CHURCH HISTORY SERIES • LESSON 19 • NOLL TURNING POINT 8

Counter-Reformation & the Jesuits

Ignatius of Loyola, the Society of Jesus, and the Council of Trent — how Rome remade itself and carried Catholicism to the ends of the earth • 1521–1614

By Shane Gunn • Following Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points*, ch. 8

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Where this fits: Lesson 19 of the Pleasant Springs *Church History* series — Noll's eighth turning point, and the Catholic response to the Protestant Reformations we have covered in **Lesson 15 (Luther)**, **Lesson 16 (Calvin & Zwingli)**, **Lesson 17 (Anabaptists)**, and **Lesson 18 (English Reformation)**. Together these five lessons give us the whole sixteenth-century religious revolution. See the full **Series Timeline**.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

When Martin Luther stood before the Diet of Worms in April 1521 and refused to recant, an educated Basque nobleman of about 30 was lying in his family's castle with both his legs shattered by a French cannonball. The date was 20 May 1521, about four weeks after Luther left Worms. The young man's name was **Íñigo López de Loyola**; history knows him as **Ignatius**. During his painful recovery that summer, out of boredom, he read two books his family happened to have — a *Life of Christ* and a collection of saints' lives. By the end of the summer he had decided to give the rest of his life to Jesus Christ. Within twenty years he had founded the most effective Christian missionary and educational order the world has ever seen.

Meanwhile, after decades of delay, the Catholic Church finally convened a general council at the Alpine town of **Trent** in December 1545. It met on and off for eighteen years over the reigns of four popes. When it finished in December 1563, it had produced the most sweeping renewal of Catholicism since the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 and had permanently defined what Protestantism was *not*. The council's decrees, the new catechism, the new missal, the Index of Forbidden Books, the seminary system, and above all the missionary drive of the Jesuits carried Catholicism across oceans into India, China, Japan, the Americas, and Africa. The Catholic Church that emerged from Trent is essentially the Catholic Church that survived, substantially unaltered, until Vatican II in 1962–1965.

Protestants sometimes tell our Reformation story as though the Catholic side simply sat still while we reformed. That is not what happened. Rome reformed too — in its own way, on its own terms, under pressures mostly of its own making — and the Counter-Reformation shaped the world almost as much as the Protestant Reformation did. This is the other half of the sixteenth century.

> *Greek NT (1 Cor 15:10): χάριτι δε ̀ θεοῦ εἰμι ὅ εἰμι, και ̀ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ εἰς ἐμε ̀ οὐ κενη ̀ ἐγενήθη… οὐκ ἐγω ̀ δε ̀ ἀλλα ̀ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ συ ̀ν ἐμοί.*
>
> 1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV): "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me."

Paul's sentence contains the paradox the Reformers and the Counter-Reformers would read in different directions. Protestants heard "by the grace of God I am what I am" and made it the center. Catholics heard "I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I but the grace of God" and read it as cooperation with grace. Both sides were reading the same verse. The fight over how to hold it together is much of Trent.

PART 1 — ROME'S CRISIS (1517–1540)

Through the 1520s and 1530s, Rome was slow to respond to the Protestant Reformation for reasons that look self-inflicted in hindsight:

• **The popes were compromised.** Leo X (1513–21) had been a Medici prince more than a theologian; his successor Clement VII (1523–34), another Medici, was a cousin. The sack of Rome by imperial troops in May 1527 — German and Spanish soldiers looting St. Peter's, scrawling "Luther" on Raphael's frescoes, reducing the Eternal City to burning rubble — traumatized the papacy.

• **The Emperor wanted a council; the Pope did not.** Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, needed a council to settle the German religious situation. Rome feared a council would curtail papal power, as earlier councils at Constance (1414–18) and Basel (1431–49) had attempted.

• **The French resisted.** France, rival of Spain, usually opposed whatever the Emperor wanted. An imperial council was diplomatic nonstarter.

• **But the grassroots was reforming anyway.** Throughout Catholic Europe, new reforming religious orders appeared: the **Capuchins** (1528, a reformed branch of the Franciscans); the **Theatines** (1524, founded by the future Pope Paul IV); the **Ursulines** (1535, the first major female teaching order); and soon, most consequentially, the **Society of Jesus** (1540).

