

University Treasurer Dr. Peurle Reports on the Work of the Jesuits in Ingolstadt (January 24, 1558)

Abstract

Dr. Johann Peurle defends the Jesuits in Ingolstadt against attacks (which, according to him, came mostly from the Lutherans and the Zwinglians) by emphasizing their diligence in teaching and their pious behavior. As Peurle notes, the two Jesuit professors lectured daily in theology and Hebrew, in addition to teaching one hour a day for free (in the form of public lectures). Once a month, they taught theology in public (meaning free of charge), and once a week, they taught privately (for a fee). Every Sunday, they read spiritual exercises in Latin in the Jesuit College and in German in the church. Additionally, they also gave diverse lessons for children and youth of varying ages.

The report suggests that the rector planned to acquire another professor (of philosophy) for the Jesuit University in Ingolstadt from Rome. Peurle disagreed with the idea because he felt that there were already enough philosophers on the university's arts faculty.

Source

Benevolent, awe-inspiring Sir, I don't know what causes so many people, mostly the Lutherans and the followers of Zwingli, to wish our Jesuits so ill and to speak poorly of them even though they diligently persevere in their activities, studies, and preaching. The two doctors of theology give daily lectures on theology, whereas the other two university professors lecture not more than every other day, and they have not lectured more than three hours a week since time immemorial. Every day the doctors of theology teach one hour of Hebrew, one hour for free. They dispute publicly on theology once a month, and once a week in private; there they instruct the untrained in how they must conduct disputation. They lecture every Sunday, one Sunday in the Latin school and the next in the German church. The young children learn their four subjects in two lectures, which are held in rooms, three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon. They do that diligently every day. Another one drills the young scholars every day in the morning and afternoon; the latter think they are too big and are embarrassed about being in a school for children. They otherwise serve as good examples and are devout and well-behaved; I know of nothing bad that could be brought up against them. They live frugally and moderately, fast a great deal, do not acquire much property, drink mostly beer and little wine. If their listeners do not want to study theology, one must not do so; here no industriousness is spared, as far as the professors and lecturers are concerned.

The rector father wanted to have a learned philosopher sent from Rome to lecture on philosophy. However, I really do not know whether that would be pro-university or not. They now have enough professors in the [liberal] arts, so that they interfere with one another because there are not enough hours in the day for anyone to do his schooling right. Many say the same thing, that the Jesuits will give a lecture out of order on their own: [they are] supposed to follow Loschero [Löscher]; I did not hear that about them. If that happens, in the opinion of many, it is damaging to the university. It may well happen that, in being called "despicable," they have made themselves inimical to them; I do not know whether that would be useful or damaging to the academy. The gentlemen should deliberate about that.

Notation on the back of the page

D. Peurle, Treasurer at Ingolstadt, Report on the Jesuits Regarding their Teaching and Way of Life.

Source: Karl Batz, ed., *Die Jesuiten in Ingolstadt: 1549–1773*. Exhibit of the City Archive, the City Scientific Library, and the City Museum of Ingolstadt, 1991, pp. 40–41.

Translation: Kathleen Dell'Orto

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