EDUCATING THE HEART OF A PILGRIM: IN CONVERSATIONS WITH *DILEXIT NOS* AND *SPES NON CONFUNDIT*

MENDIDIK HATI SANG PEZIARAH: DIALOG ANTARA DILEXIT NOS DAN SPES NON CONFUNDIT

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Dikirimkan: 18 Desember 2024; Diterima: 8 Januari 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24071/si.v24i2.10899

ABSTRAK

Umat Kristiani, sebagai peziarah rohani di dunia ini, mengarungi berbagai bahtera hidup menuju akhir jaman. Pada saat yang sama, mereka juga mengarungi begitu banyak poros dunia yang berbeda. Menyelaraskan kedua peziarahan tersebut menghadirkan tugas yang tidak pernah berakhir bagi umat Kristiani yaitu tugas untuk selalu menyegarkan kembali energi spiritual mereka. Imbas dari perjalanan sekuler sebagai umat Kristen membawa banyak tekanan ke pusat spiritualitas mereka, yaitu hati. Ensiklik Paus Fransiskus, Dilexit Nos, *memberi kita wawasan yang lebih menyeluruh tentang kapasitas spiritual dari hati. Secara khusus, pembahasannya tentang hati manusia dari sudut pandang Latihan Rohani Santo Ignatius Loyola dapat memberi kita inspirasi tentang hati sebagai sumber energi spiritual untuk melakukan peziarahan rohani di dunia ini. Dengan menerapkan berbagai literatur teologi spiritualitas untuk membaca Ensiklik tersebut, makalah ini akan menguraikan peran Latihan Rohani dalam memelihara hati kita sebagai tempat ziarah spiritual. Dikombinasikan dengan bulla Paus Fransiskus untuk Yubelium 2025, Spes Non Confundit, kita dapat menyimpulkan bahwa tanda hati yang siap untuk peziarahan spiritual terletak pada kemampuannya untuk menumbuhkan harapan eskatologis. Peziarahan spiritual umat Kristen perlu didasarkan pada kapasitas hati untuk berharap dalam proses menuju pemenuhan Kerajaan Allah.*

Kata kunci*: spiritualitas, hati kudus, devosi, Dilexit Nos, Spes Non Confundit, peziarahan rohani, Latihan Rohani, harapan eskatologis, rahmat otentik, relasi otentik, pemahaman internal*

ABSTRACT

Christians are pilgrims on this earth journeying towards the fulfilment of time. At the same time, they are also journeying along so many different axes of this world. Harmonizing the two journeys presents the Christians with a never-ending task of spiritually revitalizing themselves. The excess of progressing through secular journey as Christians brings a lot of toils to the center of their spirituality, the heart. Pope Francis's recent encyclic, Dilexit Nos, provides us with insights into the spiritual capacity of the heart. Especially, his treatment of St. Ignatius of

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Loyola's Spiritual Exercises on the human heart may provide us with inspiration on the heart as the source of spiritual energy for journeying on the pilgrimage in this world. Applying different literatures of theology of spirituality to read the Encyclic, this paper will elaborate the role of the Exercises in nurturing our heart as the locus of spiritual pilgrimage. In combination with Pope Francis' bull for the Jubilee of 2025, Spes Non Confundit, we can conclude that the sign of heart ready for a spiritual pilgrimage lies in its ability to grow eschatological hope. The spiritual pilgrimage of Christians needs to be based on the capacity of the heart to hope in the process towards the fulfillment of God's Kingdom

Keywords: spirituality, sacred heart, devotion, Dilexit Nos, Spes Non Confundit, spiritual pilgrimage, Spiritual Exercises, eschatological hope, authentic grace, authentic relationship, internal knowledge.

1. INTRODUCTION

In our ever-changing society, the phenomena of new and emerging spiritualities have become more and more prevalent. If we reflect upon the reality behind these phenomena, it has been recognized that most people living in developed countries, such as Japan, is spiritually thirsty[1]. Moreover, this spiritual thirst of people, surrounded by the ever-evolving conditions of our present society, is not just for an 'oasis' of 'life-giving water', but also for an oasis where they can find a sense of belongingness. Hence, this spiritual thirst of our society drives its' inhabitants to move towards double directions in life. First, they are moving toward an unending process of journeying in trying to find a perfect 'oasis' for them. Second, instead of the usual pattern of drinking water from an 'oasis', receiving a fresh state, and continuing to travel, they can also move in the direction of staying in one particular 'oasis' as an ideal place to escape from the harsh realities of the world. Constantly being pulled into either of these two tendencies creates tensions in our lives which eventually leads to spiritual fatigue. The locus of that fatigue is the center of one's spiritual self, the heart. Our heart, torn into different directions in life, will be gradually devoid of its absorbent to God's redeeming grace.

