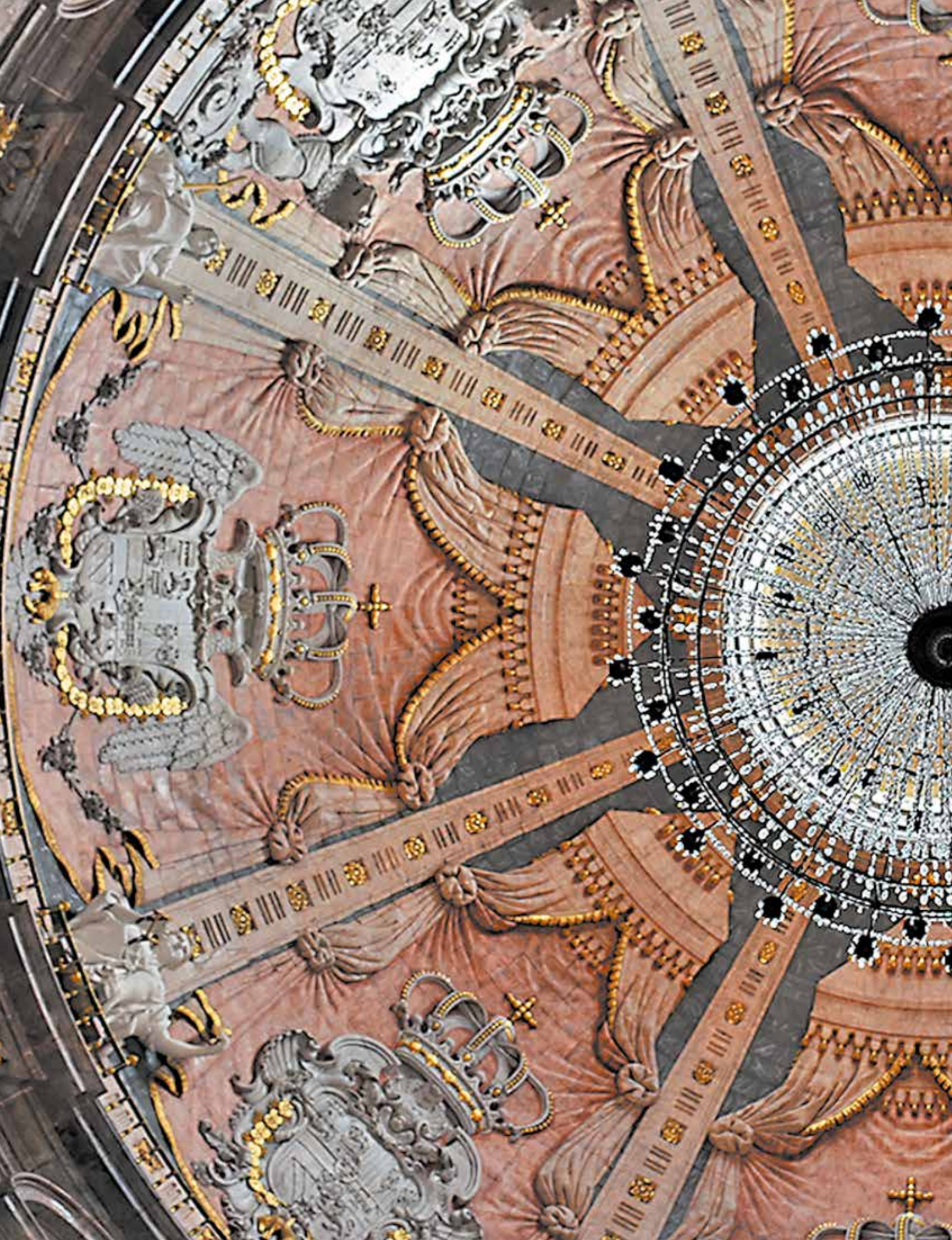


A vibrant stained glass artwork depicting several figures in historical Jesuit attire. The central figure is a man with a beard and a blue helmet, looking down. To his right is a man with a beard and a white ruff collar, looking towards the left. The background is filled with other figures in similar clothing, including a man in a yellow and blue robe on the left. The entire scene is rendered in a stylized, colorful stained glass manner with bold black outlines.