1534 • Alessandro Farnese is elected Pope Paul III. He is, like his predecessors, a Renaissance Italian noble with illegitimate children, but he is also a man of genuine reforming conviction. He begins the real work of Catholic renewal.

1537 • Paul III's reform commission issues the *Consilium de Emendanda Ecclesia* ("Report on the Reform of the Church"), a blunt internal document listing the abuses of the papacy itself: simony, nepotism, plural benefices, absentee bishops, unqualified clergy. Luther delightedly translated it into German as proof that even Rome now admitted its own problems.

1540 • Paul III approves the Society of Jesus (see Part 4).

1542 • Paul III reconstitutes the **Roman Inquisition** — the papal body for prosecuting heresy in Catholic territory.

December 1545 • After multiple delays, the general council finally opens at **Trent**.

PART 2 — IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (1491–1556)

Íñigo López de Loyola — Ignatius

BORN 1491, CASTLE OF LOYOLA IN THE BASQUE PROVINCE OF GUIPÚZCOA, NORTHERN SPAIN • WOUNDED AT PAMPLONA 1521 • FOUNDED THE SOCIETY OF JESUS 1540 • DIED 31 JULY 1556, ROME • CANONIZED 1622

Jesuit founder **Spiritual Exercises** **Soldier-saint**

Ignatius was the thirteenth child of a minor Basque noble family. He was raised as a page at the court of Juan Velázquez de Cuéllar, chief treasurer of Castile, then entered the service of the Duke of Nájera. He was a conventional Renaissance Spanish courtier — proud, dueling, fond of clothing and romantic fiction.

20 May 1521 • At the siege of **Pamplona** by the French, a cannonball shattered Ignatius' right leg and badly wounded his left. The French, impressed by his courage, carried him home to the Castle of Loyola rather than letting him die. Surgeons had to re-break his leg twice more (without anesthesia) to set it properly; he endured every procedure silently. He walked with a pronounced limp for the rest of his life.

Summer 1521 • The castle had no chivalric romances for him to read; only a *Life of Christ* by Ludolph the Carthusian and the *Golden Legend*, a medieval anthology of saints' lives. He read them repeatedly. A method of spiritual discernment emerged: when he imagined himself performing heroic deeds for a great lady, he felt temporary pleasure, followed by emptiness; when he imagined

himself imitating Francis or Dominic, the pleasure lasted. He later called this the "discernment of spirits" — the Ignatian technique of noticing the long-term fruit of different imaginative movements in the soul.

March 1522 • Recovered, Ignatius travelled to the Benedictine monastery of **Montserrat** in Catalonia, kept a night-long vigil before the statue of the Virgin, hung up his sword and dagger at the altar, and gave away his fine clothing to a beggar.

1522–1523 • At a cave near **Manresa**, he spent ten months in extreme asceticism, prayer, and interior struggle. This was the period in which he experienced his most formative mystical illumination (by the River Cardoner) and began composing what would become the *Spiritual Exercises*.

1523 • Pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He had hoped to stay there permanently to evangelize Muslims. The Franciscans who governed the Christian holy places sent him home for his own safety.

1524–1528 • Realized at 33 that if he was going to teach others, he needed education. He began elementary Latin with schoolboys at Barcelona, studied at Alcalá, and after two encounters with the Inquisition over his irregular spiritual teaching, moved to the University of Paris.

1528–1535 • Paris. At the Collège de Sainte-Barbe he shared a room with two much younger men — **Peter Faber** (a Savoyard farm boy) and **Francis Xavier** (a Navarrese noble, the future great missionary). Over years he taught them the *Spiritual Exercises*. With four other companions — Laínez, Salmerón, Bobadilla, and Rodrigues — they took private vows of poverty, chastity, and pilgrimage to Jerusalem at a chapel on **Montmartre** on 15 August 1534. The Society of Jesus had begun, though it would not be formally organized for six more years.

1537 • Ordained priest at Venice. The Jerusalem pilgrimage was blocked by war. The companions travelled instead to Rome to offer themselves to the Pope.

1540 • Pope Paul III approves the Society of Jesus.