When it comes to relieving spiritual fatigue, there are probably many people nowadays who want to have an unattached relationship with a particular 'oasis'. Most global trotters will superficially sample different kinds of 'oasis' from different places and cultures just to receive instant relief for their spiritual fatigue. Thus, we can say that the main characteristic of people of this era's new and emerging spiritualities is the provision of an instant and unattached

[1] "Since the 1980s most of Japan's NRM (New Religious Movements) have either been in declined or have ceased to grow, while 'unchurched spirituality has been gaining in importance. As Shimasono (2004:291) notes, 'it [spirituality] became visible and began to attract a considerable number of participants' supported by a new class of 'spiritual intellectuals'.", Peter Clarke, *New Religions in Global Perspective: A Study of Religious Change in the Modern World*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 316.

relationship. Newcomers are always welcome to stay and to depart whenever they please. In contrast, The Spiritual Exercises (hereinafter, the Exercises) provides us not with a kind of 'oasis' which can serve as an instant remedy for this fatigue. Rather, it serves as a prevention measure for us to face the unavoidable spiritual fatigue of life. Pope Francis, in *Dilexit Nos*, mentions that among other spiritualities on the heart of Christ, the Exercises provides the tool for us to cultivate our heart so we can always be spiritually awake. St. Ignatius focuses in the "training of the heart, for in them we sense and savor with the heart a Gospel message…. Anyone who follows the *Exercises* can readily see that they involve a dialogue, heart to heart" [2] with Jesus.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Exercises helps us to see that spiritual fatigue is unavoidable and yet can also be perceived as a channel for God's graces. As such, it can provide us also with spiritual growth. The phenomenon of spiritual fatigue leads us to inquire about the extent of our own heart as the center of our spiritual self. This paper will try to elaborate on the phenomenon of spiritual fatigue mentioned in the two documents of Pope Francis by using the methodology of literature from spirituality to convey the theology of the human heart from the Exercises. The second part of this paper will elaborate on the way the Exercises nurtures our heart so that it can become "a heart big enough to hold the universe."[3] The third part will elaborate the result of the theology of the heart from the Exercises which will build a kind of eschatological hope within the exercitants as pilgrims with Christ in the world. Throughout this paper, I will use the word 'pilgrim' in the figurative sense.

2.1. Understanding the Process of Present Spiritual Fatigue

It is true that spirituality is more suitable for people nowadays instead of organized religion. For example, in Japanese society, people will immediately understand when they hear that "institutionalized spirituality, that is, religion, is not the answer to the thirst that modern people experience. … they would rather use the term 'spirituality' than 'religion' to designate their common interest."[4] Especially when compared with social situations like the declining

[2] Encyclic of Pope Francis, *Dilexit Nos*, No.144.

[3] Quoted from Mary Purcell who mentioned that "Ignatius had a heart big enough to hold the universe." (Mary Purcell, *The First Jesuit: Saint Ignatius Loyola [1491–1556]*, (Loyola Press:1981), iv.

[4] "Established Buddhist sects have long been declining … [and] an increasing number of people are now involved in an individualistic spiritual quest utilizing media and variations networks outside organized religions … the goal of these

birth rate or aging population where members of the society yearn for a more secure societal structure to guarantee their living identity, membership towards an organized religion which carries a lot of obligations can be easily perceived as an unnecessary burden of living. However, inhabitants of the present era still crave spirituality to provide them with a kind of inner energy to move further in life. Thus, what remains to be considered is: what kind of spirituality is suitable for them?

To answer this, first, it is necessary to find the causes of this era's thirst for spirituality. Is it a thirst related to seeking one's salvation at the end of time? Or is it simply a thirst for a remedy to remove the stresses of life, something which can be satisfied through a life fulfilled by the offerings of this world? Most probably, the latter is more applicable to the people of our present era. For the tendency of people from this era, who are swept away by the rapid pace of instant life, the most important thing is to gain the maximum result from the minimum efforts of dealing with worldly matters. In *Dilexit Nos*, Pope Francis mentioned that "we find ourselves immersed in societies of serial consumers who live from day to day, dominated by the hectic pace and bombarded by technology, lacking in the patience needed to engage in the processes that an interior life by its very nature requires."[5] The tendency of this era is to measure the degree of happiness based solely on gained *rapid success*. Consequently, the more rapidly we become successful, the more we are prone to interpret our life as a happy life, even with the expense of losing our patience to nurture our own spiritual self.

