making definitions is not what I meant by brief visits to the intellectual pattern of experience. What I meant was that some artists remain in the aesthetic pattern without thinking about what they're doing. Renoir, for example, just babbled nonsense when someone asked him how he makes artistic decisions. In contrast, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and most of the other Impressionists discussed art theory all the time. What does light actually do? What should art depict? These are intellectual questions whose answers will have an impact on artwork. In my experience, I rely a lot on what I've learned from Lonergan about art, and I think my art has improved as a result.

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The Artistic Process

Q. As far as I know, Lonergan does not talk about an "artistic process." Is it proper to speak in terms of Lonergan of an "artistic process?"; and can that process be described as two-step process of aesthetic experiencing and an objectifying that is also an idealizing of a purely experiential pattern?;

A. Good observation! I hadn't realized that Lonergan doesn't give any step-by-step analysis of the process that the artist goes through. I do think you're right that it's basically a two-step process, but I also think there are two parts in the second step of objectifying. So let me describe it as a three-step process.

There's the aesthetic experience, some experience that our consciousness alerts us to because it has to do with this beauty. It already is patterned or, as in tragic works, clearly lacks a pattern that we long for. It's Robert Frost hearing someone say, "I have promises to keep" and feeling invited to explore that experience. In *Topics in Education*, Lonergan has a nice description of "aesthetic value"¹¹ that shows how broad aesthetic experience can be and how immediately it reveals the harmony or disharmony of a community's routines, long before we analyze it.

Then there are the provisional objectifications of that pattern—the "fiddling," the playing with media until it falls into a pattern that seems likely to alert others to the same aesthetic experience. In this fiddling phase, the artist is getting insights, but not yet making a value judgment. The artist has the eraser, and the poet the delete key. The process here, again, is analogous to the hundreds of insights that we get when we're solving a puzzle. Most of them are wrong.

But unlike puzzle-solving, emerging patterns can themselves become an aesthetic experience when the artwork takes on an unexpectedly arresting form and the artist follows the emerging pattern, leaving behind the original experience. I imagine that among artists it is the sculptors who are most often forced this way because chisels have no erasers. The discovery of new images during the fiddling process is analogous to what Lonergan called "ecstasy."¹² This occurs in the intellectual pattern when an originating set of questions give way to new questions and new avenues of exploration.

Then there's the final objectification. During the provisional objectifications, the artist may decide to scrap everything and start over, because the emerging pattern is ugly. But when beauty is emerging, there's a point where the artist clearly envisions the final objectified pattern. All that's left are the adjustments that eliminate distracting elements and strengthen important forms and relationships. Gradually, the questions diminish. The artist stands back, dabs a little here and there until it comes clear that any more dabs will diminish the beauty of it all.

This final objectification involves the value judgment, "This is good." It's not a judgment made by rational consciousness—the third level that Lonergan speaks of—because the artwork isn't about truth or the

correctness of an explanation or a syllogistic deduction or the mere possibility of making something. Like the judgment that it is good if I do X, the judgment that this art piece is good includes a sense of authorship, attaching my name to the judgment, claiming it as my own. Facts stay true whether or not I judge so, but the value of this art piece isn't realized unless I judge it to be worth something. After all, I might throw it away. Structurally, all artists work under a single condition: If the pattern of the painting is isomorphic to the pattern of an arresting aesthetic experience, then it's a good art piece. The operator at the sensitive level that responds to beauty determines whether the art piece meets the conditions. It's Robert Frost realizing that he could write no better ending to his poem than to say "And miles to go before I sleep"—and then say it again. But I think it's important to notice how naturally this happens, so naturally, in fact, that artists cannot recall any point where they made such a value judgment. Unlike getting insights, which seem to strike like lightning at a specific time and place, value judgments very often seem to just grow on us. The reason we often can't recall them is that it emerged—from poor to good, and from good to better, as relevant questions were met and put to rest.

I'd like to add that this process doesn't occur in everyone. There has to be some habitual respect for the transcendental notion of beauty, the total orientation of our consciousness toward what will be glorious because it is intelligible, it is real, and it is good. While everyone experiences this, not everyone realizes they experience it, let alone works with it. I think this is what art schools should teach rather than just more and more techniques. Even when students are told to copy some masterpiece, they'll do it like robots if they don't pay attention *in themselves* to the possible aesthetic experience that the master consulted when making the masterpiece.

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Creativity

Q. Lonergan does talk about a creative process. But it seems to me when he talks about the creative process he is talking about the creative doing not creative making.

A. Lonergan doesn't talk much about the creative process in his early works, except for a few paragraphs on aesthetic patterns of experience in *Insight* and a few in *Method*. As a 61-year-old, I can report that the term, creativity, had little currency in English before the mid-60s. But in 1975, Lonergan's thoughts on creativity were about history, not art. He contrasted it with a healing process in

history. It's clear that he's not focused at all on aesthetics, but more widely on the creativity of inventions, politics, practicality, economic controls, etc. And you're right that Lonergan is not primarily talking about making anything, but essentially about the doing, the inner conduct of getting insights, verifying them, and implementing them.

What really stands out, though, is that Lonergan thinks that creativity is never enough because it's almost always biased. Since its emergence in the 60s, I've noticed that the idea of creativity has risen to an undeserved place of honor among educators and politicians. Most colleges today offer courses in "creative" writing, which makes me wonder what they call the other writing courses. It's terribly overrated because we deny sin, more than death, I believe. We always think there must be a cause, a reason, why people act badly. Psychologists analyze a murderer's past. Lawyers plead mitigating circumstances that practically forced someone to do wrong. Catholics neglect the sacrament of confession. What is needed is not more creativity, but more effective forms of healing.

