



AGRUPACIÓN CATÓLICA UNIVERSITARIA
FORMING PROFESSIONAL CATHOLIC MEN AS LEADERS FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH

Father Amando Llorente, S.J.

Scholarship



(Applicant must be active member of Belen *Esto Vir* Marian Sodality)

Miami, Florida
October 2020



Homily given by Father Pedro Suarez, SJ, at the Resurrection Mass celebrated for Father Amando Llorente, SJ, at the Gesu Church in Miami, Florida on May 3rd, 2010:

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt. 4:19).

Amando Llorente heard this call when he was very young and entered the Jesuit novitiate at the age of 16.

I also was 16 years old, just out of high school, when I first met him. I consider a very difficult task to render an accurate and fair description of Fr. Amando Llorente. He was a unique individual who embodied all the qualities we expect from a true Apostle: fully devoted to his priestly ministry, humble and smart, tender in his feelings and brilliant in his oratory, a loyal and trustworthy friend, and endowed with a faith in God that could move mountains and men.

I will try to summarize my remarks under three headings: a man of God, a man of the Church and a man of Ignatius.

1. A man of God

First and foremost, Fr. Llorente's faith in God was not some sort of superficial piety, but was deeply rooted in an experience of God. While giving the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius it was clear to the retreatants that he had a deep, personal experience of God in prayer and an unquestionable trust in God's love. Fr. Llorente's love for the person of Christ and his tender, but virile devotion to the Blessed Mother, "Nuestra Señora" -Our Lady- as St Ignatius liked to call her, were evident to all.

He was filled with optimism and trust in God's providence. When his beloved Agrupación was uprooted from Cuba in 1961, this apparent defeat was for Fr. Llorente a sign that God was calling ACU to shine more fully in a new soil and transcend the national boundaries of Cuba, in order to serve the whole world at a higher, more far-reaching level. I never heard him express frustration because the apostolic work of ACU in Cuba had been destroyed. He could see God in all things, even in the tragedy of being forced into exile.

He strived for the "magis" and taught others to work without counting the cost. His motive was only the greater glory of God and his deepest inspiration was to follow Christ more closely.

2. A man of the Church

One of the first things he did when he arrived in Miami was to visit Bishop Coleman



Carroll and present himself to the local Church authority. In those early days, Fr. Llorente saw as his duty, like Peter the Apostle, to “strengthen his brothers’ faith.” Always obedient and respectful to the hierarchy, he instilled that obedience in his “agrupados” and their families.

He was sent to regroup the “agrupados” who had arrived into exile and follow the trail of those scattered to the four corners of the United States and the world to reunite them, comfort them and empower them under the banner of their commitment to God and the Blessed Mother. He gave the Spiritual Exercises, the source of their strength. He even recorded weekly tapes that went out to those “agrupados” far away with a message in order to uphold their faith and offer them spiritual guidance and strength.

True to his Eternal King, Fr. Llorente saw himself as a soldier fighting a battle for Christ and His Church. Like a true soldier of Christ, and like Ignatius Loyola in Pamplona, he seemed to say: “Always forward, never look back!”

For Fr. Llorente, the Church was the Spouse of Christ the Lord, and as such, one should revere her, defend her and love her. Nothing annoyed him more than knowing that someone disagreed with a particular precept of the Church. Fidelity to the Church could never be compromised.

Within the Church he had two favorite loves: the first was “agrupados” and their families. He made himself unconditionally available at all times for confession, spiritual advice, to share moments of sadness as well as celebrations. He had no days off.

His second great love was the poor. He relished his masses with the Sisters of Mother Teresa of Calcutta near the ACU and the help he offered the parishioners of Corpus Christi Church. He was also delighted to show pictures and tell stories of his mission trips to rural Colombia and other poor areas.

3. A man of Ignatius

Ignatian spirituality was second nature to Fr. Llorente. As General Congregation 35 told the Jesuits, he was a “fire to light other fires.” If by any chance somewhere, somehow, the spirit of Ignatius disappeared from the face of the earth, one dare say that one could rediscover that spirit by listening to Fr. Llorente.

Many Jesuits of my generation remember a talk he gave to the novices in Los Teques, Venezuela, when he arrived there shortly after his expulsion from Cuba in 1961. One of the novices, a 20-year old idealistic young man asked Fr. Llorente: “What kind of study do you recommend to someone who wants to devote himself to pastoral work?” Without hesitation, he answered right away with a big smile and said “Buenos caracteres, Buenos caracteres.” “Have a good



disposition, a gentle and kind disposition towards everyone you come in contact with. After that, you can study anything you want.”

A humble and austere man, his tastes were simple and never asked for anything fancy. He could have served as a model for the third manner of humility. He chose what is poor and despised, only to follow Christ more closely.