Therefore, this era forces us to believe that the spirituality we deem necessary is the one which procures the reaping of happiness from rapid successes. In the long run, this kind of spirituality forces us to bring about our own best efforts solely from within ourselves. Without realizing it, however, we are being led into the illusion that there is a hidden, unlimited and perfect potential each of us has within ourselves. In other words, because we believe that we need to follow the rapid progression of society, we force ourselves to become people who can elicit a rapid response to this progress. But the reality speaks differently. The process of bringing about modern technological innovations reveals the unending cycle of creation for the sake of self-fulfillment. We are forced to believe that the more automated we can be, the better we progress. The more we virtually exist in different times and spaces, the more we can

individualistic seekers is quite different from that organized religions, so they would rather use the term 'spirituality' than 'religion' to designate their common interest." Shimasono Susumu in Peter Clarke, *New Religions in Global Perspective*, (2006), 297.

[5] *Dilexit Nos*, no. 9.

multitask. The higher the level of innovation that can be produced, the more we force ourselves to believe that we have fulfilled the hidden potential of us as perfect human beings.

It is undeniable that we do need technological innovations to support the progress of civilization. Technological innovations, in this regard, have neutral value. Thus, their effect on our spiritual life is dependent on the strata of values we apply to their usages. However, can these values come from the above spirituality which we are led to adopt? Is it really the kind of spirituality that we need? In close inspection, it can also be said that the spirituality we are prone to look for in the present era is the spirituality which allows us to avoid encountering the limitations of human existence. Looking at various modern phenomena of social illnesses, we can see that people of this era are spiritually vulnerable to face the realities of life failures.

The toils of becoming an inhabitant of modern life reveal themselves in the forms of many social illnesses. Examples may range from self-withdrawal to suicide. Looking at such phenomena, we cannot but ask whether there is an "authentic manifestation of grace"[6] offered by the kind of spirituality we are longing for in this era? This is precisely the proper indicator which points to the right kind of spirituality for us as children of this era. The fact that we will unexpectedly face our own weaknesses appearing out of the blue, without any ability from us to comprehend and absorb their meaning integrally, should guide us to recognize that the spirituality we really need is a spirituality which enables us to perceive God's grace through our own limitations. While we can also ask to what extent weaknesses or failures are allowed in the structure of the society from this era to create a new kind of spirituality, we must prioritize our search for the authenticity of God's grace as the sign of true spirituality.

Finding the authentic God's grace in the society of this era is not an impossible task. This is because "the true gift has in itself … the potential to create a relationship, contrary to the pure market that generates exchange."[7] The spirituality which enables us to pierce through many kinds of relationships for the purpose of finding God's authentic grace is the proper one for us. Authentic grace reveals itself through authentic relationships. Thus, our next inquiry

[6] The phrase 'authentic grace' is borrowed from Roger Haight. He mentioned that "[i]n no sense it is easy to distinguish grace or the action of God in one's life clearly. There is an element of nonexperience in every experience of grace, a dialectical element of 'human nature' or 'personality' that obscures grace from our direct view. As a result, every form of religious or quasi-religious experience cannot be simply identified with genuine movements from God. If every personal religious experience is taken as an authentic manifestation of grace, one opens the way to the greatest possible error and disillusionment. Illuminism quickly descends into illusionism. All discernment of authentic religious experience requires extreme caution and the application of both critical and pragmatic norms. All of the reasoning against the possibility of experiencing grace has this value of cautioning against the easy possibility of falling victim to pseudoreligious experience, to fantasy or illusion on the one hand, or to idolatry on the other." Roger Haight, *The Experience and Language of God's Grace*, (Paulist Press: 1979), 11.

[7] Antonio Spadaro elaborate the understanding of grace in the context of our digital world. He further mentions that "[t]he gift is a gesture that gains significance with an experience of relationship." Antonio Spadaro, *Cybertheology: Thinking Christianity in the Era of the Internet*, (Fordham University Press: 2014), 65-66.

entails finding the kind of relationship that can be called an authentic relationship in our present society.

2.1.1. The Authentic Relationship: Marked by the Heart of a Pilgrim

Pope Francis mentions that "the heart makes all authentic bonding possible since a relationship not shaped by the heart is incapable of overcoming the fragmentation caused by individualism."[8] The grace of God is made visible through this kind of relationship from the heart. Heart-to-heart relationship between persons united in God's grace provides us with hope to witness the authentic grace of God working to renew all kinds of relationships in the world of this era. Similarly, this is the kind of hope we need to deem also as authentic.