1541–1556 • Ignatius serves as first Superior General, from a room in Rome, writing the *Constitutions* of the Society (formally approved 1558), corresponding with Jesuits across the world (nearly 7,000 of his letters survive), and overseeing the order's explosive growth. By his death in 1556 there are ~1,000 Jesuits in twelve provinces across Europe, Brazil, and India.

PART 3 — THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

The *Exercitia Spiritualia* — begun in the cave at Manresa in 1522 and refined over the next twenty-five years — is one of the most influential devotional manuals in Christian history. It is not a book to read so much as a structured 30-day retreat to *do*, guided by a director, following Ignatius's careful pattern of prayer, imaginative contemplation of scenes from the life of Christ, self-examination, and discernment.

The retreat is divided into four "Weeks," which are thematic rather than strictly chronological:

THE FOUR WEEKS OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Week 1 — Sin and Mercy. The retreatant considers the gravity of sin (original, historical, personal), the realities of hell and judgement, and the mercy of God meeting the sinner.

Week 2 — Life of Christ. Extended contemplation of scenes from the Incarnation, birth, hidden years, baptism, and public ministry of Jesus — with the retreatant imaginatively present in each scene, noticing everything that might move the heart.

Week 3 — Passion. The agony in the garden, the arrest, trial, scourging, and crucifixion, walked slowly and contemplatively.

Week 4 — Resurrection. The appearances of the risen Christ, ending in the "Contemplation to Attain Love" — a final meditation on God's love in all things.

Key Ignatian principles within the Exercises:

• **The First Principle and Foundation.** "The human person is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining the end for which he is created." Every creature is to be used or not used purely according to whether it leads to God.

• ***Indifferentia* — Holy indifference.** The retreatant seeks to become indifferent to riches or poverty, long life or short, honor or dishonor — wanting only what God wants.

• **The Two Standards.** A meditation in which the retreatant sees Christ standing beneath his standard in a plain near Jerusalem, and Satan beneath his standard in Babylon. Each sends disciples into the world with different strategies. The retreatant is asked to choose sides.

• **Discernment of spirits.** Rules for distinguishing motions of the Holy Spirit from motions of the enemy and one's own disordered affections. Still taught today in Catholic spiritual direction and increasingly read by Protestant pastors.

• ***Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*** **(AMDG) — "For the greater glory of God."** Ignatius' watchword and the Jesuit motto. Every choice is tested against this single criterion: does it give greater glory to God?

"Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All I have and call my own. You have given it all to me; to you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace; that is enough for me."

> **— Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* §234 (the *Suscipe*), the prayer at the Contemplation to Attain Love**

PART 4 — THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (AD 1540)

On 27 September 1540, Pope Paul III issued the bull *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae* formally approving the new order. The document used language Ignatius had drafted: the companions would be "soldiers of God" under the direct command of the Pope, available to go anywhere in the world for any mission the Pope might assign them.

What made the Jesuits different from previous religious orders:

> **1. No habit, no fixed daily Office in choir.** Unlike Benedictines, Dominicans, or Franciscans, Jesuits do not gather for the hours of prayer several times daily. This freed them for active missionary, educational, and pastoral work at any hour.

> **2. Long and rigorous formation.** A Jesuit today still trains for roughly 10–13 years after college: two years of novitiate, philosophy, regency (teaching experience), theology, ordination, and tertianship. Jesuits are typically 35–40 before taking final vows.

> **3. A special fourth vow of obedience to the Pope.** In addition to the traditional three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience (to the Superior General), professed Jesuits take a fourth vow — personal obedience to the Pope regarding missions. This made them the Pope's shock troops in a way no earlier order had been.

> **4. Schools as evangelism.** By 1556 there were about 35 Jesuit colleges; by 1640 there were nearly 600 across Europe. These schools educated princes, merchants, and professionals free of charge, producing the Catholic leadership class of the 17th and 18th centuries.

> **5. Flexibility in adaptation.** Jesuits in China wore Confucian robes; in India they engaged Brahmin philosophy; in the New World they learned indigenous languages and (famously) opposed the enslavement of native peoples. Their accommodation sometimes caused doctrinal controversies within Rome, but it also made them uniquely effective missionaries.