In this wider, more historical perspective of human creativity, there is a role that aesthetics plays. It promotes creativity by liberating viewers from seeing everything in functional, instrumental terms. It suggests that there's more beauty and harmony to be had. At the same time, art promotes healing because it stirs hope in people beat down by repeated failures of creativity. Unfortunately, for many people, "creative" art is anything that just looks different.

I'd like to add that even in the realm of aesthetics, creativity is vastly overrated. Because of pull and counterpull, the artist also needs discernment. I mean this in the very practical sense of where the artist pays attention—whether naively to the visible or audible forms or more astutely to the rise and fall of hope in consciousness. We commonly call good artists "creative," but the better adjective is "healing." I say this because if aesthetics is mainly about hope, then its main role in society is to heal, and only through the liberation of the psyche to envision the "better yet" in life does it support the creativity to bring about that better yet.

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Ignatian Spirituality

Ignatian Spirituality and the Arts: Bedfellows?

Q. A Jesuit I know made the point that Ignatian spirituality and the arts are not necessarily meant to be natural bedfellows. According to

him, you can be Ignatian or artistic, but you can't be both. Yet, performatively, he is a Jesuit who works in the arts. His very life seems to involve him in a counterposition. I know that he has suffered greatly at the hands of Jesuit superiors for his work in the arts.

A. I think it's quite sensitive of you to see the suffering behind his opinions. And I can sense your own struggle to work these things out for yourself rather than bow to an expert's opinion. I wouldn't go so far as to call his stance as a counterposition, though, since that term is better reserved for the absence of a conversion. I'd call it just incomplete development. Sadly, your Jesuit artist friend seems to have accepted as normal what is really an incomplete development in his superiors. The essence of this struggle is the tension created by one's conceptualization of Ignatian spirituality and the actual, concrete operator at the sensitive level that always drives toward beauty. The concrete reality of the wholesome person is always more meaningful than the ideals, rules, principles, guidelines, and any other conceptualizations of wholesomeness, Ignatian or otherwise. So wholesome people are always in a kind of tension between inner obedience to transcendent movements and the norms received from others and even the norms they may have personally established in their past.

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Ignatian Spirituality and the Arts: Incompatible?

Q. So am I right in seeing Ignatian spirituality and the arts as two different realms of meaning--not (as they may seem) two completely incompatible activities?

This seems to me to be the central problem out here in the Northwest as we grapple with the problem of how the arts relate to spirituality. They are two distinct realms that need to be integrated. I believe I understand you correctly when you say that it is "method" or the realm of "philosophic interiority" that is the method of integration. But I have found the integration of poetry with Jesuit life to be the single greatest struggle of my Jesuit life. In *Loneragan and Spirituality* you talk about the "principle of integration" for the realms of common sense and theory—but neglect to say what the "principle of integration" is for the artistic realm of meaning.

A. You are correct that I find an answer to this dilemma in philosophic interiority and that Ignatian spirituality and the arts are not incompatible. Loneragan's genius lies in the discovery and implementation of the operations by which we know, appreciate,

decide and love. It's complex, but it can give anyone living in any combination of various realms of meaning the core insights into their mutual relationships and the language to explain themselves to others.

So, yes, I do think that coming to understand what I do when I paint is necessary for me to integrate art with Ignatian spirituality. By the same token, I also need to have discovered what I do when I'm living out Ignatian spirituality. That is, I need to have translated both the categories of the artist and the categories of Ignatius into verifiable operations of the subject. Otherwise I won't be able to comprehend the two realms in the same terms. In the first article I ever published, I attempted such a translation of Ignatius' "discernment."¹³ I posed the question whether the result of discernment was a *discovery* of what God willed or a *decision* to do my best as far as my lights allowed. I concluded that it was neither. I proposed that Ignatian discernment issued in a value judgment born of religious love. But I want to add quickly that answers like this are only cognitive achievements. As such they do no more than give intellectual support to the more difficult and ongoing existential achievement of living out one's call in that uncertain gap between inner and outer norms.

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Why No Art in the Exercises?

Q. It seems as though Ignatius—in the Exercises—is not principally inviting the retreatant into an artistic/aesthetic experience. It seems clear that the Exercises are mainly about growth in the attainment of the good rather than in the appreciation or production of the beautiful. Clearly, they seem more about moral and religious conversion than (if there is such a thing) aesthetic conversion.

A. Just to be clear, I do take "aesthetics" to be a realm of meaning, and not a horizon dialectically opposed to some other horizon, such as occur in people with inadequate intellectual, moral or affective horizons. That is, I don't think it requires undergoing a conversion, or making the Exercises, to enter the realm of aesthetics. By "enter the realm" I mean not just appreciation of beauty, since everyone has that. I mean an awareness of the questions that occur to artists and critics—which is almost impossible without actually making aesthetic expressions of some sort or another. These are questions about form, texture, the pace of passages, the dead spaces, the "conversation" in which this piece echoes themes from some other piece, and what all these do to the viewer or listener. Most people aren't bothered by such questions unless they've tried their hand at making something beautiful.