Jesuits

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN THE WORLD

2021







Cover

Photo: *Ignatius wounded at the Battle of Pamplona* (Stained glass - Mauméjean Studios)
 Museum of the Casa Torre, Loyola (Azpeitia, Basque Country, Spain)
 The event of Ignatius' wound at Pamplona is at the origin of his conversion,
 a fundamental theme of the Ignatian Year 2021-2022.

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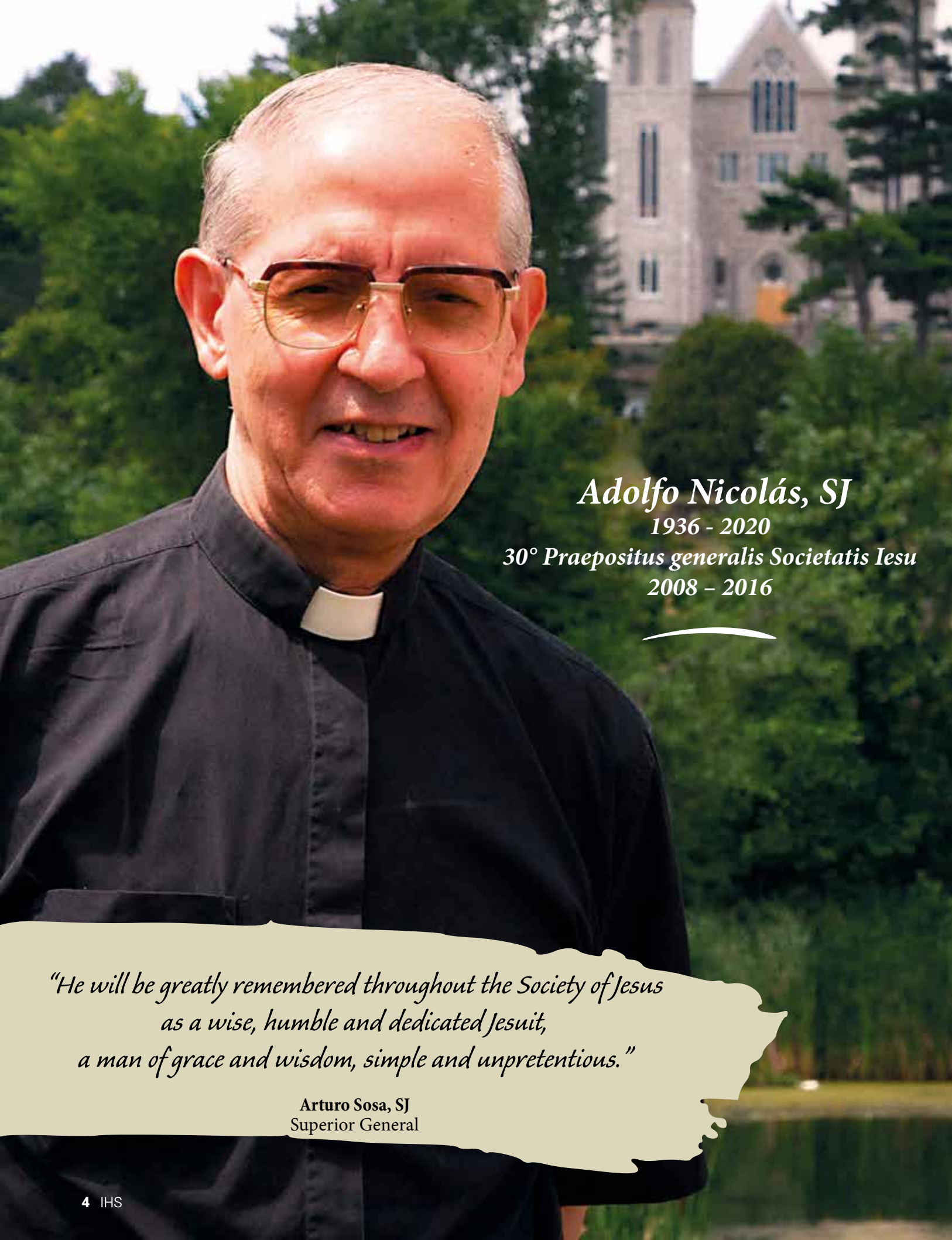
Ignatius at the Cardener
 (drawing by Lorenzo Rumori)
 Another stage in the life
 of St. Ignatius on his journey
 of conversion.