> **6. Central command.** The Superior General in Rome (often called *il Papa nero*, the "Black Pope," after the black Jesuit cassock) governs a worldwide organization with military precision. This centralization alarmed everyone who was not a Jesuit, including many bishops and kings.

Growth. From 10 men in 1540, the Society grew to roughly 1,000 by 1556, 13,000 by 1615, and 23,000 at the time of their suppression in 1773. Today there are approximately 14,000 Jesuits worldwide — still the largest single male religious order in the Catholic Church.

PART 5 — THE COUNCIL OF TRENT (1545–1563)

The Council of Trent is the longest and most consequential council in Catholic history. It met in the small alpine town of Trent (modern Trento, northern Italy) in three distinct periods across eighteen years:

First period: 1545–1547 (Paul III, Julius III) — Sessions 1–8. Doctrinal sessions on Scripture and tradition, justification, and the sacraments in general. Moved to Bologna in 1547 because of plague; effectively suspended.

Second period: 1551–1552 (Julius III) — Sessions 11–16. Eucharist, penance, and extreme unction. Suspended when Protestant armies under Maurice of Saxony threatened northern Italy.

Third period: 1562–1563 (Pius IV) — Sessions 17–25. The Mass as sacrifice, orders, matrimony, purgatory, saints, images, indulgences, and the entire disciplinary program.

Ended 4 December 1563 with a closing cry "Anathema to all heretics!" from the 235 bishops present.

The theological decisions. Trent's decrees follow a consistent pattern: a positive theological statement of Catholic doctrine, followed by a list of numbered *anathemas* condemning specific Protestant errors. The key doctrinal decrees (listed here by session):

- **Session 4 (8 April 1546) — Scripture and Tradition.** "Scripture and the apostolic traditions… must be received and venerated with an equal affection of piety and reverence." This is the explicit rejection of *sola scriptura*. The Latin Vulgate is declared the authentic edition (see **Lesson 12 Part 9**). The Deuterocanonical books are confirmed as fully canonical (see **Lesson 2 Part 5**).

- **Session 5 (17 June 1546) — Original Sin.** Defines original sin without locking down the Augustinian-vs-Thomist debate on its mechanism. Anathemas against Pelagianism.

- **Session 6 (13 January 1547) — Justification.** Trent's most important dogmatic decree. Sixteen chapters and thirty-three canons. The positive teaching: justification is the true transformation of the soul, not merely an imputed forensic declaration; it begins with prevenient grace; it is received in baptism; it can be increased by good works done in grace; it can be lost through mortal sin and regained through the sacrament of penance. Key Protestant positions — justification by faith alone in a purely forensic sense — are explicitly anathematized.

- **Sessions 7, 13, 21, 22, 24 — The Seven Sacraments.** Baptism, confirmation, Eucharist (including transubstantiation), penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony are all confirmed as true sacraments instituted by Christ. Anathemas against Protestant rejections.

- **Sessions 22 & 25 — The Mass and the Saints.** The Mass is a true, propitiatory sacrifice offered for the living and the dead. The invocation of saints, veneration of relics, use of sacred images, and doctrine of purgatory are all confirmed — in each case with pastoral guidance urging the removal of superstitious abuses.

The disciplinary decisions. Alongside the doctrinal decrees, Trent transformed Catholic ministerial practice:

> • **Bishops must reside in their dioceses** (ending centuries of absentee nobility collecting bishopric revenues from Rome).

> • **Every diocese must establish a *seminary*** to train clergy — a genuinely new institution. The word "seminary" in its modern sense is Trent's.

> • **Priestly celibacy is reaffirmed.** Despite pressure from some German bishops, Trent refuses to allow clerical marriage.

> • **Preaching is required** on every Sunday and holy day. Parish priests must instruct children in the catechism weekly.

> • **Marriage must be performed publicly** with the parish priest and two witnesses (the decree *Tametsi*). This ended the medieval scandal of secret marriages.

> • **Indulgence sales are abolished.** Indulgences remain as a spiritual remedy, but the sale of them — the specific abuse that triggered Luther's 95 Theses — is ended.