A person who has authentic hope is a person who can recognize that both the real challenge in spiritual life and the hidden presence of reliance on God's grace within one's heart need to be in dialogue with each other. Making visible this reliance on God's grace we carry with us, brings a balanced treatment between one's recognition of modern life's challenges to spiritual life and the desire to find an authentic relationship. We all know too well that achieving this balance often takes another toil in our daily lives. However, looking at the need to keep the dialogue between endangered spiritual life and the endeavor to find an authentic relationship, it is essential to stay connected to the harsh realities of modern life while at the same time also dedicating our hearts to maintaining the authenticity of our relationships in this world. Consequently, to nurture the authenticity of our hope, we also need to remain connected in the diverse realities of our lives. Maintaining an authentic relationship with other people will train us to find the right amount of heart's "authentic openness"[9] in this world.

An authentic relationship, thus, is instrumental in placing our hearts as the center of our spiritual self in every aspect of encounters with worldly matters. Spiritual life that tries to hide from the facts of life can be regarded as pseudo-spirituality. Unlike this spirituality which disconnects us from reality, the spirituality rooted in the authentic graces of God manifested in modern life can be recognized by the strength it provides us in redirecting our most painful experience to become our search for hope. This is because spirituality which is suitable for us does not aim to manifest a perfect human existence according to the ways of this world. It aims for an existence that transcends the sense of perfection of the world.

[8] *Dilexit Nos*, no. 17.

[9] The phrase is quoted from Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti*. He mentions, "A believer may be untrue to everything that his faith demands of him, and yet think he is close to God and better than others, ... The guarantee of an authentic openness to God, on the other hand, is a way of practicing the faith that helps open hearts to our brothers and sisters." *Fratelli Tutti*. no. 74.

The initiative to gradually manifest this transcendental perfection requires the experience of overcoming one's own understanding of perfection in this world. In this regard, such an experience cannot only be found in the experience of human successes. The experience of overcoming one's sense of perfection most often is found in experiences of life crises. In other words, experiences such as repeatedly falling in temptations, struggling in endeavors for love, or being persecuted for protecting the eternal truth of our existence are mostly examples of areas which can be applied to spirituality suitable for our present era. It is precisely through these experiences we can gradually come face to face with our transcendental self as the authentic grace given by God.

In this manner, spirituality suitable for our present era is based on our affective experience. This spirituality begins by taking roots in the experience of being loved by God as the way to overcome modern pressure about becoming perfect. This type of spirituality helps us to recognize the transcendental power that works mystically to redeem the feeling of being limited by our overtly individualized sense of modern perfection. It is precisely because this type of spirituality works within us through a mystical involvement of God's grace, that we may not be able to fully explain it. Conversely, if the entire process of a living spirituality could be explained only in words, then it would not be called truly spirituality for its lack of mystical presence. We can always try to express them verbally. However, it is going to be a limited effort. What we can really do is to try to intuitively feel a sense of attraction towards that work of God's grace leading us towards finding the meaning behind all our endeavors.

This attraction comes from experiencing the all-encompassing love of God towards one's limited reality. Having foretaste a little of one's transcendental self, a desire is born within us to experience it more and more. Pope Francis recognizes the existence of this kind of affective spirituality in the Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola[10]. From the Exercises' point of view, this desire signals the presence of hope being activated in our hearts. The more we trust in our transcendental self, the more we will feel hope burn within us. Guided by our attraction to the complete perfection of God's love within our own limitations, we, thus, become a spiritual pilgrim in this world in search of transcendental perfection. Austen Ivereigh formulated this situation of complete perfection beautifully in this next sentence. "The 'freedom and spiritual vitality' of the one who loves much comes from her lack of fear of failure."[11]

[10] Pope Francis mentions that "the theology underlying the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola is based on 'affection' (*affectus*). The structure of the Exercises assumes a firm and heartfelt desire to 'rearrange' one's life, a desire that in turn provides the strength and the wherewithal to achieve that goal." *Dilexit Nos*, no. 24.

[11] Austen Ivereigh, *First Belong to God: On Retreat with Pope Francis (English Edition)*, (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2023), 152.