Jesuits

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN THE WORLD

2021



Adolfo Nicolás, SJ

1936 - 2020

30° Praepositus generalis Societatis Iesu

2008 – 2016

*"He will be greatly remembered throughout the Society of Jesus
as a wise, humble and dedicated Jesuit,
a man of grace and wisdom, simple and unpretentious."*

Arturo Sosa, SJ
Superior General



From Fr. Arturo Sosa, Superior General, to the readers of the magazine JESUITS 2021

Dear friends,

On 20 May 2020, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás has passed away. Following the Crucified and Risen Lord, he now enjoys the Life of God.

Elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus on January 19th, 2008, he made countless contributions not only to the development of the Society, but also to the progress of Consecrated Life in general and of the Church. He did so with his own style... always full of warmth, goodness and joy. After presenting his resignation as General of the Society in 2016, he took a brief rest in Madrid, near his family, before returning to Manila. He was spiritual director at the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) and at the Pedro Arrupe International Residence.

He never tired of calling us to move from distraction to dedication. He did so again when I visited him in Tokyo just last year, in July 2019. He was very aware of the many opportunities for distraction that present themselves to us and, because of this, the danger of remaining superficial in our life and mission. He reminded us incessantly that it is only possible to desire and choose a life dedicated exclusively to the mission of reconciliation and justice.... if we go out of ourselves to focus on Christ.

The memory of Fr. Adolfo Nicolás gives us a reason to, once again, thank the Lord for so many good things that we have received, among them the life of our brother Nico. He remains, today, a gift for the People of God and.... for the future... a light for those who desire to serve the same Lord in the Society of Jesus, this *mínima Compañía colaboradora*.

Arturo Sosa, SJ
Superior General



Curriculum vitae

- 29 April 1936:** Born in Palencia, Spain
- 15 September 1953:** Enters the Novitiate in Aranjuez (Spain)
- 1955-1958:** Juniorate (Studies in Humanities), Aranjuez
- 1958-1960:** Licence in Philosophy, Alcalá de Henares (Spain)
- 1960-1964:** Language schools (English and Japanese), Yokosuka (Japan)
- 1964-1968:** Studies in Theology in Tokyo (Japan)
- 17 March 1967:** Ordination to the priesthood in Tokyo
- 1968-1971:** Master in theology at the Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Rome
- 1971-1978:** Professor of Systematic Theology at Sophia University, Tokyo
- 1978-1984:** Director of the EAPI (East Asian Pastoral Institute), Manila, Philippines
- 1985-1993:** Professor of Theology at Sophia University, Tokyo
- 1991-1993:** Rector of the Scholasticate, Tokyo
- 1993-1999:** Provincial of the Province of Japan
- 1999-2004:** Teaching Theology in Japan and in the Philippines
- 2004-2008:** Moderator of the Jesuit Conference of East Asia and Oceania
- 2008-2016:** Superior General of the Society of Jesus
- 2016-2017:** Spiritual Director, Arrupe International Residence, Manila
- 2018-2020:** Ministry of prayer, Loyola House, Tokyo
- 20 May 2020:** Deceased in Tokyo

