IN ALL THINGS

Religious Faith and American Culture

Edited by
Robert J. Daly, S.J.

THE JESUIT INSTITUTE
AT BOSTON COLLEGE

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Papers of the Inaugural Conference of
The Jesuit Institute at Boston College

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Foreword

As in many other Jesuit universities, especially in the U.S., the Jesuits at Boston College have recently been engaged in intensive discussions about the Catholic and Jesuit character of their institution. In the recent past, most Catholic colleges and universities have experienced rapid transformations from strongly denominational schools, governed largely as extensions of their founding religious groups, into modern institutions comfortably taking their place in the mainstream of American higher education. As is already the established pattern in American private higher education, will these changes lead to a dilution of religious ethos? And, in any case, what is the role the founding religious community, now a small numerical minority, should continue to play in these institutions?

At Boston College, one of the most visible results of the effort to meet the challenges contained in such questions has been the founding of the Jesuit Institute.

The idea of the Jesuit Institute grew out of discussions within the Jesuit Community, which then effectively founded the Institute with a generous endowment in 1987. Formally constituted in 1988 as a university research institute, this new venture is designed to help strengthen the Catholic and Jesuit character of Boston College by supporting research across the disciplines of the university.

The task of fleshing out the plan was committed to a director and advisory board. Beginning in December, 1987, this group, men and women, Jesuits and laypersons, quickly evolved into a planning and working committee receptive to the faith-inspired gesture of the founding Jesuit Community, and sensitive to the hope-inspired vision of Jesuits and others for the future of Boston College. As they took up the task of charting the course and shaping the vision, some fundamental principles gradually fell into place:

1. Research, especially interdisciplinary, will be the Institute's primary activity.
2. The Institute will be committed both to the highest quality of research and to its publication.
3. The Institute will not establish new academic programs. It will attempt to encourage rather than absorb or seek control over existing programs or program elements already consonant with its goals.
4. The Institute will seek to identify and support reflection and research on issues and concerns which should be part of the research profile of a Catholic university, but which, for whatever reason, do not receive the attention they merit.
5. The Institute will focus on questions and issues which are located at the intersection of faith and culture, which affect or are affected by religious knowledge or faith experience.
6. The Institute is committed to pursue its goals by the means appropriate to a funded research institute, i.e., by sponsoring and funding—possibly also in conjunction with other funding agencies—research scholars, research projects, conferences, lectures, seminars, consultations, etc.

While these principles were emerging, planning for the Institute's Inaugural Conference was also moving ahead. This conference was not merely to publicize the Institute, but also to advance the practical task of clarifying its specific goals and strategies.

At the same time, the advisory board continued its search for overarching themes by which to channel the Institute's still relatively modest resources. The "intersection" metaphor mentioned above in the fifth principle quickly became a key concept in these efforts, providing the overarching theme for the first research grants awarded for academic year 1989-1990: "Religious Faith and the Searches for Knowledge." This theme was further specified for the 1990-1991 grant period in order to welcome proposals specifically from scholars in the natural sciences and the social sciences.

In the months leading up to the Inaugural Conference, at a time when the first issues of the Jesuit Institute *Newsletter* were being distributed, the Institute director met in small groups with some 330 colleagues from the university community. In all these meetings, the agenda was the same: providing information about the new Institute, clarifying its nature and role in the University, seeking feedback and suggestions.

These meetings, spaced over five months, contributed immensely to increased clarity about the goals and purposes and some of the specific challenges of the Institute. Among these challenges is the increasingly obvious need to develop appropriate ways to affirm that, in being committed to help Boston College become more Jesuit and Catholic, the Jesuit Institute is committed to do this in a manner that is consistent with the nature and processes of a modern university. In the past two centuries, Roman Catholicism resisted some of the key developments of modernity, especially in the natural and social sciences. For many, this part of our Catholic heritage leaves a strong note of ambiguity about the relationship of a modern research university to the life of Roman Catholicism. However, as the discussions accompanying the establishment of the Jesuit Institute at Boston College have brought out, some very positive elements have also come from our heritage.

First, there seems to be a felicitously symbiotic relationship between a fundamental Jesuit charism and the true spirit of academic research. In the culminating exercise of his *Spiritual Exercises*, the

Contemplation for obtaining Divine Love, St. Ignatius encourages Jesuits and all who make the Exercises to see all things as being from God and of God. The specifically academic way of living out this Ignatian charism of finding or seeing God in all things is the attitude of intellectual openness. This attitude motivates the scholar to be radically open to all knowledge and strongly supportive of research in all areas of academic activity. It is the obvious inspiration for the title of the Institute's first major publication: *In All Things.*

Second, there is a close affinity between the central principle of selection for Jesuit Institute-sponsored research and the Ignatian criteria for the selection of ministries. Ignatius wanted Jesuits to be ready to travel to any part of the world and undertake whatever the church most needed to have done at that time. This principle expressed in the Jesuit motto, *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (For the Greater Glory of God), is at the heart of what the Jesuit Institute has come to recognize as its primary function: to identify and support that kind of authentic research which should characterize a university that is Jesuit and Catholic.