Within this spiritual pilgrimage in life also arises the awareness that to achieve this transcendental perfection we need a sense of arriving at our destination, for otherwise the journey would be meaningless. Roger Haight mentioned that those who are seeking for a spirituality will whether Jesus is really someone that human beings can realistically relate to as a fellow seeker before an unknown future?"[12] Pope Francis stresses that transcendental perfection will only be achieved through the process of arriving *gradually* in our union with Christ immanently. He mentioned that Christ, "in his utter *transcendence*, chose to love each of us with a *human* heart."[13] (italics added) That is why, in God's time, this pilgrimage of hope will bear also the growth of our faith. In this manner, spirituality confirms the growth of our faith along with hope. Through this process of spiritual pilgrimage, affective spirituality makes our hearts flourish with hope and faith. Each time we arrive at tasting a little bit of God's complete perfection, our various spiritual illness as people living in this rapid era is also healed.

2.1.2. Community of Polarized Commitments

After this journey of pilgrimage in our daily realities, spiritually engaging pilgrims will start asking the following question: how can I make this encounter with my transcendentally perfected self into a physical reality? As human being, we cannot but ask this question because we do not want a "disembodied spiritual truth."[14] To answer this question, modern people are then faced with the challenge of a deeper question: can I commit myself to supporting my authentic hopes? With this question, we have arrived at the topic of love as a virtue within this process of pilgrimage.

The reason why this topic is challenging lies in the background of the social tension we inhabit in this era of polarization. Within every intersection of our lives, we are presented with the pulling attraction towards so many groups who demand our devotion to them. Ranging from the pull of various political parties to social gatherings, we are demanded to become followers of a certain pole. Pope Francis recognized this danger of polarization when he mentioned, "we live at a time in which polarization and exclusion are burgeoning and considered the only way to resolve conflicts." [15] The society in which we live moves according

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[12] Roger Haight, *Christian Spirituality for Seekers: Reflections of The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola*, (New York: ORBIS BOOKS, 2012), 91.

[13] *Dilexit Nos*, no.60. (italics added)

[14] *Dilexit Nos*, no.60.

[15] Pope Francis, *Homily for the Consistory*, November 19, 2016. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20161119_omelia-concistoro-

to tensions among polarized centers. On the one side, there is a society that changes at a fast pace, and on the other, there are also societies that are left behind for being unable to keep up with the rest of the world. At the same time, there is also a society that has the zeal for transcendental life, but there are also societies which committed to dwelling totally in the mundane realm of daily life. Within these polarized situations of our modern world, we will always be pulled into one side of the polarities.

This tension will result in the possibility that we will move away from the awareness of transcendence within immanence. In other words, our dedication to hope for the transcendental perfection initiated within our journey in this world can be stuck to the mundane realm. We will then be challenged to ask about our own commitment to the journey of incarnating God's grace in this world. Guided by this question most of us will reflect immediately upon our committed participation in various rituals of grace. We have the natural tendency to follow the rubrics of religious ritual because we believe that symbolically performed rituals can elicit powerful 'graces' to support our commitment.

However, committing ourselves to God's grace is more than just a matter of rubricism. From the point of view of modern society, commitment can be perceived as a sign of political loyalty to the one who holds the power. And since our religious rituals seemingly hold the power to distribute God's grace, it can also be perceived politically. In spirituality, however, commitment, as an expression of confidence in the transcendental self is perceived as a willingness that a person will always return to the source of that transcendental self, which is the heart of Christ. In this regard, the source of our spiritual commitment is the sense of belonging to an ecclesial community.[16] This view of spiritual commitment to always return to one's ecclesial community is the protection for us which prevents us from falling into the temptations of switching among centers of this polarized world.

Here, the importance of spiritual commitment of ecclesial community which the polarized world tends to dislike, comes into play. Ideally, ecclesial community contains, first, the image of spiritual pilgrims whose journey's purpose is to maintain their commitment to transcendence. However, while dedication protects pilgrims individually, it also makes them aware that an individual's hopes cannot be realized without the hope of other pilgrims walking together in this world. Therefore, an ideal religious ritual is not only personal but also

nuovi-cardinali.html (accessed December 3, 2024)

[16] Pope Francis perceive returning to the ecclesiastical community as our link to the heart of Jesus as a mission. He mentions that it if "we turn aside from the community, we will be turning aside from Jesus. If we turn our back on the community, our friendship with Jesus will grow cold." *Dilexit Nos*, no. 212.

communal. Thus, a pilgrim's commitment to an ecclesial community, which is based on their commitment to God as the ultimate destination, is closely linked to religious rites celebrated communally which become the "markers on life's journey".[17] Through this celebration, the purpose of incarnating the transcendence within the immanent reality of the pilgrim's community creates more than just a superstitious bond for structural cohesiveness. It builds communal affection towards one another as the main ingredient for communal unity.