Universality and collaboration

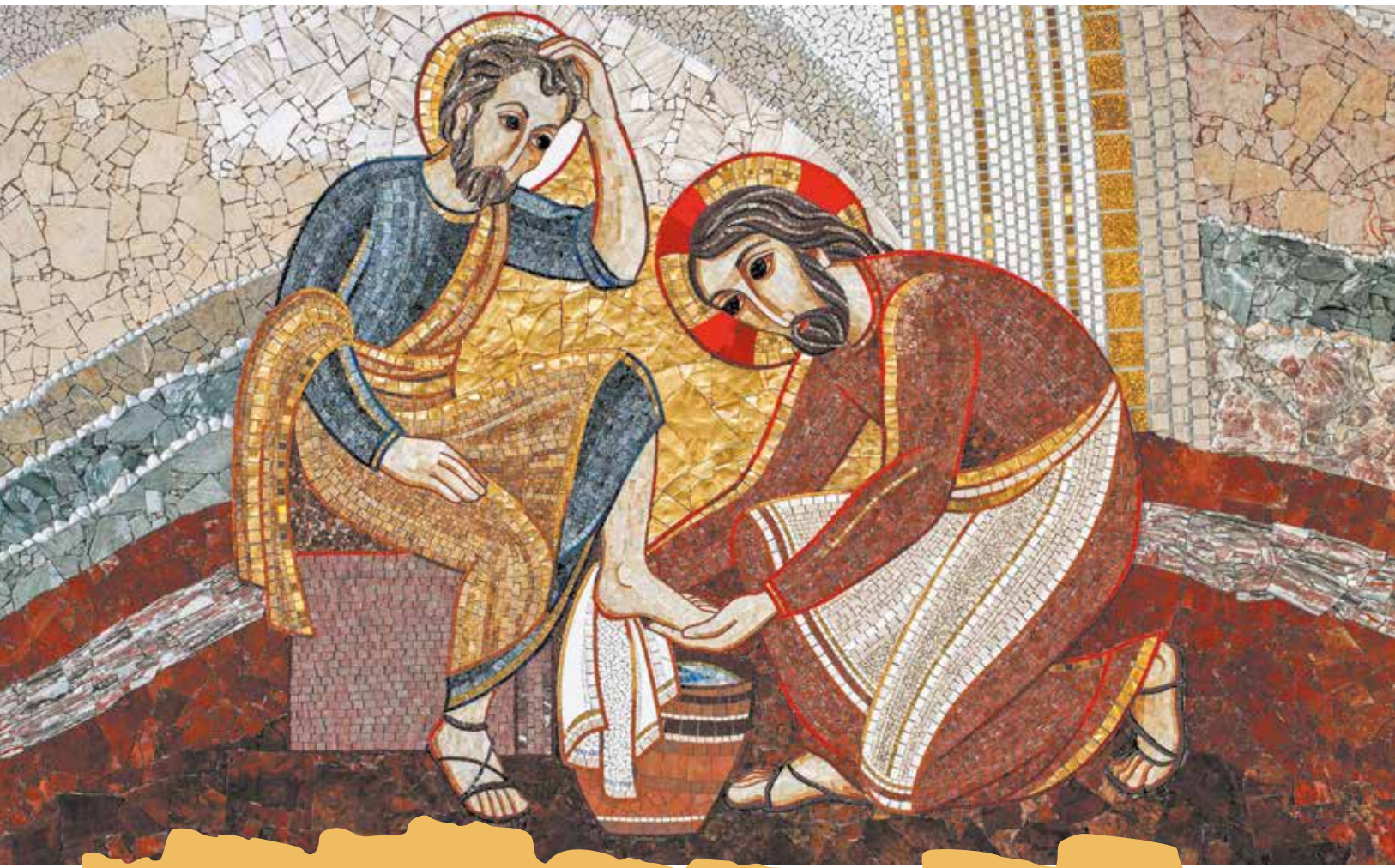
(Excerpt from a letter by Fr. Adolfo Nicolás)

Two of Father Nicolás' emphases during his generalate were the strengthening of the universal character of the Society of Jesus and the importance of broad-based collaboration. Here is an excerpt from a letter from 2009 – still relevant today.

So many of the issues that concern us, that affect our ministries and challenge our apostolic discernment, are of a universal character. The Society of Jesus is involved in a growing number of projects that have a supra-provincial, supra-national, or supra-continental character. We have been and are involved in corporate responses to issues that have universal scope such as migration and refugees, advocacy and networking on social issues, ecology, and sustainable development.

At the same time, we are aware that many of the areas we Jesuits want to contribute to are much larger and more complex than we can address by ourselves. Issues such as poverty, globalization, peace, unemployment, education, and those mentioned above require us to work wholeheartedly with many others. Moreover, we rejoice that we are able to work with so many others of good will and good heart, well-educated men and women with excellent training and skills for cooperative planning and international networking. We are blessed to cooperate with them for the good of all humankind. However, such cooperation underlines the need of a universal dimension in all we do.