It was in the context of these reflections and developments that the speakers of the Inaugural Conference prepared their remarks and then the more extensively developed papers which appear in this volume. How remarkably well they did this is evidenced in the following pages. The fact that this specific context did not lessen but notably enhanced the general relevance of these papers as significant studies in their own right seems to suggest initial confirmation that the Jesuit Institute is well launched.

The Papers

The Inaugural Conference ran from 4 pm, Friday, April 21 to 5 pm, Saturday, April 22, 1989. John W. Padberg, S.J., presented the opening, keynote address by speaking directly to the opportunities and challenges opened up by the founding of the Jesuit Institute at Boston College. The other speakers spoke not directly to the Institute but to a range of concrete issues chosen both for their impor-

tance in themselves and for their anticipated relevance to the work of the Jesuit Institute. They were arranged in three panels.

First, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Preston N. Williams and Richard A. McCormick, S.J., addressed a broad, complex range of issues under the perenially critical themes of "Family, Culture, and Ethics."

Second, John W. O'Malley, S.J., Anne E. Patrick, S.N.J.M., and Denis Donoghue addressed the theme: "Interrelating Religion and the Arts." This theme is illustrative of how the Jesuit Institute envisions its role in general and at Boston College in particular. In contrast to the European Church from which it largely grew, the North American Catholic Church, shaped by its immigrant and working-class past, has yet to develop strong ties to the arts. Boston College, along with most Roman Catholic educational institutions in the U.S., must now face this challenge.

Third, Rosemary Haughton, John A. Coleman, S.J., and Michael J. Buckley, S.J., under the theme of "Culture and Belief," began a critical exploration of some of the challenging (and often neglected) issues that arise at the intersections of faith and reason, culture and belief.

In the conference panel format, the remarks of each speaker were relatively brief. After the conference, the speakers carefully prepared a significantly expanded version of their remarks for publication in this volume.

Robert J. Daly, S.J.
Director
The Jesuit Institute at Boston College

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John W. Padberg, S.J.
The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, MO

The founding of the Jesuit Institute is an extraordinary event. It looks forward to the future and back to a heritage. The year of its founding has at least the potentiality of ranking as an imaginative venture with the years of four other such ventures, 1540, 1547, 1583 and 1789. It will depend on how well, how vigorously the quality of imagination which infused the events which then took place and which, it seems to me, has brought the Jesuit Institute into being, will continue to infuse, inspire, pervade the Institute now and in the years to come. It is that topic of imagining a heritage at the Jesuit Institute which I wish to address this afternoon.

Before I do so, however, let me first, on behalf of all of us here, congratulate and thank all those who have brought into being our present happy occasion and the Institute itself. May I mention specifically Father Robert Daly, the Director of the Institute, its advisory board which has worked so long and so diligently, the hundreds of members of Boston College who have contributed in countless meetings their insights to the nature and goals of the Institute, Boston College itself and Father J. Donald Monan, S.J., its president, in their generosity, and, most importantly, the members of the Jesuit community at Boston College, especially Father Joseph Duffy, S.J., the rector at the very beginning of the Institute and Father William Barry, S.J., the present rector. That community has had the imagination and the courage and the generosity to propose and to venture upon this new manner of expressing the Jesuit charism.

Let me return now to those four dates mentioned a moment ago, 1540, 1547, 1583 and 1789. They mark events in the history of the Society of Jesus and I want to recall them for the sake of the Jesuit Institute itself so that it might experience in its corporate personality what Thomas Fuller recounted as the benefits of history for us individual persons: "History maketh a young man to be old without either wrinkles or gray hair; privileging him with the experience of age without either the infirmities or inconveniences thereof."[1] Most importantly, it was the willingness to imagine previously unexplored possibilities which brought about those events and then carried them far beyond their simple beginnings.

In the first part of these remarks, I want to say something about what happened at each of those dates. In the second part, I want to suggest that the enduring principles and the heritage which animated those four events ought to animate the Jesuit Institute, too, for the future.

