

# **Drawing Aside the Purple Curtain**

***The Papal System Today: an Analysis of the News***

## **The Jesuits Elect a New General**

by Shaun Willcock

In January 2008, the Jesuit Order elected its new Superior General. He is a 71-year-old Spaniard, Adolfo Nicolás, and he succeeds Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, who presented his resignation to the pope of Rome after leading the Jesuits for almost 25 years.

Nicolás speaks Spanish, Japanese, English, French and Italian. He worked for many years in Japan, and also in the Philippines. From 2004 to 2007 he was the moderator of the Jesuit Conference of East Asia and Oceania, covering Myanmar (Burma) to East Timor, passing through Korea and Vietnam to the new province of China, and contributing to the growth of the Jesuit presence in that part of the world.<sup>1</sup> According to the Jesuits' postulator general, Nicolás was the "optimal choice" for the position. He said he "has excellent theological formation and a great missionary spirit. The Holy Spirit blew hard and the fathers let themselves be guided by the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> In truth the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with it. Jesuits are not under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and never have been; the spirit that "blew hard" was of another sort entirely.

It has always been well known to Roman Catholics that the Jesuit General is referred to as "the Black Pope". Jesuit priest Chris Chatteris, writing in a South African newspaper in early 2008 after the new general's election, did what Jesuits do best: he put a good spin on the title. This is what he wrote:

"Take the cliché about the Jesuit General being the 'black Pope'. This is explained in some papers with sartorial superficiality as being because the Pope wears white and the Jesuit General black. Deep analysis. The tag's origins actually refer to the fact that both men are elected for life. And the point of the 'black Pope's' lifelong term is not to imitate the 'white Pope'. It is about the need that the Jesuit founder, St Ignatius of Loyola, felt for continuity of government and the avoidance of frequent meetings to elect new superiors."<sup>3</sup> Nice try, Sir. That's a whitewash. Here's the real reason:

"In Roman Catholic circles it is well known that the Black Pope is the term used for the General of the Jesuits. As the Pope is always robed in white, and the General in black, the contrast is obvious. But those Romanists who do not greatly love the Jesuits, and their number is not limited, use the term as indicating that the Black Pope rules the White Pope."<sup>4</sup> He is called this because he is known to be the real power behind the Vatican throne, rather than the pope!

Over the centuries, Jesuits have even assassinated popes who stood in the way of their ambitions. And the popes have always feared their power, for as the Jesuit founder originally designed it, the Order was responsible to the Society's General alone – not even to the pope of Rome! The Jesuit General alone was recognised as God's true representative on earth.<sup>5</sup> It is no different today, and this can be seen by what occurred when the new general was chosen:

Traditionally, newly elected superiors-general renew their obedience to the pope of Rome in writing; and Benedict XVI, upon receiving an envelope from the new general in which this was done, said he thought this was a "good custom". In addition, obedience to the pope in missionary matters is the fourth vow that all Jesuits make, alongside the usual three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The Jesuits reported, "The pope opened the envelope right away and read the vows. Then he said, 'This is a very good custom.'"<sup>6</sup>

Well, Benedict would certainly think so! In fact, he probably breathed a sigh of relief upon receiving the envelope. For knowing the history of this sinister Order as he undoubtedly does, which

has seen to the “accelerated demise” of a number of popes through the centuries – he would naturally welcome *any* promise of obedience to himself that the Jesuits are prepared to make – even if what they write is not worth the paper it is written on.

One of Benedict’s papal predecessors, Clement XIV, said this about the Jesuits in his Papal Bull, dated 21 July 1773: “...the Kings of France, Portugal, and Sicily, found themselves reduced to the necessity of expelling and driving from their states, kingdoms and provinces these very companions of Jesus [as they called themselves! – S.W.], persuaded that there remained no other remedy to so great evils and that this step was necessary in order to prevent the Christians [by which he meant Roman Catholics] from rising one against another, and from massacring each other in the very bosom of our common mother, the Holy Church.” He also stated that the Jesuits had produced “dangerous seditions, tumults, discords, dissensions and scandals.”<sup>7</sup>