Anyway, just because Ignatius doesn't bring art into the Exercises doesn't mean that he had no respect for the arts. The simplest explanation is that in his day few retreatants had access to art works. There's no evidence I know of that he looked down on the arts and good evidence that some early Jesuits were "missioned" to the arts. I presume that he had the typical instrumental view of the arts. (Indeed, in his First Principle and Foundation he takes an instrumental view of everything!) He practically had no choice. Along with most Christian artists of his day, he regarded art as an instrument for presenting the incarnate Son in historical and apocalyptic settings, and architecture as an instrument to assist prayer in church.

And I agree that the Exercises are mainly about doing good, although I wouldn't presume that doing good excludes making something beautiful. I don't think that the Exercises limit the possible range of ways to live out one's vocation. While Ignatius assumes, along with the ordinary theology of his day, that priesthood and religious life are higher callings objectively, he certainly does not conclude that any person is therefore called to ecclesiastical service. Indeed, his rules for discernment focus on the quality of inspirations, not the objective validity or nobility of their content.

I see the function of the Exercises within Ignatian spirituality as leading men and women to make a commitment to following Christ. This is core to any Christian praxis, of course, but there's a further element, in my opinion, that is unique to Ignatius. It's to give Christians the Two Standards world view. They would begin to see every man, woman and child as beset by two pulls: one toward having things, having a name, and having self-sufficiency; the other toward relaxing one's grip on things, preferring anonymity, and being self-dependent on the directives from God, particularly in the ways of poverty and humiliations as part of one's identification with Jesus. Here, in this double pull, is where I find the connection between the Exercises and a deeper understanding of the arts.

That deeper understanding has taken 400 years to evolve, though. Since Ignatius' time, we've seen the emergence of scientific method, the discovery of the unconscious, and the revolution in hermeneutics that affected both how we read texts and how we read symbols. I'm not suggesting that this has changed our underlying existential situation of being under a double pull one bit. In fact, Lonergan has built on this core vision of the human condition. As I see his contribution, he has generalized the methods of science to include the data of consciousness, and with it, the findings of psychology about repression as well as the findings of anthropologists about how symbols work in us. He too portrays the person as beset by two pulls,

one toward authenticity and the other toward inauthenticity. And then he has gone far beyond Ignatius' three steps (riches/ honors/ pride vs. poverty/ humility/ humiliations) in explaining how the dynamic of these pulls works in history.

The big payoff for aesthetics is that we can now see quite clearly how the realm of aesthetics was under a cloud of idealism for centuries, affecting even Ignatius. And we can now see how the artistic impulse is, in fact, a profound way of posing the question of God. That is, when the aesthetic experience works, we feel most poignantly the desire for and the pull toward a transcendence beyond our understanding. "Glory to him, whose power in us, works infinitely more than we ask or imagine."¹⁴

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Targeting the Exercises to the Artist

Q. How could one "target" artists for the Exercises? Are there ways to better adapt the Exercises to artists?

A. Well, I've never done this, but if I'm right that we understand art far better today than Ignatius did in his day, then maybe we're in a position to give it a try.

It goes without saying that Ignatius relied on image and affect far more than concepts and analysis in the Exercises. The parables of the Kingdom and Two Standards are obviously some kind of metaphors. He presents very few preachings and miracles of Jesus. Most of the "contemplations" involve walking with Jesus somewhere. His "discernment of inspirations" relies more on their feel than their content.

The exception to this approach is in the First Week, where he has retreatants think more on what, in all justice, is their due. This is consistent with his rules for discernment. For people in need of repentance, thinking is more reliable than feeling. But for people moving ahead in the spiritual life, feelings should take the lead over thinking. There's real wisdom in this. The principle is that our affects tend to consolidate our horizon while our thoughts tend to change it. If this is true, then even artists in need of repentance need exercises that make them think, reflect—lifting the left brain to God.

Things really switch to right brain in the following weeks. Although Ignatius never could have expressed his practical wisdom in the modern psychological terms of symbol and unconscious and the

bicameral brain, he knew from experience that exercising his imagination deepened his love and devotion. I would express what is going on as assisting the retreatant to make a "real assent," in Newman's terms. (Recall how Ignatius always had the retreatant "recall the history." I believe he meant to remind the retreatant that these things really happened. God really did work for us in this time and this place in this way.) I've had retreatants report that the colloquies with Jesus really touched them, but they described it as "It was like Jesus was really *there!*" And I had to ask, "Well, ... Isn't he?"

Unfortunately, there are many retreatants who find the switch to imagining really difficult. They imagine the scenes as presented in the *Exercises*, but they keep analyzing things. Or, when they find free imagining difficult, they get distracted by trying a technique they don't fully understand. They never reach the point of real assent: "This is *true*." All a director can do is explain that it's just an exercise of imagination as an aid to acknowledging a reality. And if imagination doesn't do it, then perhaps a mantra will—such as "This is true."

I suppose my approach with artists during the Second, Third and Fourth weeks would be to first educate them on how the symbols in their subconscious are the font of their hopes as humans as well as of their artistic expressions. I'd underscore how important hope is to living, particularly to living with failure, betrayal by friends, frustrated enterprises, and all the nameless spooks that haunt the subconscious. I'd advise letting good music, poetry, dance, landscapes and art enter the soul, as it were, to face down these dark threats to our happiness.

I'd point out that since symbols are combinations of image and affect, there needs to be some discrimination. Affects can become detached from their original images, and then what pops into consciousness is something weird. This is the normal working of a neurotic repression. Besides that, affects can lean toward self-centeredness or toward self-transcendence, and for this, Ignatius' rules for discernment are extremely valuable.