Maybe the best way to remember Fr. Adolfo Nicolás is to take up again this brief prayer that he wrote at the end of the eight-day retreat he made in 2011 with his General Council. In the months following this retreat, some of the meetings of the Council began with this prayer, which arose from Father Nicolás' personal meditation on the miraculous catch of fish as reported in chapter 21 of the Gospel of St. John. This prayer is an excellent summary of his personality and spirituality. Here it is:



Lord Jesus,

What weaknesses did you see in us that made you decide to call us, in spite of everything, to collaborate in your mission?

We give you thanks for having called us, and we beg you not to forget your promise to be with us to the end of time.

Frequently we are invaded by the feeling of having worked all night in vain, forgetting, perhaps, that you are with us.

We ask that you make yourself present in our lives and in our work, today, tomorrow, and in the future yet to come.

Fill with your love these lives of ours, which we put at your service.

Take from our hearts the egoism of thinking about what is “ours,” what is “mine,” always excluding, lacking compassion and joy.

Enlighten our minds and our hearts, and do not forget to make us smile when things do not go as we wished.

At the end of the day, of each one of our days, make us feel more united with you and better able to perceive and discover around us greater joy and greater hope.

We ask all this from our reality. We are weak and sinful men, but we are your friends.

Amen.

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Fingers, Palm, and Wrist

In February 2019 we received from the Holy Father, Pope Francis, the mission to put into practice the *Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029* (UAP). The experience of having been guided by the Spirit in the formulation of the *Preferences* has also made us aware of the need to take time to assimilate them, so that they may be truly a source of spiritual freedom and creativity to renew the life of all who give themselves to the mission of the Society of Jesus.

The purpose of the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* is to shed light on the road we must travel to make ourselves companions in a mission of reconciliation and justice. The *Preferences* are the outcome of a singular spiritual process very different from an exercise in strategic planning. We receive them as orientations shedding light on the renewal that the Society of Jesus needs in order to respond to the demands of the epochal change that humanity is now living. The global experience of the COVID-19 pandemic offers us a new perspective from which to imagine the transformations that humanity needs in order to make the new epoch a space that is more just, more worthy, more ecological in all dimensions of life.

Although we express them as four orientations, the UAPs must be taken together. They are like a hand with its fingers. We can use a single finger, but the hand really achieves its purpose when we use all the fingers, the palm, and the wrist in a coordinated way. The “fifth finger” of the UAPs are all those persons who find the meaning of their lives in the mission and style of work of the Society of Jesus and who connect themselves to the Society to expand the reach of what we do together.

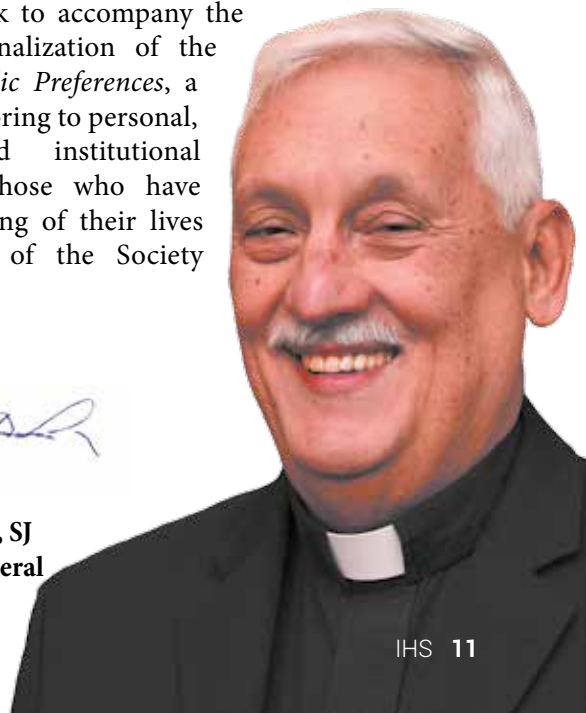
The fingers must be joined with the palm, just as the Society of Jesus is fully inserted into the mission of the Catholic Church that is sent to be present everywhere with a message of hope: to reconcile all things in Christ. The wrist,

which gives the hand the flexibility and mobility necessary to adapt to a variety of situations, is the Holy Spirit. An authentic spiritual life is an indispensable condition for the functioning of the hand, allowing us to give our best to the mission to which we have been called.