PART 6 — WHAT TRENT DID NOT DO

Three things Trent conspicuously did not do help explain its long success and its long limitations:

> • **It did not negotiate with Protestants.** Some Protestant observers were invited; none were voting participants. The Lutheran princes had demanded a council in German territory with Protestant participation; they got neither. Trent defined Catholic doctrine

against Protestantism rather than seeking any reconciliation. This made the Protestant-Catholic divide permanent.

• **It did not resolve internal Catholic theological debates.** The old disputes between Thomists and Scotists, Augustinians and Molinists on grace and free will, were left where Trent found them. The Jansenist and Molinist controversies of the 17th century (still not definitively settled) arose from Trent's deliberate refusal to resolve them.

• **It did not reform the papacy or the Curia.** The ongoing corruption of the papal court was the original driver of the Reformation. Trent reformed the bishops, the clergy, and the laity — but not the popes. Reform of the Curia would wait until the 20th century. The structural problems of medieval Catholicism were inherited, not solved, by Tridentine Catholicism.

PART 7 — TRIDENTINE MASS & THE ROMAN CATECHISM

Trent had decreed a uniform Roman liturgy and a uniform catechism, but left their production to the Pope. Both appeared under **Pius V** (r. 1566–1572):

The Roman Catechism (1566)

Tridentine teaching | For parish priests

Also called the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, it was addressed not to children but to parish priests — as a reliable guide for their own teaching. Four parts: the Apostles' Creed, the seven sacraments, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. It was the standard Catholic dogmatic textbook until 1992, when John Paul II's *Catechism of the Catholic Church* replaced it. The Roman Catechism is still studied by Catholic theology students and remains a remarkably clear statement of traditional Catholic teaching.

The Tridentine Missal (1570)

Uniform Latin Mass | Used until Vatican II

Pius V promulgated *Quo Primum* in July 1570, imposing a uniform Latin Mass across the entire Western Catholic Church. Local medieval rites that could prove continuous use for 200+ years (Ambrosian in Milan, Mozarabic in Toledo, Dominican, Carmelite, Carthusian) were exempted. Everything else was standardized. The 1570 Missal — revised modestly in subsequent centuries — remained the Catholic liturgical standard for 400 years, until the *Novus Ordo Missae* of Paul VI (1969) introduced a vernacular rite under the authority of Vatican II. The 1570 rite is sometimes still celebrated today (called the "Traditional Latin Mass"), and was given broader permission by Pope Benedict XVI in *Summorum Pontificum* (2007) — a permission partially restricted by Pope Francis in 2021.

The Index of Forbidden Books. The first Papal Index was promulgated under Paul IV in 1559. Pius IV revised it in 1564 in implementation of a Trent decree. The Index listed books Catholics were forbidden to read; Protestant Bibles and most Protestant theological works were on it. It remained an active institution until 1966.

PART 8 — THE GLOBAL JESUIT MISSION

While Trent was defining Catholic doctrine in the Alps, Jesuits were carrying that doctrine across oceans. Within fifty years of their founding they were working on every continent then known to Europeans.

Francis Xavier (1506–1552) — Asia

NAVARRESE NOBLE • IGNATIUS'S ROOMMATE AT PARIS • APOSTLE OF THE INDIES AND JAPAN

India | Japan | Died off China

Xavier sailed from Lisbon in April 1541 and arrived at Goa in May 1542. Over the next ten years he evangelized the Paravar fishing communities of southern India, the Molucca islands, and (most famously) Japan, which he entered at Kagoshima in August

1549 and where he established the first Christian congregations. He died on the island of Shangchuan just off the Chinese coast on 3 December 1552, waiting for an entry permit to mainland China that never came. His right arm is kept as a relic at the Gesù in Rome.

Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) — China

ITALIAN JESUIT • MATHEMATICIAN, CARTOGRAPHER • EVANGELIZED CHINA IN MANDARIN AND CONFUCIAN DRESS

China Accommodation

Ricci's accommodation strategy — wearing the robes of a Confucian scholar, writing his theological works in literary Chinese, engaging Confucian philosophy as a natural partner to Christian theology — eventually won him a permission to reside at Beijing and access to the imperial court. His world map, astronomical instruments, and mathematical texts established a Chinese Christian community that, after the Chinese Rites Controversy (settled against the Jesuits by Rome in 1715–1742 and reversed in 1939), would endure persecution and underground existence for centuries.