With this understanding, then, I'd let them paint or compose music or poetry. Not to produce something to show others, but simply to *exercise* their hope at the subconscious level. And I mean *exercise* in the sense of tone up and strengthen. The images should convey a sense of mystery, rather than a moral lesson (à la Norman Rockwell). Whether art pieces and poetry depict anything is neither here nor there. The emerging image or pattern should be beautiful, perhaps haunting, perhaps awesome. It should all have the quality of an invitation.

For non-artists, I wouldn't attempt to drag them over the hurdles of a first watercolor or dance. I'd invite them to listen to certain pieces of classical music, contemplate certain art pieces, and savor certain poems. The key is to ensure that they understand that they are exercising their hope, their longing, their desire.

In the Second Week, maybe that invitation should first be toward following the King, and then toward following Christ in his love of God and neighbor. In the Third, toward the dark mystery of suffering with Christ and death. In the Fourth, toward the consolation and assurance that Jesus gives his disciples. I'd caution against spending more than an hour on any single piece, unless it pulled them back and this pull passed the scrutiny of discernment. Restricting the time will promote spontaneity and avoid the sense of producing a souvenir of the retreat or an art piece to show at some gallery.

I think the director should have some experience in these artistic exercises, along with some understanding of the dynamics in the aesthetic pattern of experience. Otherwise, he or she will not recognize the important movements.

Perhaps a good way to start is for a few retreat directors to spend a few days together somewhere, each spending three or four one-hour periods in artistic exercises. Then meeting for a while to talk about what was going on.

As I say, I've never done this as a retreat exercise. However, I do have a deep sense of what an *invitation* all of creation is. By the grace of God and the mediation of Lonergan and some Impressionists, it's with me in an abiding way.

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A Description: Ignatian Spirituality and the Arts

Q. I'm wondering if you might be able to elaborate a little on exactly what integration of the arts with Ignatian spirituality might look like?

A. Well, the integration has to occur in a person. And people can be thoroughly familiar with the usual objects in a realm of meaning and yet not understand the subjectivity that goes with it—the mental routines, affective processes, the hard-coded norms of consciousness, and intrinsic limits to various assertions. For example, an artist may be keenly aware of hue, saturation and tone, but totally oblivious of

judgment of value, affect-laden images, virtual space, and symbolic operators mediating between the unconscious and noticed experience.

I think the vast majority of experts in science, history, aesthetics and even mystical experience have no idea of the subjective operations by which they move in these realms. Because they are not accustomed to asking questions about interior operations, they find it difficult to integrate their specialized realm with any other realm and with everyday commonsense living. Most Jesuit artists are probably at home in aesthetics, religious devotion, some science and philosophy, and certainly in common sense. For any Jesuit to see how it all hangs together in himself, though, he'd benefit from understanding the different specialized combinations of self-transcending operations that respond to the questions and spontaneities peculiar to each realm. The specialization of the realm of philosophic interiority is to understand and relate the operations specific to each realm of meaning and its relationships to any other realm. To my mind, this is what philosophy studies should do for him, and for anyone else, for that matter.

In a number of places, Lonergan introduces his readers to their subjectivity by pointing out how experience is always pre-patterned. What we notice around us or arising in our imagination always hangs together somehow. You can't really recognize a traffic noise you heard before because it has no pattern. And when we're awakened from a deep sleep, all we can remember is some snatches of images; they lack the flow of a dramatic pattern that shows up when we dream in the morning.

Being people full of concerns, our pre-patterned attention usually serves other purposes. In the morning, we immediately recognize the alarm clock and set our minds to getting up. A computer analyst examines data in a program that is crashing, looking for some pattern that explains it. A philosopher who believes that the mind sees reality pretty much the way the eye sees light will impose a pattern on experience that really isn't there. Ambitious people impose a filter on any experience that might nudge them to giving rivals an advantage. Really, all of us, living in our particular dramatically-patterned world, usually see what we want to see, what fits into our purposes.

But an artist objectifies patterns in experience unadulterated by other patterning. This, for me, is a key insight into what I'm doing when I paint. There are two moments here. As an artist I'm first seeing, but I'm aiming to exclude any interference with my seeing that might arise from intellectual curiosity or practical needs. With both image and affect, I try to let them speak for themselves, as it were, without being constrained by ulterior purposes. Although the artist excludes alien

motives and questions, that doesn't mean that seeing is purely passive. On the contrary, our innate bent toward beauty recognizes pure patterns and is oblivious to unrelated data. This is what artistic seeing is.

Then, in a distinct act from artistic seeing, there is the desire to objectify it. Here is where the person becomes an artist. Everyone experiences pure patterns but only a few try to objectify them in paint, surfaces, or sounds. In this second moment, too, I make an effort to exclude patterning that originates from other sources. This is no easy task. When we draw or compose a poem, we feel a liberation of our affectivity from the normal practical needs to behave and fit in. Unfortunately, our culture imposes terrific pressures against this purely aesthetic experience, which makes it difficult for us to concentrate on patterns in their purity. We have to learn the discipline of postponing extraneous concerns: "I have to submit this art piece by Wednesday." "My wife won't like this because it doesn't look like a tree." "I really hope someone discovers me."