An exemplary Jesuit, he worked hard and managed to make many good and lifelong friends. He was honest, sincere and straightforward, a man of one word. He was kind to all, rich or poor, and careful not to offend anyone in word or deed.

He had the gift of forming “character” among the young, like no one else I have ever known, a “man for others” in the fullest sense. He certainly inspired me and scores of others to become priests and religious, and he also inspired many young men and women to form Christian marriages and Catholic homes. To this day, I consider him to be a giant lighthouse, who inspired countless people to become the best they could be.

A true master of the Spiritual Exercises, he managed to give more retreats in one year than many Jesuits have given in a lifetime. His retreats were always packed, with people on waiting lists to receive the Spiritual Exercises under him. Anyone who ever made the Spiritual Exercises under his guidance has to agree that he was knowledgeable of the text, the annotations and the rules contained in the little book written by Ignatius, profound, inspiring, and filled with the Ignatian spirit of generosity and the “magis”.

Like the grain of wheat in the Gospel, that falls on the ground and yields much fruit, Fr. Llorente has fallen on the ground of many souls. This magnificent audience is a testimony of the profound and transformative effect he had in the lives of so many. We are mourning his loss because we loved him very much and his exceptional dynamism made us think that he was indestructible. At an age when most men have rightfully chosen a time of serene retirement, he was unstoppable, and continued to work hard, even at the tender age of 91.

Father Llorente, be our protector and intercessor before God in heaven. May all of us who mourn your passing walk in the ways of the Lord, as you taught us with your words, but most eloquently, through your example. St. Paul the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians: “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor 13: 12). Free from the strictures of the body, Fr. Llorente can now see God, whom he loved in faith, clearly and face to face.

Good bye, dear friend. You have been called to God’s glory, the same glory you preached so often and so brilliantly during your long life. May the Eternal King grant you eternal rest.



PERSONAL INFORMATION

Student Name: _____

High School: _____

Class Of: _____

Cumulative GPA: _____

Colleges/Universities Applied to (circle if accepted): _____

Current # of Honors Classes: _____

Total AP Classes: _____

List of Extra-curricular Activities: _____



Mission of the ACU: Forming Professional Catholic Men as Leaders for the Propagation of the Faith.

The ACU is a Marian Sodality that promotes a personal relationship with Christ and fosters devotion to the Virgin Mary. The ACU receives its direction from the Society of Jesus. Its members are male students and professionals who decide to live a Christian vocation following the spirituality that flows from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Members acquire a solid formation on the Catholic Faith, are faithful to and defend the teachings of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and engage in apostolic action to evangelize and influence the world. The ACU plans and facilitates regular activities to create strong bonds amongst members and their families.

EXPLAIN HOW YOU CURRENTLY EXPRESS THESE VIEWS IN YOUR DAILY LIFE AND/OR PLAN TO DO SO DURING YOUR COLLEGE CAREER AND BEYOND.



IMPORTANT ACU FACTS

- a. ***ACU's Focus is on three equally important pillars that should be in equilibrium: prayer, formation and apostolate.***
- b. The ACU fills a need for high school, college students and professionals.
- c. The ACU meets you where you are in life. For example, as a student it meets you on campus and the formation topics are made appropriate for students taking into account their needs and interests.
- d. It provides a solid formation based on analytical reasoning.
- e. It is a Marian Sodality with special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- f. Its strong spirituality is centered on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. This is a fundamental tenet of the ACU.
- g. The ACU cultivates a supporting group with common ideals.
- h. The ACU is not localized to a city but has national and international chapters. When one joins the ACU, one joins not only a particular chapter but also the entire sodality.
- i. Membership is not limited by ethnicity or language.
- j. The ACU fosters fellowship events shared across all chapters with spouses and families of ACU members. We focus on professionals and seek to have agrupados in leadership roles. We are all called to be Christian leaders of our faith.
- k. We want to form men to be "servant leaders," that lead by example, caring and nurturing others in their day-to-day lives as they live their faith.

LIST WHICH OF THESE FACTS ABOUT THE ACU ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU (AND WHY) WITH SOME DESCRIPTION OF HOW YOU LIVE THESE IDEALS.



SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

1. The Spiritual Exercises have been, are and will be ESSENTIAL to the ACU.

2. Purpose of the Spiritual Exercises

- a. The foundation of a solid Christian life is built on three pillars: Spirituality, Formation and Apostolate.
 - i. Spiritual Exercises are the most important component of the spiritual life of ACU members; they help agrupados develop a personal relationship with Jesus.
 - ii. Just as we do physical exercises to keep our body in shape, we need to do to Exercises to keep our spiritual life in shape.
- b. Purpose of the Spiritual Exercises
 - i. Ignatius wrote that the purpose of the exercises is “the conquest of self and the regulation of one’s life in such a way that no decision is made under the influence of any inordinate attachment.”
 - ii. In other words:
 - 1. To understand one’s self clearly.
 - 2. To help us make clear, unbiased decisions.
 - 3. To ensure we don’t have any inordinate attachment in our lives.