2.1.3 The Communal Mystery of Transcendental Love in the World

Starting simply with being committed to the journey, the starting point of a traveler's journey with a religious community points to the direction of Christ's love as the natural outcome of faith and hope. Committed to one's true self and to the transcendental perfection that will become one's goal means continuing the journey of one's life in the form of self-giving to the many communal encounters which we cannot possibly predict. Only through these self-giving encounters with others within our ecclesial community and our larger society can we gradually manifest our transcendental selves also in the form of a community. Concretely, no matter how difficult it is to overcome the challenges of our daily limitations, we will try to overcome them with our limited power. And when we reach the limit, we surrender our efforts to the unlimited God's grace found in our ecclesial community. These are the two concrete manifestations of love that work within our limitations that move towards the overarching love of God. Love, in the end, becomes the mission to manifest one's hopes within one's ecclesial community.

The more we engage ourselves in this pilgrimage's process with the awareness of community as the mission from our hearts, the more we will become a 'testimony of Christ's transcendental love' in this world. Modern people who have a pilgrim's spiritual vision can endure the suffering, harshness, loneliness, and alienation of this world with the power of communal love. Pilgrims seek to find transcendence in all events, so they will look for places in this world where transcendental love is manifested. Based on the transcendental love we have encountered communally; we will identify and relate to various events in this world that represent similar transcendence of Christ's love. In other words, the mystical experience of a transcendental heart within an ecclesial community will be the drive for that community to seek and witness the same mystery of Chrisy's love manifesting in this world. [18] In the end,

[17] Mark Earey, *Worship that Cares*, (London: SCM Press, 2012),19.

[18] Pope Francis reminds us that the matter of the heart should be perceived as a matter a mystical journey of becoming one with Christ in all realities. He mentions that heart "is the unifying principle of all reality, since 'Christ is the heart of the world, and the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection is the center of history, which, because of him, is a history of salvation'."

the pilgrim community will generate hope, faith, and love in this world (1 Corinthians 13:1-13). Those who accept the pilgrim's spirituality take the path of witness to love.

2.2. The Spiritual Exercises Nurturing the Heart of the Pilgrims

In this section, I would like to delineate the process which the Exercises provides to an ecclesial community during the pilgrimage of life here on earth. This delineation is composed based on the spiritual situations of the present era described above. The goal here is to recognize the scope of dialogical prayers (meditation, contemplation, etc.) to bring about the cultivation of the heart.

2.2.1. Remaining in Hope: Eschatological Process of the Spiritual Exercises

In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul wrote: "Not only the creature, but we ourselves, who receive the first fruits of the Spirit, also groan in our hearts as we wait in eager anticipation for adoption as sons, that is, the redemption of our bodies. *For in this hope, we were saved.*" (Romans 8:23-24, italics added). This verse expresses the state of a person as a 'pilgrim of hope'.[19] That is, while we may be aware that this life is finite and temporary, we may also be aware of the hope that this life is also guided by the Holy Spirit toward eternal life. Our efforts are efforts to direct this journey of earthly pilgrimage in accordance with God's will. Moving towards the will of God is a historical process, a *process of eschatological manifestation* of the Kingdom of God here and now. The Exercises is intended to make that process move towards its proper course.

Those who commit themselves to undergo the Exercises will be challenged to re-examine the eschatological process of their lives. It is a challenging task for us as people of this era to embody the idea of processual manifestation and that everything will be fulfilled in due time according to God's will. Most likely, it will be easier for people of this era to accept and to embody life as random movements towards a final destination called death. As such, we tend to become more interested in current events than in the end, which we accept as a reality that we cannot change. In other words, we tend to perceive the eschatological situations of this world as something negative which we need to avoid by maximizing the livelihood of the present moments. Moreover, because no one knows when this final destination will come, we

Dilexit Nos, no.31.

[19] In his Bull of Indiction for the 2025 Jubilee Year *Spes non Confundit*, Pope Francis addresses the whole Church as 'pilgrims of hope' in the sense that "the Holy Spirit illumines all believers with the light of hope." *Spes non Confundit*, no.3.

tend to have a very strong sense of temporal distance towards the end, focusing only on the present moment. These are our conditions when we enter the Exercises looking for the spiritual oasis of life, the revitalization procedure for our spiritual fatigue because of the "spirit of reparation" it generates. [20]

With this spirit of reparation, the Exercises can guide us in directing our eschatological journey as a conversion based on the grace of God[21]. St. Ignatius of Loyola unites the temporal dimensions of the retreatants through the Exercises' notion of 'internal knowledge' (The Exercises, no.104). To facilitate that unity, the retreatants are encouraged to "enter into the heart of Christ"[22] with their own memory, mind, and will. The unification of temporal dimensions takes place when a past memory is brought up to mind to be integrated (or, if needed, to be reconciled) with the present encounter in front of God, which results in the creation of a burning desire to love more like God. This is the content of internal knowledge gained through the Exercises. And the locus of this internal knowledge is centered in the heart of the exercitants which directs the movements of memory, mind, and will modelling on the love of Christ toward the created world.