Besides excluding patterns that are not relevant, we also have to learn what it means to intelligently discriminate among those patterns that are relevant, as we move from seeing to objectifying. Some art looks like nothing but emotional exuberance in a frame, just as some music is indistinguishable from yelling. I suppose, in an effort to be honest, these artists are trying to express something without any concern for what viewers may think. However, in a genuine effort to avoid manipulating the viewers' feelings, they unfortunately avoid intelligent selecting and arranging materials in ways more likely for viewers to recognize patterns of experience that are loaded with elemental, unconceptualized meaning.

With some art forms, the focus on the pure pattern is clear: instrumental music, abstract art, dancing, landscaping, architecture, weaving. With others, we want to integrate a pure form with an overlay from the dramatic pattern of experience: song, opera, poetry, representational art and sculpture. The difficulty with this second class of aesthetics is that would-be artists easily go for the linguistic message or likeness to a subject and forget that the pure, non-linguistic, non-depicting pattern itself has to grab the senses at the same time. There is no great poetry and great portraiture without pure patterns in the sounds and strokes, respectively. A good example is Hopkin's "as tumbled-over-rim-in-roundy-wells stones ring." I love to say it and hear it. This, I believe is what enabled the Impressionists capture so much attention—the pure pattern of textures and masses were wonderful in their own right.

But the artist is not out to manipulate, in the ordinary sense of that term. What the artist does is invite the viewer to withdraw for a while into experiencing pure patterns of form, tension and resolution that echo the forms, tensions and resolutions that shape our everyday experiences, whether or not the painting depicts anything recognizable. These pure patterns, after all, are not dead diagrams in the mind; they are live, patterned impulses that move us toward self-transcendence. Granted, they are elemental, but they are also vulnerable to all kinds of derailments as we try to live our lives in obedience to the quiet pull toward authenticity. But they are gorgeous, fascinating, alluring.

The viewer will return to the practical world, enriched by having isolated, for a short length of time, the raw experience of the presence of too much meaning. He or she may realize that the expression, "There's more to this than meets the eye," is true about everything. There is nothing we know of that really had to be. The "thereness" of reality is a universal, totally compact miracle.

I realize that I've been talking about integrating the arts with one's ordinary life, not about its integration with Ignatian spirituality. That's a difficult topic because only recently have we understood that the power art lies not in teaching lessons but in stirring hope. The expectation that art should teach is most evident in the media that depict something—poetry, songs, pictures and sculptures of things or people. Certainly there are key Ignatian themes that can be portrayed—gratitude, the Kingdom, the Two Standards, the poverty and humiliations and death of Christ, the resurrection. These themes have been depicted in hundreds of medieval stained glass windows and paintings. And, don't get me wrong, art can teach. We all can recall seeing pictures like these in our childhood.

But the power of the good art in our lives lay not in what it said but in what could not be said. Art is a kind of liberation from the boxes of thematized thinking, an expansion beyond the concepts we have about Christ, a beckoning to let ourselves feel desire or dread about dimensions of life far bigger than we can understand. Gratitude is an expression of fulfilled desires; The "Kingdom" is a call to follow Christ in his passionate desire to win the world for the Father; the Two Standards represent the pull and counterpull of desires; the Third Week is about the desire to be like Christ in the details of his poverty and humiliations; and the Fourth Week is being with the risen Christ who desire to be the consoler to his frightened disciples. They're all about desires.

The arts don't add any new ideas to Ignatian spirituality, but if it's good, it can stir the desires that put force behind ideas and move us to commit ourselves. The locus of the integration of the arts and Ignatian spirituality lies in the order of symbols, and within that order, it lies in all the affects that lean toward transcendence and recoil from its opposites.

I imagine that in your own specialty, poetry, your goal should be to stir some of these desires in your readers. What makes it good poetry will be the symbolic associations of the words, their meanings, metaphors and connotations, but supported underneath by the rhythm and flow of the sounds, the pace of the piece, the alliterations and assonances. Everything should "work" toward moving the reader/listener to feel the desires you want to elicit, even the shape of the poem on a page or the setting of the podium from which it is read.

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'Contemplation' in Ignatius and a More Technical Definition

Q. You mentioned that your view of contemplation is different from Ignatius'. What does Ignatius understand by it and how does your approach differ?

A. For Ignatius, "contemplation" meant a technique of imagining being with Jesus in some actual situation. You let your subconscious take the lead, as it were, and talk with Jesus in the particular predicament he happens to be in. As you probably know, a surprisingly large number of people find this dialog quite easy, and Jesus says some surprising things.

I haven't done a thorough enough research on its origins, but let me list some clues. Since the 13th century triumph of Thomism over Neoplatonism as the framework for systematic theology, church leaders were educated in Aristotle's view that reality is informed matter, not some "really real" invisible world of forms shaping the visible world. Artworks began to depict Jesus in actual scenes for the faithful to observe, wonder and love. Jesus became less the awesome ideal type and more the specific man whose ragged humanity revealed the real God. Get to the concrete, historical reality, and you get to God. I believe this is why Ignatius prefaces his contemplations with the directive, "Recall the history." His interest was not in some exercise for surfacing the contents of our subconscious; indeed the theory of the subconscious had not yet been developed. Rather he wanted to lead the retreatant to a real assent about Jesus in our world.

So my reading of Ignatian “contemplation” is that he uses imagination to elicit a real assent. In contrast, I have defined contemplation as *any* exercise that leads to a real assent. I’ve mentioned that I found this rather easy when I pray with my eyes open. The point is to rest in an affirmation of what really is so and what really is worthwhile.