There was an indication of the great power and influence of the Jesuits, and of their habit of going their own way and ignoring even the orders of the pope when these did not suit them, in a letter Benedict XVI sent on January 10 to the previous Jesuit General, Kolvenbach, on the occasion of the order’s 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation. He wrote:

“It could prove extremely useful that the General Congregation reaffirm, in the spirit of St. Ignatius, its own total adhesion to Catholic doctrine, in particular on those neuralgic points which today are strongly attacked by secular culture, as for example, the relationship between Christ and religions; some aspects of the theology of liberation; and various points of sexual morality, especially as regards the indissolubility of marriage and the pastoral care of homosexual persons.”

Why would the pope say it could “prove extremely useful” for the Jesuits to reaffirm their adhesion to Roman Catholic doctrine? There can be only one reason: he knows that the Jesuits are quite prepared to “bend the rules” to suit themselves whenever they feel like it – *and* furthermore, he knows that *many other* Papists know it as well!

The Jesuits, more than any other order, promoted the diabolical doctrine of “liberation theology”, of which the pope spoke; they are also deeply involved in pushing the interfaith movement; and they have always been very lax when it comes to sexual morality.

The Jesuits, for their part, reported that a committee had been formed to study the pope’s letter. Now if an entire committee had to be formed to study it, this just shows that the Jesuits are in the habit of doing things their own way, even if this conflicts with more orthodox Roman Catholic practice. They operate according to the rule that “the end justifies the means”.

Further evidence of the fact of the power and influence of the Jesuits, and their habit of going their own way and ignoring even the orders of the pope when these do not suit them, is seen in the words of the new general. He held a press conference in Rome in which he said: “The Society of Jesus has always been, from the beginning, in communion with the Holy Father, and always will be. The Society wants to collaborate with the Holy See, to obey the Holy Father. This has not changed, and never will.”<sup>8</sup>

Now why would the Jesuit General find it necessary to even make a statement like that? *Unless...* unless there are very real tensions between the Jesuits and the pope of Rome! There so often have been. The very fact that a statement like this was made, shows that the Jesuits and the pope of Rome do not always see eye to eye, and that the Jesuits are pretty much a law unto themselves within the Roman Catholic institution. This statement by the general is a lie, and he knows it. The Society has *not* always been in communion with the pope, and in fact has often gone counter to the pope’s own wishes and commands. And even from its very formation, it was always committed to the general first, and only secondarily to the pope. And note his wording: “The Society wants to collaborate with the Holy See, to obey the Holy Father.” One can easily discern the scarcely-veiled arrogance behind the words. It *wants* to “collaborate” with the pope? But the pope is the head of the Roman Catholic “Church”, the supposed “Vicar of Christ”! A Papist doesn’t “collaborate” with the pope! Plus, his words imply that although the Jesuits want to “collaborate” with the pope and “obey” him, they will only do so if and when it suits them!

Over and over, we see the Jesuit General making statements expressing the Jesuits’ commitment to the pope, and refuting the idea that they act independently. Way back in January 1995, when the

pope at the time, John Paul II, met with the Jesuits, the Jesuit General at the time, Kolvenbach, said that the meeting with the pope was a clear sign that the Jesuit delegation “has no desire to act as an autonomous or isolated body”.<sup>9</sup> Methinks they protest too much! They constantly have to issue such statements and assurances, for the simple reason that *no one really trusts them – not even the pope himself!* And with very good reason, as history has shown.

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### ***ENDNOTES:***

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1. *Zenit.org*, January 20, 2008.

2. *Zenit.org*, January 20, 2008.

3. *The Witness*, February 5, 2008.

4. *The Black Pope: a History of the Jesuits*, by M.F. Cusack (ex-nun). London, 1896.

5. *Footprints of the Jesuits*, by R.W. Thompson. 1894.

6. *Zenit.org*, January 27, 2008.

7. *The Reformer*, November/December 2003. The Protestant Alliance, UK.

8. *Zenit.org*, January 27, 2008.

9. *The Southern Cross*, 22 January 1995.