The Jesuit Reductions (Paraguay, 1609–1767)

INDIGENOUS CHRISTIAN COMMUNES IN THE PARAGUAY RIVER BASIN

Guaraní Christian communes

Starting in 1609, Jesuits organized indigenous Guaraní Christians into self-governing, partly communal villages (*reducciones*) protected from Spanish and Portuguese slaving raids. At their peak in the 1730s, about 30 Reductions housed roughly 140,000 Guaraní in organized, prosperous Christian communities with cathedrals, schools, printing presses (the first in South America), and their own Guaraní-language liturgies. The Reductions are still widely remembered as one of the great Christian experiments in honoring indigenous dignity — though modern scholarship has also noted their paternalism and the disease catastrophes they could not prevent. The 1986 film *The Mission* (Robert De Niro, Jeremy Irons) dramatized their destruction by Portuguese slavers and the Jesuit expulsion of 1767.

The Canadian Martyrs (1642–1649)

JESUIT MISSIONARIES TO THE HURON AND IROQUOIS OF NEW FRANCE

Martyrs | New France

Isaac Jogues, Jean de Brébeuf, Gabriel Lalemant, Charles Garnier, and four other Jesuit missionaries in New France (Canada) were tortured and killed by the Iroquois during the Beaver Wars of the 1640s. Brébeuf's endurance under torture became legendary. Eight of them were canonized as saints in 1930.

PART 9 — OTHER COUNTER-REFORMATION SAINTS

The Jesuits were the most visible instrument of Catholic renewal, but they were far from the only one. The same decades produced some of the greatest saints in Catholic history.

TERESA OF ÁVILA (1515–1582)

Spanish Carmelite nun, reformer, mystic. Founded the Discalced ("shoeless") Carmelite reform, restoring rigorous contemplative life to a worldly order. Her *Interior Castle*, *Way of Perfection*, and *Autobiography* are classics of Christian mysticism. Declared Doctor of the Church in 1970 — the first woman to be so named.

JOHN OF THE CROSS (1542–1591)

Spanish Carmelite priest and poet, Teresa's partner in Carmelite reform. His poems (*Dark Night of the Soul*, *Spiritual Canticle*, *Living Flame of Love*) and their prose commentaries are considered the summit of Christian mystical literature. Imprisoned and beaten by his own conservative Carmelite brothers; wrote some of his greatest poetry from the cell.

CHARLES BORROMEO (1538–1584)

FRANCIS DE SALES (1567–1622)

Archbishop of Milan 1564–1584, papal nephew, and implementer of Tridentine reforms in his enormous archdiocese. Founded seminaries, visited every parish in person (800+ visits), reformed the clergy, served the plague-stricken in 1576 while the local government fled. The model Tridentine bishop.

Savoyard aristocrat who became Bishop of Geneva (though he could not enter Protestant Geneva and lived in Annecy). His *Introduction to the Devout Life* (1609) was one of the most widely read devotional books in Catholic history — aimed at married lay people, not contemplatives, teaching that holiness is possible in ordinary life.

VINCENT DE PAUL (1581–1660)

French priest who organized systematic charity for the urban poor on a scale Western Europe had not seen. Founded the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) and co-founded the Daughters of Charity with Louise de Marillac. His approach shaped modern Catholic social service organization.

PETER CANISIUS (1521–1597)

Dutch Jesuit, preacher, catechist, and university reformer in the German-speaking lands. His three catechisms (large, small, and smallest) were the Catholic answer to Luther's Small Catechism; they ran to 100+ editions in a century and shaped Central European Catholicism for 300 years.

PART 10 — SUPPRESSION AND RESTORATION (1773 & 1814)

The Society of Jesus' astonishing growth and political influence made it a target. By the mid-18th century, the Catholic monarchies — Portugal, France, Spain — had each for their own political reasons expelled the Jesuits and demanded the Pope suppress the entire order.

1759 • Jesuits expelled from Portugal and all Portuguese territories by the Marquis of

Pombal.