I think this kind of contemplation is easy to grasp. I have conducted exercises with groups in which I ask them to write down something they have realized about their life during the past year. They wrote things like, “I realize that my children are growing up.” “I will never be perfect.” “I am unhappy.” (AA also tries to rest at this point where the alcoholic just admits that he or she is an alcoholic.) I invited them to talk about the feeling of conviction they have about this realization. Sometimes I had to steer the discussion away from what they planned to do about it, since that’s where most people tend to go. I asked them just to rest in this truth for a while without drawing conclusions about what needs to be done. Then I said I was going to tell them something else that is true, but that they may not have realized it yet—that is, they haven’t acknowledged it with that same feeling of conviction they have regarding what they wrote on their paper. Then I said, “The Lord is very near; there is no need to worry” (Philippians 4:5). And I invited them to rest with that for a short period. I recommended they keep their eyes open, because people tend to analyze or imagine when they close their eyes.

While I believe I’m in line with Ignatius’ intention, I’m out of line with spiritual directors who look for messages that Jesus gives in highly imaginative prayer. I don’t doubt that such message may be valuable, coming as they often do from the subconscious of a person divinely in love. But there can be a lot of nonsense too, the worst being from the self-appointed gnostics that keep showing up in history with a message for us from God.

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Ignatius and his “Application of the Senses”

Q. What do you think St. Ignatius means by the “application of the senses.”

A. I think he was developing the idea of exercises in prayer. As you know, he describes what he means by exercises in the Introduction to his *Spiritual Exercises*. It’s very much like calisthenics—motions to tune up one’s spiritual vitality, to make one more disposed to the movements of the Spirit. So, in logical fashion, he wanted to make sure that the retreatant exercised each of the five

senses when contemplating a scene in Christ's life, much like you'd use weights in the gym in different ways for different muscles.

I know it sounds a little robotic to channel-surf through the five senses. But behind the exercises Ignatius makes an assumption that's well worth noticing. It's that we are in charge of our senses. We can tell them where to look, feel, taste, smell, and listen. When I was a novice, we were told to practice "custody of the eyes." Today's attitude toward sensory input seems to be absolutely liberal and uncritical. We aren't expected to treat our senses as instruments under the command of our souls but windows letting in every kind of weather.

Ignatius assumes a similar distance between our souls and both temptations and inspirations. I believe I talked about his when discussing desolation and depression. The point is that Ignatius' had an implicit view of the subject whereby not only is sensory input external to us, but imaginal and cognitive input is as well. What is our own is strictly what results from our decisions. I believe that this is a critically important element in the spiritual life. It defines quite neatly how responsible we are for dealing with what simply occurs.

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The Graces of the Four Weeks of the Exercises

Q. One of the directors in training is wondering how you describe and/or explain the graces of the four weeks. How do you recognize when a person has received the graces of the different weeks and know it is time to move them on?

A. In the classical *Exercises*, the grace of the First Week seems to be the experience of deep sorrow for sin and a firm purpose of amendment. Ignatius wants retreatants to feel sorrow for *all* sin, not just their own. He wants them to see sin in its full global and transcendental dimensions. In the *Annotations* he expects that this grace is enough for many people, and if they show no desire to go further, then there's no reason to. I believe he wants the director to listen for desire in the retreatant, like waiting to see what the Spirit has done, rather than present the retreat as some kind of step-by-step program for becoming a more spiritual person. In our more secular times, I think even very moral people can meditate profitably on sin as a violation against a loving God and against a friendly universe.

Still, for a person for whom Christ is alive and present, I think the First Week can be skipped. Here you have someone used to acting in conscious awareness of the presence of Christ and you're going to ask

them to consider sin in its formal aspect as a violation of the order of things. It's abstract to them, abstracting from their awareness of Christ with them. I think it's better to plunge right into the Kingdom and then the Two Standards. It's there that the Christian retreatant will realize the profound interpersonal enormity of their sin. Indeed, for people accustomed to following Christ, I think the retreat should simply follow where they feel drawn, while the director follows the retreatant, posing here and there questions that arise from familiarity with the dynamic structure and overall vision of the Exercises. Even with Jesuit novices and tertians, I wince at giving the "classic Exercises" for didactic purposes. I think directors need to be unusually careful to follow the leads of the Spirit in the Jesuit retreatant. They can study the Exercises some other time.

Anyway, the grace of the Second Week, I believe, is an earnest desire to follow Christ in establishing God's Kingdom. The week starts with Christ's invitation and the retreatant's desire. I think that's the grace that ought to run through the entire week. Still waters do run deep, which is another way of saying that desires do not always show in emotions. So the director needs to pay close attention, being careful to learn and adapt to the retreatant's normal expressions of desire.

That desire is "exercised" through a deep awareness of sharing life with Christ. For Ignatius, the Incarnate Christ was real and present, though invisible. And so there was no pretending when you imagined yourself walking with Jesus, talking with him. It was by your becoming present to Jesus, who is actually present to you, that you could legitimately enter the virtual space where Jesus had actually lived. The key grace, I believe, is a sense of sharing in the actual experience of Jesus as he was baptized, tempted; as he selected apostles and sent them out, as he healed and comforted. It's important to distinguish this from hero-worship. It's rather the space of friendship in which I deepen my knowledge and love of you by going with you where you go and feeling what you feel.

