

PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION¹

Editor's Note:

The original page in Fr Daly's papers was hand-written. The following evidence suggests that he wrote this reflection during his annual 8-day retreat in 1989.

1. The document is dated 27 November 1989.
2. Another hand-written paper in Daly's files, headed "1989(-90) at X.C.", lays out what is clearly his program for a retreat, giving the date and time of various retreat activities (e.g. prayer times, reading, exercise, meals, Mass). The dates listed are from Saturday 25 November until Monday 4 December.²
3. The entries in this retreat program for 27 November, the date of this document, include the following: "6.40 Med on Foundation. Rewriting it." 'Med' is an abbreviation for 'meditation', while 'Foundation' is a common shorthand, in Ignatian circles, for 'Principle and Foundation', a reflection on our last end which appears at the start of the First Week of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius Loyola.³
4. The sentiments in this document echo those of the Principle and Foundation.

It would seem, therefore, that Daly decided to appropriate the Principle and Foundation more deeply by rewriting it in his own words.

Footnotes in square brackets are editorial.

¹ [The original has no title but simply the date. The title for this edited version seems appropriate for the reasons outlined in the Editor's Notes.]

² [Jesuits customarily do a silent 8-day retreat each year. While these dates suggest a longer period, these retreats normally begin sometime in the evening before the first full day and end with breakfast on the morning after the eighth day. The '90' in the title seems strange given that the dates of the retreat fall entirely within 1989. This is explained by a parenthetical note near the title: "Previous retreat was Feb 1989 at Anglesea". Since Daly had already done a retreat in 1989, the '90' is noting that he understood this second retreat that year to count as his retreat for 1990.]

³ [*Spiritual Exercises*, paragraph 23. A classic English translation of the Principle and Foundation by Fr Elder Mullan SJ can be found on the Christian Classics Ethereal Library website at <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/ignatius/exercises.xii.i.html> .]

My God, you chose to create a universe in which I, Tom, would exist. You have plans for that universe, for its growth in goodness. You give me opportunities, at every instant, to assist such growth.

These involve understanding something of your plans, discerning the actions, & types of action, that are appropriate to the sort of being I am, to the sort of world I am in, to the sort of society that surrounds me.

They involve understanding, on the basis of revelation, & of the interpretation of revelation in the life and work of your Church, something of the love in your call to me, & to each of us, to live in your friendship, both now and forever, in and through and beyond those appropriate actions, along with all their ramifications that you have prepared in love for those who live in faith and act with hope.

In your love for me you have made me free. You have given me power to collaborate in your work, or to draw apart, to contribute positively to my own growth in my use of all the gifts, internal & external, with which you have furnished me, thus contributing, too, to the improvement of the world and the life of your Son's mystical body, in ways that are inviting and demanding, yet loaded with implications that are beyond my horizon.

The other side of freedom is in withdrawal & non-cooperation.

The key is never to withdraw from you, my creator & lover. I must become alert to what could be an obstacle to friendship with you, and exercise myself in avoiding such things, as well as in welcoming all that fosters this central friendship.