1764 • Jesuits expelled from France by Louis XV.

1767 • Jesuits expelled from Spain and all Spanish territories (including the Paraguay Reductions) by Charles III.

21 July 1773 • Under enormous political pressure, Pope **Clement XIV** issues the brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* suppressing the Society of Jesus worldwide. All 23,000 Jesuits lose their order. Their Superior General is imprisoned in Rome. The General died in prison in 1775; Clement XIV himself died a year after the suppression, probably poisoned.

1773–1814 • Jesuits survive only in non-Catholic territories — ironically, in Orthodox Russia under Catherine the Great, and in Protestant Prussia under Frederick the Great, both of whom refused to promulgate the suppression in their realms.

7 August 1814 • Pope **Pius VII** restores the Society of Jesus worldwide in the bull *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum*. Napoleon's revolutionary disruption of Europe had changed the political calculus; Rome needed the Jesuits back.

The restored Society rebuilt itself over the 19th and 20th centuries. In 2013, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires — the first Jesuit in history — was elected Pope Francis.

PART 11 — THE LONG SHADOW OF TRENT

The Catholic Church that emerged from Trent is called, by historians, **Tridentine Catholicism**. Its basic features held largely unchanged for four centuries:

> • **The Latin Mass** as uniform Western liturgy (until 1969).

- **Seven sacraments**, with transubstantiation as the explanation of Eucharistic change.

- **The priesthood** as a celibate male caste with seminary training.

- **A well-organized devotional life** of rosaries, saints' days, Marian devotions, stations of the cross, eucharistic adoration.

- **A magisterium** centered in the Pope, whose authority was further expanded in 1870 by Vatican I's declaration of papal infallibility (see **Lesson 2 Part 6**).

- **Global missions** — especially Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican — that carried Catholicism from South America and the Philippines to Africa and East Asia.

Vatican II (1962–1965). Pope John XXIII's Second Vatican Council deliberately did not overturn Trent but read it in a more pastoral register and adapted Catholic life to the modern world — vernacular liturgy, religious freedom, ecumenism (Orthodox now "sister churches," Protestants "separated brethren" or "ecclesial communities"), renewed emphasis on Scripture alongside tradition. (Vatican II will be Lesson 12 in Noll's sequence.) But Tridentine Catholicism is the Catholicism most Protestants still imagine when they imagine Catholicism — because it is what they have inherited in their mental images. It is also, in large measure, what the Catholics in our pews still live and love.

Trent and the Joint Declaration (1999). In 1999, after three decades of careful ecumenical dialogue, the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation jointly signed the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. The Declaration states that the mutual condemnations of the 16th century (Trent's canons against Protestants on justification, the Lutheran Confessions' condemnations of Rome) no longer apply to each other's current teaching. The World Methodist Council signed on in 2006; the World Communion of Reformed Churches in 2017; the Anglican Communion in 2016. Trent's sharp anathemas have been significantly softened from both sides. The doctrinal distinctions remain; but the living anathemas are gone.

This is one of the most important modern developments in Reformation-Catholic relations.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR US

• **Rome was not all dead wood.** A Protestant church history that portrays the 16th-century Catholic Church as a corrupt institution waiting only for Luther to knock it over misses the genuine spiritual and reforming vitality the Counter-Reformation also contained. The same decades that produced Calvin and Knox produced Ignatius and Teresa. Both halves of the Christian story are real.

• **Protestants owe more to Rome than we often admit.** Our creeds are Rome's. Our scriptural canon (for the New Testament) was recognized in councils we inherited. The very Bible we read is the Latin Vulgate tradition copied by Catholic monks for a thousand years and then re-translated. We do not have to agree with Trent's theology to be grateful for the stewardship of the church that produced much of what we still read and pray.

• **The Jesuit example still preaches.** A disciplined, educated, globally minded, mission-oriented order with a long formation and a clear theology can reshape a civilization. Much of what modern American Protestants admire in parachurch ministries — InterVarsity, Cru, Wycliffe, Young Life — looks, from a certain angle, like a Protestant attempt at something the Jesuits did first and better.