Since shared experience is not enough without shared understanding, that desire is also mediated by a vision of the universe as called by God to become the Kingdom, but beset by pull and counterpull everywhere and at all times. I think you know how strongly I believe this vision of the Two Standards is key to how Ignatius lived his daily life and wanted to share this "heuristic structure" of world process with others.

The grace of the Third Week continues the grace of the Second—my desire to answer the desire of Christ to establish the Kingdom, including that shared space with him and his struggle with pull and

counterpull. Here, though, it's in the experience of being rejected, misunderstood, violated, and murdered. It's the experience of feeling abandoned by the Father and of having nothing to go on but faith in God, charity toward the neighbor, and hope against hope. Here, the retreatants' ordinary experiences of the cross is key, whether that cross has been laid upon them by the malice of others or just by the odds of living in a world of accidental disasters and interior burdens.

The Fourth Week, too, carries on the grace of the Second. Here the grace is a share in Jesus' happiness and in his activity as consoler. It's coming to understand in an intimate way that Jesus is happy because the Father acted in love for the world through him, not because his personal suffering is over. He is happy because the Kingdom has begun, not because the future promises to be universally bright. It's the triumph of pull over counterpull.

The director knows it's time to move on when the retreatant wants to. In a sense it's easy. The director's job is just to ensure that the retreatant's desire is coming from a good spirit. In my experience, if the retreatant moved into a later phase too quickly, the spirit moves soon enough to complete unfinished business, so the director needn't worry too much about moving on prematurely. I can think of several times when the sense of sin didn't really hit a person until the Second or Third week. It would be a mistake, I think, to keep a retreatant in Week X until you think the grace of that week has been received. The director's discernment is as important as the retreatant's. I can think of times when I felt like "rescuing" a retreatant who was suffering spiritual desolation in the Third Week. It took a lot of trust on my part to assure the retreatant that this was, indeed, a share in the suffering of Jesus, and to go with it for a spell. In a similar way, some retreatants resist the joy of the Fourth Week. It's as if they well know that joy will lead them to sacrifice and total commitment, and they're being tempted. It's important to name this as temptation and to deal with it with the rules for discerning inspirations.

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Authors on Lonergan and Spirituality

Q. This one comes from my MDiv thesis director: can you recommend any other writers trying to advance this project of understanding Ignatian spirituality in terms of Lonergan? I found a book by Walter Conn that takes a Lonergan approach to pastoral counseling and spiritual direction. That is the only other one I know of.

A. There are quite a few authors who approach spirituality from Lonergan's perspective. Let me list the ones that happened to be listed in recent issues of the *Lonergan Studies Newsletter* and a selection from the Lonergan Website (<http://www.lonergan.on.ca/index.htm>) under "Secondary Sources." Of these, Flanagan, W. Conn, Crowe, Doran, Gelpi, Johnston and Tyrrell often deal with Ignatian spirituality.

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Appendix: Spiritual Integration

"Spiritual Integration"—An Overview

Based on Tad Dunne, *Loneragan and Spirituality*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985: 181-84.

We saw that we needed to spell out for ourselves exactly what goes on in our souls when we think, act, love, and tell stories. But so what? How will this self-understanding bring about a spiritual integration in the social order? We can formulate a general answer to that question by recalling four lessons that emerged from our study. This will enable us to give a more precise definition of spiritual integration.

First, we have seen that common sense is not adequate to meet the problems of the world. Common sense thinks that its own short-range and piecemeal kinds of insights are the best kind. It spontaneously neglects taking the long-range historical perspective. It belittles rigorous theoretical analyses. It disregards philosophy. So the first step in a spiritual integration is a commitment to an intellectual life, be it in science, in historiography, literary criticism, philosophy, theology, or what have you.

Second, we have seen that even within an intellectual life the empirical sciences and historical scholarship seldom deal adequately with psychological and social problems. In most cases they neither give sound enough analyses nor provide sufficiently effective policies for halting the spiral of decline. The reason for this is that they have not articulated the dynamics of consciousness as well as they have articulated what goes on in the world of sense. That is, they have not sufficiently recognized that values and meanings constitute human realities just as surely as atomic particles constitute physical realities. Because they have generally failed to study the origin, development, and breakdown of values and meanings, they regard all human problems as fundamentally intelligible. They have not taken seriously the difference between authenticity and unauthenticity. This is why the therapies and solutions they propose usually just add to the complexity of situations rather than expose the biases and supplant the incoherent ideas that have made situations intolerable. Therefore a second step is to reflect on the methods of science and historiography to see if they deal adequately with authenticity and unauthenticity.

Third, we have seen that transcendent love has a redemptive role to play in the social order. Whether or not that love is called religious, it recognizes values where biased minds fail to see them. It impels a

person to act on behalf of others, even at painful costs to oneself. And it integrates a person's affective life in such a way that he or she is enabled to withstand the debilitating psychological undertow of a decadent culture. In other words, transcendent love gives faith, charity, and hope. These work to heal an otherwise biased consciousness and free it to create the social structures that will be effective in reacting to crises and in meeting the needs of all people. A solid spiritual integration does not merely acknowledge this healing movement of transcendent love. It also works to enhance it within scientific and philosophic spheres. It raises the categories we call faith, charity and hope to the level of explanatory terms in the human sciences and historiography.