WHAT TYPE OF SPIRITUAL RETREATS HAVE YOU DONE IN THE PAST? WHERE DID YOU ATTEND RETREAT(S)? WHAT WAS THIS EXPERIENCE LIKE FOR YOU?



PILLAR OF FORMATION

1. Background

- a. The foundation for a solid Christian life is based on three pillars: Spirituality, Formation and Apostolate.
- b. The mission of the ACU is “Forming Professional Catholic Men as Leaders for the Propagation of the Faith.”
- c. To be a Catholic leader one must have a sound formation in Catholic doctrine and related subjects.
- d. Spiritual, intellectual and apostolic to be able to share our faith with others.
- e. To mold and guide us toward a faith-based relationship with Jesus.
- f. To help us understand and discuss our faith in a more rational manner.
- g. To educate us on Catholic principles for situational ethics.

2. Related items

- a. The objectives for the formation for an ACU professional man are:
 - ii. Understand Christianity and Catholic teachings at “professional level.”
 1. The ACU formation is based on using logic and reasoning.
 2. The ACU members need to learn how to continue ongoing formation on their own as college educated men.
 - iii. Support the other “pillars” of the ACU man:
 1. Spirituality— Catholic formation should nurture spiritual life.
 2. Apostolate— “You can’t give what you don’t have.”
 - iv. Understand and be on the same wavelength (“be of one mind”) with the Universal Church. [In Spanish, “sentir con la iglesia.”]

EXPLAIN HOW YOU HAVE DEVELOPED YOUR FORMATION AND PLAN TO CONTINUE DOING SO IN COLLEGE. ALSO, SHARE ANY IMPORTANT TOPICS YOU DISCOVERED ABOUT THE CHURCH AND YOUR FAITH AND WHY YOU CONSIDER THEM IMPACTFUL.



PILLAR OF APOSTOLIC WORKS

1. Background

- a. The foundation for a solid Christian life is based on three pillars: Spirituality, Formation and Apostolate.
- b. Apostolic outreach is essential to the life of the agrupado. The ACU encourages each agrupado to be a “leader for the propagation of the faith.”
- c. Our spiritual life and formation motivates us to reach out in service to others.

2. Related items

- a. The most important apostolate is the example as a role model:
 - i. As a practicing Catholic at home, socially and at work: Living one’s faith/beliefs in one’s home, professional and social life.
 - ii. Being an example of an outstanding professional Catholic person.
- b. Apostolic activity as a professional man at the place of work:
 - i. Strive to do the best possible job in one’s profession while living the values of the Catholic faith.
 - ii. Execute your daily duties with integrity and ethically.
- c. Apostolic activity in the Church and the ACU:
 - i. One very important apostolate is to support the ACU as lay leaders in individual chapters (organize events, organize talks, etc.)
 - ii. Apostolate in support of Church ministries and activities.
 - iii. Corporal works of mercy

PLEASE DESCRIBE (BRIEFLY) ANY APOSTOLIC ACTIVITIES YOU HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AND HOW IT HAS IMPACTED YOU. ALSO SHARE ANY PLANS YOU MAY HAVE TO BE INVOLVED IN APOSTOLIC WORKS DURING COLLEGE.



ACU Motto and other ACU maxims

- a. The ACU Motto: *Esto Vir*
 - i. Biblical reference: I King 2:2, where David says to Solomon “*confortare, et esto vir*” (be brave and act as a man).
 - ii. Each agrupado is required to always act according to his consecration oath.
- b. Magis (do more [for Christ]). ACU members strive to be the best person they can be at everything: family, profession, social life and apostolate.
- c. Discernment is an essential part of the Christian life.
 - i. Different stages in life require specific discernment of the choices available at the time:
 - ii. Methods for discernment:
 1. Spiritual Exercises and its methodology.
 2. Assistance of a Spiritual Director.
 3. Assistance of a very good and upstanding Catholic friend.
- d. The ACU is characterized by a collection of individuals, most of whom have strong leadership traits. It is necessary that agrupados demonstrate respect and humility when processing different points of views. Agrupados should express their point of view honestly, without pretension and with respect toward others.

IN RELATION TO EVERYTHING MENTIONED HEREIN, PLEASE DESCRIBE WHY THE ACU SHOULD CONSIDER YOU FOR THIS SCHOLARSHIP.