By happy coincidence, we will soon mark the fifth centenary of the wound suffered by Ignatius of Loyola in the battle of Pamplona in May 1521, the wound that opened for him the opportunity for a radical turn in his life. We desire that the inspiration of the process of personal conversion that led Ignatius to share his spiritual experience and to found the Society of Jesus may become also for us an impulse toward transformation of our life and mission. We foresee an “Ignatian year” from 20 May 2021 until 31 July 2022 with a special moment on 12 March 2022, the fourth centenary of the canonization of Ignatius of Loyola together with Francis Xavier, Teresa of Avila, and Philip Neri. The pages of this 2021 edition of *JESUITS - The Society of Jesus in the World* seek to accompany the process of internalization of the *Universal Apostolic Preferences*, a process that will bring to personal, communal, and institutional conversion all those who have found the meaning of their lives in the mission of the Society of Jesus.



Arturo Sosa, SJ
Superior General



We can still be amazed!

A moment of enlightenment for me, in the midst of the crisis generated by the pandemic of the latest coronavirus, was a talk offered to the Jesuits of the General Curia by one of our companions. His background as a biologist and his communication skills made us discover the world of viruses. In spite of the seriousness of the subject, I left the hall with a sense of wonder at the tenacity of contemporary science that seeks to understand what is happening in the microscopic universe of DNA and cells. Why is the research going so far? Of course, to improve the lives of men and women around the world and, in the concrete circumstances of the fight against COVID-19, to find a vaccine that curbs the intruder's death-dealing power and restore life to its fullest. This thirst for knowledge is undoubtedly a source of wonder.

I also marvel at the inventive capacities of our times. The rapid developments in information technology for communications have made it possible to overcome geographical barriers and reduce social barriers. The ordeal experienced throughout the world in 2020 has made it possible to feel a universal solidarity as never before: we are all connected and dependent on one another. This is God's plan for humanity; we have come to understand it a little better.

The coronavirus has brought us closer to Pope Francis who, alone in St. Peter's Square, embraced sick humanity and prayed for and with it. It allowed Father General to address us directly conveying his encouragement and his hopes. More simply, by freeing us from the accelerated rhythm that characterizes the lives of many of us, this COVID-19 gave us time. Time to stop, to examine our days and our lives, to go deeper. Time to marvel at restored contact with friends for whom we had not had any time for ages.

In a world where thick clouds darken the days, where we can no longer live oblivious to the real social and environmental threats we face, it is still possible to be


amazed. Not only by "classic" wonders, like the candor of young children or the beauty of nature, that of the garden of the General Curia in spring, for example. Amazement comes to me when I see the collective commitment to building a better world. This is what comes out from the portrait offered in our publication *JESUITS - The Society of Jesus in the World - 2021*.

When our Superior General asked that the 2021 edition should prepare for the Ignatian Year by emphasizing the theme of conversion, it worried me. It is a serious and challenging theme. Who wants to enter into a conversion process... or even read about it? But throughout the months of preparation of this publication, we have been able to see that the testimonies of conversion, both past and present, are sources of thanksgiving. Conversion allows for the changes needed for the human and spiritual progress that we are aiming for. Ignatius, Francis Xavier, Father Arrupe too, all experienced moments of conversion that allowed them to adjust to the needs of the people that God was putting on their path. Closer to us, the testimonies of Jaime, Sonja, Amaldass and Michael open our minds and hearts. They give way to amazement at the ability of men and women to commit themselves to love and service.



Pierre Bélanger, SJ
Publisher

● WEB: jesuits.global



The four Universal Apostolic Preferences are meant to be constitutive and integral dimensions of every apostolate of every Jesuit. Every apostolate that is done must have these four preferences embedded and integrated in them.

Arturo Sosa, SJ
Superior General
To the Jesuits of Nepal. 27 February 2020



UNIVERSAL
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PREFERENCES

Considering the call of Christ

Where do the four Universal Apostolic Preferences lead us?