Fourth, we have seen that stories can bear redemptive power, and that the best stories touch each person's inner sense of the struggle between authenticity and unauthenticity. The fundamental lesson here is that history itself is an unfinished story. We have no guarantee of its outcome. So we are left with the challenge to live out the struggle in our own times and places. We are called to live with a dialectical attitude not only regarding the world of common sense but also in whatever theoretical or scholarly specialty our work demands of us.

Notice how we have moved through five realms of meaning. The limitations of common sense require the higher viewpoint of the realm of theory. The realm of theory, in turn, needs the higher viewpoint of the realm of method, that is, of philosophic interiority or generalized empirical method. Within the realm of method we can understand the realm of religious transcendence and see how it possesses the power to heal the world of its ills. Finally, the question of redemption raises the need to examine the realm of historical and literary scholarship in order listen to and tell the stories that touch the transcendent in ordinary living.

We can now define what "spiritual integration" is. It is the capacity to move through these realms of meaning intelligently. That is, the kind of authenticity needed today is the kind by which a person has a basic understanding of these different realms of meaning and can move from one to another as the situation demands. The spiritually integrated person overcomes the division of the split soul because he or she understands the aims and techniques of both commonsense practicality and theoretical analysis. But beyond healing that split, spiritual integration allows a person to ground all the workings of the mind and all the practical decisions of a responsible life in the love of divine Mystery.

Notice that spiritual integration is not primarily a commitment to some theory about human nature. It does not insist that you memorize metaphysical categories. Obviously, we have had to define many categories in our discussion here, but only to help you perform the inner experiments that lead to your own understanding of how you in fact know, act, love, and tell stories. How we name the processes we discover in ourselves is not of the utmost importance. What counts is the actual discovery, understanding, and verification of our understanding of the processes. Only then do we expand upon that inner achievement by developing language that is intelligible to others across the widest possible variety of fields.

So spiritual integration is primarily a commitment to using one's head and heart not only about the realities of the outer world, but particularly about the head and heart themselves. It is a habit of soul, not a body of knowledge. It regards the data of consciousness as the testing-ground for any theory about how with use our capacities for transcending ourselves. In this sense, spiritual integration is by no means complete. It will develop and grow as any empirical science does, by the self-correcting process of trial and error.

Does this approach seem too intellectual for the average person? Even if it is not primarily a framework of categories, does it not ask too much of most men and women who love God and neighbor?

I insist that the answer is no. The so-called "average person" today is already somewhat familiar with the realms of common sense, theory, religious experience, and historiography. But being familiar with is still a long way from explicit understanding. The one thing lacking is the further insight into exactly how these realms differ from and relate to one another. Without such insight, a person has no clear grasp of the limits of and procedures proper to each realm, and so the person will easily slip over a border, smuggling the methods of one realm into another without realizing it. With such insight, he or she will move through these realms of meaning much more intelligently and be more able to cooperate with God's redemption of a world shrouded in darkness.

Spiritual integration, as we have seen, is also a dialectical habit of mind. It is relatively suspicious of consciousness, and yet it is committed to cooperating with transcendent love and its first-fruits of faith, charity and hope. It is ready for a battle, and yet it is ready to love. Fortunately, the notion of a dialectical attitude is not completely foreign to Western thought, so we are not trying to inaugurate an enterprise that nobody has ever heard of. We can use the building blocks that others have already assembled, even though, as we shall

see, these others have built their houses on sand. They need the solid underpinning that Lonergan's generalized empirical method promises to give.¹⁵

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- ¹ *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.* New York: Paulist Press, 1985, pp 115-128
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 195
- ³ "Ongoing Genesis of Methods," *ibid.*, p. 161
- ⁴ See any of the many editions of Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, para 32, 326, 327 and 351.
- ⁵ "Healing and Creating in History" pp 100-109 and Mission and the Spirit, pp 23-34, in *A Third Collection*.
- ⁶ For further reading on value judgments, you can find the key Lonergan texts in *Method in Theology*, pp 36-41. He also discussed values and their relationship to aesthetics in *Topics in Education* (Collected Works Volume 10) §3.1.3, pp 36-38. See Michael Vertin's "Judgments of Value in the Later Lonergan," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995) 221-248. For a good overview of ethics based on Lonergan, and the key role of value judgments there, I like Melchin's book: *Living with Other People* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998). For a more philosophical approach see his "Revisionist, Deontologists and the Structure of Moral Living," *Theological Studies* 51 (190), 389-416.
- ⁷ These are some of the questions I addressed in "What Do I Do When I Paint" – *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 16 [1998] 103-132.
- ⁸ *Topics in Education*. Vol. 10 of Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). p. 219
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 222
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 218
- ¹¹ "Aesthetic value is the realization of the intelligible in the sensible: when the good of order of a society is transparent, when it shines through the products of that society, the actions of its members, its structure of interdependence, the status and personality of the persons participating in the order. You can recognize a happy home or a happy community. The good of order can be transparent in all the things made, all the actions performed, in the habits and the institutions. It strikes the eye. ... It is aesthetic value, then, that enables people to apprehend the human good on its profoundest level, or, on the contrary, to sense something wrong, in a very immediate fashion." *Topics in Education*, page 37
- ¹² *Method in Theology*, pp 185-196

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- ¹³ "Three Models of Discernment," *The Way*, Suppl. 23, Fall, 1974, 18-26
- ¹⁴ Ephesians 3:21
- ¹⁵ *Lonergan and Spirituality: Towards a Spiritual Integration* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985), pp 181-184