In 1539, 450 years ago this year, Ignatius Loyola and nine companions sat down to deliberate in common on how they would both maintain together their friendship in the Lord and go out separately to do the work of the Lord in lands as widely distant as Italy and the Indies. The results of their deliberations, approved by the Church in 1540, was the establishment of the Society of Jesus.[2] We do not recognize today how very unusual this new religious order was in the Church because so many of its features became, especially from the nineteenth century on, common to many religious congregations. The Society of Jesus was an imaginative response to the spirit of the times and the needs of the Church. It was utterly mobile, without the constraints of cloister or of the chanting of the official prayer of the Church, able to go anywhere for the preaching of the Gospel, not reliant on the deliberation of a community chapter but upon the intimate personal knowledge of member and superior, at the immediate service of the Pope in order to be sent where he thought its members might best serve the Lord, selective in recruitment, respectful of all serious learning and eager to make use of it, including such use in the unusually lengthy training of its

members, imbued with the experience of the Spiritual Exercises common to all its members, seeing all of creation as a good gift of God and willing to employ all creatures in the praise and service of God.[3] The Society had also many of the characteristics of the older religious orders, but no one had ever before combined the older characteristics and these new insights. Ignatius Loyola had the imagination to do so; he had the colleagues who could grasp what he was trying to do; he had the organizational skills to bring together effectively that imagination and those colleagues in the Society of Jesus. Within twenty years, the Jesuits were everywhere from Ethiopia to Poland, from Sicily to Brazil, in every conceivable kind of work, yet bound together by a common spirit and a common ideal. We may take the Society of Jesus for granted today, praise it or blame it (and there are enough people who would vigorously do either of these), admire or be puzzled by it, but the creation of the Jesuits was an extraordinary act of imagination, organization and colleagueship (the first Jesuits called themselves "friends in the Lord"); and in its results, it went far beyond what anyone might have conceived at its founding.

The Society was officially approved and began its existence in 1540, but between that year and 1547, the second of our dates, there was no such thing as a Jesuit school explicitly for laypeople.

Gradually, through experience, the early Society saw the advantages of schools and then, in 1547, the Spanish viceroy of Sicily requested that a college be set up in Messina. Why? For the reform of the island of Sicily, he said. That college was the first school set up by the Society of Jesus directly for lay students. Ignatius, in sending ten of his colleagues there, ten of the very best men he had in what was still a very small Society, told them as they left Rome for Messina, "If we live for ten years, we shall see great things in the Society of Jesus." Indeed they did! At the end of ten years, by 1556, the year Ignatius died, there were 40 colleges spread throughout Europe and already in parts of the New World, in India and a few places in Africa. From the beginning, they regarded organization of the school and of the curriculum as important, and so great was the

need for such an organized system of education and so great its desirability that the Jesuits were besieged with requests to start institutions everywhere throughout Europe and in mission lands. We take such an organized and institutionalized system for granted. But it took a great leap of the imagination to bring it into existence.

They were also at times urged to become members of the faculty or administration of already-existing institutions, which were not specifically Jesuit. At this point I would like to pause and tell you a story which may (I do not say necessarily will) give you some vivid sense that Boston College itself is indeed in the great tradition of Jesuit education. It is a story about the experiences of the first Jesuit to be rector or president of a university. His name was Peter Canisius, now St. Peter Canisius, and he was elected by the faculty to that office at the University of Ingolstadt, today the University of Munich, in October, 1550, 439 years ago. In a letter to Ignatius Loyola in Rome a few weeks later, he told him what in practice the office of president involved:

> Governing this place is bringing me a good deal of trouble and precious little so far in the way of obvious results. The rector's [for our purposes, read "president's"] principal duties are to enroll new students, to force debtors to pay their bills, to listen to the complaints which men and women citizens of the town bring against the young men, to arrest, reprimand and jail the students who get drunk and roam around the streets at night, and finally to preside at official festivities and at academic functions connected with the conferral of degrees . . . . They say, and it's true, that the lawyers run the place.

Have things really changed so much over the centuries?

Let me return now to what happened in the foundation of those Jesuit schools originally started in 1547. Within 50 years, by 1600, there were 245 Jesuit schools around the world. By 1740, 200 years after the founding of the Society, there were 700 schools for lay students and 175 seminaries and houses of study for those preparing