雷敦穌 Edmund Ryden, SJ
Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan



The teacher asks, “Well, children. Have you done the four things I asked you to do?” Some reply, “What I did is more or less your four things, so I am OK.” Others say, “I do something

for each but can always do more.” The attitude of the children is one of trying to live up to a hard task, trying to prove to the master that can pass the exam.

We might take the same attitude to the four *Universal Apostolic Preferences*, some of us trying to prove that really we do them all the time; others recognising some need for

improvement. This way of looking at things is not wholly unjustified. If I never give the Exercises in any format whatsoever; if I cannot care less for drought-stricken villages, then the Preferences may help to wake us out of our torpor. Yet, this is not really what the Society intends for us.

The Preferences are designed as a new way of putting the Formula of the Institute and as such can only be understood in the context of our founding documents. Furthermore, Father General has stressed that they work together. In response to this suggestion, I offer the following observations, well aware that there much more could be said.

Let us start from the Meditation on Two Standards (SpEx 136-147) and consider how Satan goads his demons “to tempt [people] to covert riches ... The first step, then, will be riches, the second honour, the third pride” (SpEx 142). These are the preferences of the world/Satan. I imagine them in the centre of a circle where we are drawn like a moth to light. The fundamental attraction of this way is that “I” am in charge. “I” am the centre and have power.

The way of Christ is the opposite. He leads to poverty, insults or contempt and humility (SpEx 146). These values are out of the limelight, not in the centre. It is as if we are thrown off the merry-go-round and out to the edges. We need to constantly work against the pull of the world taking us toward the centre and the closer we get to the centre the harder it becomes to resist the force. The Preferences are precisely ways of describing the counter-force that is the attraction of the way of Christ. They invite us “to look down upon the whole expanse of all the earth, filled with human beings” (SpEx 102).



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A stone that has started to roll downhill is not interested in stopping to think. A moth that is attracted to the light heeds no advice to fly away. Our tendency is to fail to discern, to think only as we were taught, to be unwilling to change. Discernment causes us to stop short, to allow God to do new things with us and so prevent us locking ourselves in the prison we have created for ourselves out of our own fears, ignorance and, limitations (SpEx 59). We are like Adam hiding behind the bushes. Christ invites us to

“a cry of wonder” that leads to new life (SpEx 60).

Many young people suffer from unemployment, uncertainty, and doubt. They are powerless. We saw this recently in Greta Thunberg’s short address to the United Nations. The leaders worry about money and figures but do not really wish to change things. The preference in favour of youth means not that we have to become paternalistic patrons of the youth, but rather that they become



our inspiration. In front of the Child Jesus and his parents, “I will make myself a poor, little unworthy slave... and serve them in their needs with all possible homage and reverence” (SpEx 114).

A globalised society and media could lead to more coverage of the whole world. In fact, what often happens is the opposite. English-language media dominate. Every tweet and sneeze of President Donald Trump hits the headlines in Delhi and Tokyo. We are called to swim against the tide, to seek to go to places that are shadowy and forgotten, to the margins of the Amazonian rainforest and the slums of our cities. We must “be content with the same food, drink, clothing, etc.” as the poor have (SpEx 93).

Most people today live in cities created as 24-hour, non-stop, climate-free environments where the rhythm of the rising and setting of the sun, the shifts in the seasons from winter’s cold to summer’s heat, are only minor peculiarities to be ironed out by human ingenuity. We make a cocoon for ourselves such that we no longer feel the wind or smell the flowers, “nor can foot feel, being shod” (G.M. Hopkins: “God’s Grandeur”). Pope Francis has called us back to creation, to live a life in joy, in which we are commissioned to sing the praise of the Creator.

The UAPs point to areas in life where we can find poverty, insults, and humility. They lead us to the cross, to see “how much God our Lord has done for us” (SpEx 234). The collaboration they call for is firstly with God, and then with others, where it is God and the others who are in charge.