• **The Spiritual Exercises can feed a Protestant too.** Ignatius' careful prayerful imagination, his discernment of spirits, his *Suscipe* prayer, his AMDG instinct — none of these depends on Catholic sacramental theology. Increasing numbers of evangelical retreat centers and spiritual directors draw on Ignatius because the Exercises work. A Protestant who has never prayed his way through Week 2's contemplation of the Nativity has missed a discipline the Christian church knew how to teach long before we existed.

Greek NT (1 Tim 3:15): ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ… ἥτις ἐστι ̀ν ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος, στῦλος και ̀ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας.

1 Timothy 3:15 (ESV): "The household of God… which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Trent declared that "Scripture and the apostolic traditions must be received and venerated with an equal affection of piety and reverence." The Reformers rejected this as undermining Scripture's final authority. Is there any sense in which a Protestant might still learn from the concern that prompted Trent's language?

2. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* use the imagination to place the retreatant inside Gospel scenes. Does that sound Protestant? Why or why not? What would you gain or lose from trying it this Advent?

3. Francis Xavier and Matteo Ricci learned the languages and took on the clothing of the people they evangelized. How much adaptation is faithful contextualization, and how much is compromise? Where is the line?

4. The Catholic saints of the Counter-Reformation (Teresa, John, Charles Borromeo, Francis de Sales) produced an astonishing quality of lived sanctity. If Protestant theology is correct, why did sanctity flourish so richly in a Catholic context?

5. The Jesuits were suppressed in 1773 by their own Pope. What does that tell us about how quickly a church can turn against its own best servants — and what should we do when we see our tradition about to do something similar?

> **6.** The 1999 *Joint Declaration on Justification* represents a significant softening of the mutual anathemas of the 16th century. Is ecumenism like this faithful charity, or theological compromise? Where should evangelical Protestants engage, and where should we hold back?

CLOSING PRAYER

> Lord Jesus Christ, head of the one church divided, we thank you for Ignatius in his cannon-ball recovery at Loyola; for Xavier sailing off the coast of China; for Teresa reforming her sisters into genuine prayer; for John of the Cross in his Toledo cell writing songs of union with you; for Charles Borromeo walking the plague streets while the rich fled; for the Canadian Martyrs singing under torture at Ossossané; for Matteo Ricci teaching your gospel in Mandarin. Forgive the church its divisions. Teach us to honor our Catholic brothers and sisters whose holiness has often exceeded our own. Give us Ignatius' willingness to give everything — *Suscipe, Domine* — take, Lord, and receive our liberty, our memory, our understanding, our will. All we have and call our own, you have given. To you we return it. Give us only your love and your grace; that is enough. Amen.

FURTHER READING

Primary sources:

- Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises* — the Louis Puhl (1951) and George Ganss (1992) English editions are the standards. Best done with a trained director.

- Ignatius, *Autobiography* (dictated 1553–55); *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*; selected *Letters* (c. 7,000 survive).
- The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent — H. J. Schroeder's English edition (1978) is the standard Protestant-accessible translation.
- The *Roman Catechism (Catechism of the Council of Trent)*, 1566.
- Teresa of Ávila, *Interior Castle*, *Way of Perfection*, *Autobiography*.
- John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, *Spiritual Canticle*, *Living Flame of Love*.
- Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life* (1609).
- Francis Xavier, *Letters and Instructions* (ed. M. J. Costelloe, 1992).
- *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (Lutheran-Catholic, 1999; Methodist 2006; Reformed 2017; Anglican 2016).

Modern studies:

- **Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points*** (3rd ed., 2012), ch. 8: "A New World: The Founding of the Jesuits (1540)."
- John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (1993) — the standard modern scholarly introduction.
- John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (2013) — by far the best short modern account.
- Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, 4 vols. (ET 1957–1980) — the definitive scholarly history.
- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (2003) — covers both Protestant and Counter-Reformation in one sweep.
- Philip McGregor, *The Catholic Reformation* (2014).
- Michael W. Maher, *Jesuits and the Catholic Reformation*.
- Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes* (4th ed., 2014) — treats the Counter-Reformation papacy fairly.
- James Martin, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* (2010) — sympathetic popular introduction to Ignatian spirituality.

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