for the priesthood, all run by the Society of Jesus. Those schools were all based in their operations on that famous manual of procedure, the *Ratio Studiorum,* which was mostly a handbook of specific teaching methods set out with admirable clarity for the classes of the day. One of the editions of the *Ratio,* however, had as its preface a general essay by a famous Spanish Jesuit educator named Ledesma in which he set forth a statement of the purposes which the Society of Jesus had in conducting schools and universities. Let me quote directly what Ledesma, set down as that Jesuit purpose. The Society was to run schools, first, because they supply men with many advantages for practical living; secondly, "because they contribute to the right government of public affairs and to the proper making of laws; third, because they give ornament, splendor and perfection to the rational nature of man; and fourth, and what is most important, because they are the bulwark of religion and guide man most surely and easily to the achievement of his last end."[4] Now of course, it did not always work out in practice that way, and another early Jesuit, Pedro Ribadeneyra, even while defending Jesuit education, had to admit that a lot of people contended that "it is a repulsive, annoying and burdensome thing to guide and teach and try to control a crowd of young people, who are naturally so frivolous, so restless, so talkative and so unwilling to work that even their parents cannot keep them at home. So it happens that our young Jesuits, who are involved in teaching them, lead a very strained life, wear down their energies and damage their health."[5]

Let us return now for a few more minutes to history. We left the Society of Jesus in 1740 with 700 schools. By 1773, they were all destroyed when the Church suppressed the Jesuits at the insistence of and, indeed, under threats of schism in the Church from the Bourbon monarchies of France, Spain and Naples, aided by Portugal. Sixteen years later, the French Revolution came along with all of the institutional, social, psychological and religious havoc which the revolution caused to Church, society and states throughout Europe. At the time that the French Revolution was coming to an end, the Society of Jesus, partly restored in the earlier turmoil of the 1800s, had 12 small, struggling schools. Four were in

Italy, two in France, five, surprisingly, in Russia, and one, equally surprisingly, in the United States. But the story of that imaginative American venture and its consequences will wait for 1789, the fourth of the dates which I mentioned earlier.

Let me go back now to the third date, 1583. A little more than 400 years ago, a thirty-year-old Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci, set foot on the mainland of China. His work? In the long run, quite simply to bring Christianity to China. How? By trying to put into effect the principles elaborated by one of the greatest and most farseeing proponents of inculturation who has ever lived, Alessandro Valignano. Valignano, an Italian like Ricci, was, at the still early age of 34, delegate of the General of the Society of Jesus to all of the lands of the Far East where the Jesuits were working or might work. Through tireless journeys from India through Indonesia to China to Japan and back and forwards again for better than 30 years, he developed, far in advance of his time, almost all of the principles which we today take for granted, at least in theory if not that very often in practice, of how one civilization or culture should best meet another if it comes not as conqueror but as friend and eventual colleague.[6]

Let me describe those principles briefly. They were, first, a sympathy and a respect for the cultural, social, intellectual, and spiritual values of the people among whom one was working; secondly, a perfect command of the language, the idiom, in which that civilization or culture was incarnated; third, science and scholarship in the service of introducing the values and ethos of one civilization or culture to another, quite frankly in this case in the service of introducing the Christian faith to China; fourth, a long-term endeavor of serious writing and personal dialogue; fifth, concern for the groups upon whom a society depended for its leadership and cohesion, especially, in his time, the scholarly communities and government officials; and, finally, the supreme importance of the example of one's personal values lived out in one's life.

Ricci was to spend a lifetime wholeheartedly incarnating all of those principles of Valignano. He lived, studied, spoke and indeed thought in the language and the manners and the idioms of China. Twenty major works in Chinese itself on mathematics, astronomy, literature and apologetics came from his pen, among which rank some of the classics of Chinese literature.

Most importantly, Ricci had the imagination to see that Christianity could be truly compatible with a non-European culture, and need not simply be presented in its sixteenth-century Western European garb. He had the extraordinary ability to see how this might be true, not only in theory but also in practice. That meant especially the determination to understand sympathetically the central facets of Chinese civilization and to begin to make of them a synthesis with Christianity which would be true both to that civilization and to the faith. Just as important was Ricci's determination to find contemporary Chinese expressions for the timeless truths of Christianity. This was really the first such endeavor, methodically and seriously undertaken in the context of a fully developed and immensely sophisticated civilization, since better than 1500 years before. In that sole previous example, the Hebraic experience and expression of revelation had been transmuted into the vocabulary of Greece and Rome, out of the experience and reflection of the new converts of the Roman empire to the infant Christian Church.

In this extraordinary work of imaginative adaptation, in a totally different culture, for better than a quarter of a century, Ricci built up institutional support and had the colleagueship of his brethren in the Society of Jesus. By no means did every individual, even among his fellow Jesuits, agree with him and his methods. When did all Jesuits *ever* agree on anything? But he did have the support of the Society as an institution, and this kind of support immensely multiplied the fruits of his labors. Ironically, a century and a half later, the Church, another institution, with its structures and its imagination lodged in Europe, could not recognize what was happening as the Church in China attempted to become truly Chinese without