

The Society mounted itself on the idea of "all for the greater glory of God." To attain that "all", a number of ideas were inveighed that in time would give the group a certain infamy for getting their ends regardless of the price. The most notable of these were:

probableism...anything even scarcely recognized as being a possibility in the long annals of the teaching of the church and its fathers may be true and can be resorted to for authority...

intentionalism...(casuistry) the end justifies the means, if intent is good, the tools to get it cannot be bad.

mental reservations ..with clear knowledge of a given outcome and with clear consent one may hold a contrary opinion correctly in mind and act on it later regardless of what may have been indicated as the course of action in open discourse.

To see these ideas working at their finest, read Pascal: THE PROVINCIAL PAPERS.

In these later periods of the reformation, the Jesuits were just about everywhere as their numbers allowed. They were not required to go in clerical garb and often served in official court positions. As they had no hope of personal gain, they had nothing to lose and could take the boldest of steps as the need occasioned. They were enormously successful in curbing the Reformation in Poland, parts of France and portions of central Europe. They offered a strong catholic showing in Scandinavia and moved their work to the unreached parts of the world. From a success point of view, their work was phenomenal.

The Continuing Inquisition

By the time of the Reformation, the inquisition had seen its best days. But the methods and means of seeing dissenters and heretics were not over and particularly in northern Italy after 1552 the inquisition was helpful in retarding reformation progress. In Spain it was still a force but the jealousy that existed among Catholic orders made it difficult for it to have much success in France or in Catholic Germany.