Through this process, exercitants will come to the new awareness about the pilgrimage journey more in the form of a dialogical process of moving their memory, mind, and will back and forth along the course of history towards God. The exercitants will realize that the end is neither the final stage of the evolution of nature nor the final stage of life in this world. Instead, they will find that the end is happening through a loving encounter between the created world and God, through Christ's love. Thus, a little bit of the end happens every time a moment of unity of love between each creation and God takes place through Christ. God, who loves the world, will shine the light of Christ's love through all creation at the time when the fulfilment of the end has fully arrived. Pope Francis recognizes this as the "virtue of hope" which we develop as pilgrims of hope in this world.[23] If we want to reach the end, we must begin with the love from our hearts that hope.

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[20] The meaning of a spirit of reparation, according to Pope Francis is the spiritual drive which "leads us to hope that every wound can be healed, however deep it may be. Complete reparation may at times seem impossible, such as when goods or loved ones are definitively lost, or when certain situations have become irremediable. Yet the intention to make amends, and to do so in a concrete way, is essential for the process of reconciliation and a return to peace of heart". *Dilexit Nos*, no. 186.

[21] The process of spiritual journey is not a process of private conversion but a process of receiving conversion as a grace from God. "Conversion is a *grace*: what we do is *prepare* our hearts and beg God to grant us an *experience* of his love or his Word in a new way, whenever he wants and in the way he wishes." Sergio Munoz Fita, *Jesus and You, Woman: Ignatian Retreat for Women under the guidance of Edith Stein*, (ISBN 10: 1737437325, 2022), 83.

[22] *Dilexit Nos*, no. 144.

[23] "We, however, by *virtue of the hope* in which we were saved, can view the passage of time with the certainty that the history of humanity and our own individual history are not doomed to a dead end or a dark abyss, but directed to an encounter with

2.2.2. The Internal Knowledge of Hope

The internal knowledge of the exercitants will try to capture God's love for humanity as it is expressed through Christ. Under the umbrella of Christ' love, which the exercitants follow throughout the Second Week of the Exercises, they can have hope for a summation that will bring meaning to their life's journey. The progress of the Exercises continues to build hope within the exercitant's hearts. All of us may be aware that our hope is not based on one's own efforts but on God's love. The internal knowledge from the Exercises tries to process that knowledge into a kind of framework to direct our spiritual life. Within the framework of the heart which can perceive God's love, trials and errors of life in this world will be imbued not as judgments from God. Rather, as realities to measure our heart's ability to create a "definitive encounter"[24] which closes the distance between us and God. Through purifying the realities of evil in this world, we will try to close this distance between us and God progressively by becoming a living testimony of God's love.

It is a fact that the modern era tends to be more realistic in trying to secure hope for a brighter end to life. This entails cutting ties with everything which is unrelated to securing that hope. However, becoming hopeful for a better future does not mean becoming an overt optimist who disregards bleak realities while longing for empty promises of utopia. We do not have to be confined within our solitary shells just to secure our hopes. This is because our authentic hope comes from the Holy Spirit who always gives us God's love and protects us. God is the One who gives the desire in the human heart to return to God's love. The desire to love is a manifestation of the desire to hope. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, our desire will create a loving heart that can hope. Thus, it is not an empty desire. Because it is a movement of the heart to endure all the struggles of living in this world, the desire to be in union with God's love gradually shapes the strength and breadth of the human heart.

To this end, what we need is to return to a living heart, a heart that can encounter God's love. The weapon for us to travel in this world is a heart that can self-revitalize. To obtain such a heart, we shall refrain from devoting our hearts to worldly ways and submitting our hearts to God. This is a very special challenge for us who are living in the ever-changing era, where the possibility of human hope being taken away is higher than ever before.

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the Lord of glory.", *Spes non Confundit,* no.19 (italics added).

[24] "Judgement, then, concerns the salvation in which we hope and which Jesus has won for us by his death and resurrection. It is meant to bring us to a *definitive encounter* with the Lord. The evil we have done cannot remain hidden; it needs to be purified in order to enable this definitive encounter with God's love." Ibid., no.22.

3. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL EFFECT OF PILGRIMS OF HOPE

All the salvific work of God depicted in the Bible tried to pinpoint the meaning of journeying while waiting for the promise of salvation using various analogical words about the end time. However, what we should learn from them is not their use of apocalyptic language to express God's judgment, but the way they tried to depict the hopeful situation of that journey towards fulfillment at the end. The exercitants, in employing the bible for their spiritual journey should learn the testimonies of God's loving heart imbued within the messages of its' narratives. The Bible is filled with testimonies of spiritual journeys characterized by submitting one's heart to God. The truth of the words of God is that judgment at the end of time will be recognized as "a rapport of truth with the God who is love and with oneself, within the unfathomable mystery of divine mercy."[25]

The consummation at the end of time is not about God's evaluation of the offerings of our sacrifices in life. Rather, the end is the result of us submitting our hearts to Jesus' own heart, the heart of God's own Son, whom God sent to testify to the greatest love for all creation. At the end of the Exercises, the exercitants will find themselves filled with desires to share this experiential narrative of trying to submit their hearts to the heart of Christ. If we follow the direction of Jesus' heart our image of pilgrimage on earth will change. Our hearts will be filled with a sense of awe from sensing that the fulfillment of Christ's love is *along the way* of our pilgrimage. Rather than fearing what the end time will bring, we will be inclined to inquire about the presence of Christ manifested throughout the journey to make him its' anchor.[26]

The Exercises, done properly, will eventually equip the exercitants with a heart that is sensitive and responsive to the heart of Christ. The 'Contemplation to Attain Love' (the Exercises, no.104) at the closing of the Exercises is an exercise meant for this culminative gift.[27] The goal of this exercise is far from adopting a kind of pantheism. Nor to provide the exercitant with a warm, sentimental, feeling from believing the presence of Christ manifested in all creation. Its goal is to guide the exercitant's heart to resound the throbbing heart of Christ

[25] *Spes non Confundit*, no.22. (italics added)

[26] Pope Francis encourages us to use the image of anchor for Jesus because it "is eloquent; it helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus. The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death." Ibid., no.25.

[27] Pope Francis mentions that "[t]he progression of the Exercises *culminates* in the 'Contemplation to Attain Love', which gives rise to thanksgiving and the offering of one's 'memory, understanding and will' to the heart which is the fount and origin of every good thing. This interior contemplation is not the fruit of our understanding and effort, but is to be implored as a *gift*." *Dilexit Nos*, no.145. (emphasis added)

to the created world. In other words, the heart-to-heart approach of this exercise is given to the exercitants so that they can participate in attesting to Jesus' consolation towards this created world's efforts. The exercitants then will be able to find joy in embracing imperfection as channels of God's grace, in reconciling with the enemies, in trying to heal divisions, in protecting the sustainability of the whole creations, and in walking together towards a better future for the manifestations of the Kingdom of God.

4. CONCLUSION: The Pilgrimage of the Church Based on Spirituality of the Heart

We understand the word 'heart' mostly from the point of view of feeling. The Exercises, based on Pope Francis' "*Dilexit Nos*", offers us a more integrated view of heart as the locus of our intentions to be in sync with the heart of Jesus. In dealing with modern global trotters who are prone to spiritual fatigue from daily encounters with the demands of perfection from this world, the Exercises offers a spirituality of heart which can revitalize itself. The characteristic of a global trotter is to maximize the pleasure of 'sampling' the different tastes of journeys by rapidly switching from place to place. The spiritual fatigue of the heart brings along thirst for a spiritual depth, for a heart which can be a source of unlimited spiritual energy.

In contrast, Pope Francis' "*Spes Non Confundit*" offers an image of a pilgrim community based on the spirituality of the heart to hope. Our heart is not a machine to be recycled an unlimited number of times to provide us with everlasting energy. Our heart is an organic being capable of evolving according to its' own characteristic movements which is to carry through one's hope from the past, into the present, towards the future. In other words, the characteristic movement of our hearts is a pilgrimage of hope that unifies different kinds of experiences encountering the living Christ in this world. The Catholic Church following the movements of her spiritual treasures is often said to be a pilgrim church trying to instill the eternal truth of God into this evolving world. In particular, the Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola provides the Church with a suitable spirituality to direct the commitments of our hearts. Through the process of pilgriming towards Jesus' own heart, the Exercises will nurture our hearts as the eschatological locus of Christ's love.

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