● URL: <https://www.amdgchinese.org/en/>

The heart on the horizon

Breaking new ground at the CLC

Manuel Martínez Arteaga
Executive Secretary of the CLC

When in February 2019 the Society of Jesus shared the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* (UAP) 2019-2029, here at the Christian Life Community (CLC) – an international association of lay people with an Ignatian charism and spirituality – we were filled with joy. We sensed the convergence of two processes begun at different times and carried forward by two apostolic bodies that live their Christian vocation according to two different states of life. With a universal outlook and guided by the Spirit, we have decided to turn our gaze toward the same horizon. This gaze is in line with the *kairos* the Church is experiencing. As we find ourselves breaking new ground, Pope Francis with his encyclicals and apostolic exhortations, makes us feel at one with the Church, inviting us to a greater commitment, to “come out of ourselves in order to meet others.”

The last General Assembly (Buenos Aires 2018) focused our attention on deepening communal discernment. As CLC, we then feel called to offer ourselves, achieving a better integration of our three dimensions: spirituality, community and apostol-

ic impulse. And we know, because we have experienced it, that discernment in common is what gives unity of purpose. It is part of who we are, it is at the heart of our mission and it is the way we do things. Pope Francis has insisted very much on the need for discernment at this time. It is one of the least developed facets, both in the Church and in society. In permanent contact with reality – source of inspiration – we are invited to open up places for coming together that allow us to create a *culture of discernment*. We are convinced that, through dis-

cernment and its fruits, we are meant to create, transform, reconcile and love. May who we are shine forth.

Our reading about what happened in Buenos Aires kindles anew our deepest desire to be an apostolic body, in which “our way of being is mission and we will have to boldly dedicate every effort” wherever we are in order to continue building the Kingdom. There are many examples throughout the world in which CLC is committed to concrete actions. The experience in conflict mediation, led by CLC in



Spain with the collaboration of Elias Lopez SJ – who works on reconciliation – regarding the situation in Catalonia, has meant truly experiencing a community of discernment aimed at creating reconciliation. It is a proposal that recognizes the formation of people as the only real tool for peace: *to be trained in the pedagogy of forgiveness and to shape oneself conforming to Jesus*. It is a way to help in the transformation of society as a response to

following Jesus. We walk striving for harmonious living that goes hand in hand with justice and the invitation to integral reconciliation with God, with others and with our Common Home.

The youth have become a priority for the Ignatian family. They are also a priority for CLC. The apostolic exhortation *Christus vivit* has given us a new framework, one that is more essential, more profound and

more apostolic. Each heart's personal encounter with the living Christ leads to a personal life commitment. It is important to give young people dynamic, cheerful, enthusiastic and creative common spaces so that they can continue their process of growth, accompaniment, discernment and celebration. Ignatian spirituality, and in particular the path of the Spiritual Exercises, is a cherished gift that we can share with the Church. Youth



can be considered a vulnerable stage. However, “it is young people, with their perspective, who can help us better understand the changing times we are living and the new hope they promise” (Father Sosa). Therefore, it becomes a responsibility to work with them and for them structurally, preventively and with lasting foresight. It is the best way to build a more just and more humane world.

These times we are living represent a new opportunity to move forward in our permanent journey of learning and maturing as collaborators in the mission of Christ, which has been entrusted to the Church. We are often to be found working together in the different places where we have a presence. We drink from the same spiritual source – the Spiritual Exercises – and we have set ourselves a hope-filled challenge that invites us to be creative in the search for new ways to give concrete answers to this world that needs to be reconciled.

The reading of the UAPs, the different missionary fields of CLC, the messages of Pope Francis, do not make sense if we read them independently. We live in a hyper-connected world. The great problems have an ever growing more global



impact. Our approach to them, our actions and our outlook on the horizon must be integral. Prayer and discernment in common are the basis for bringing about unified action. In CLC we want to continue along the path of deepening

our identity and we wish to keep on sharing the journey with those who contemplate the horizon with confidence and hope.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <http://www.cvx-clc.net/>

“A living tradition”

On the horizon of the Universal Apostolic Preferences

José Alberto Mesa, SJ
Secretary for Education, Rome

The first Jesuits, once they had decided to dedicate themselves to education, understood that they had to prepare themselves to be educators in the

educational institutions they founded. When they agreed to open the *Collegio di San Nicolò* (St. Nicholas' College) in Messina in 1548, they had not yet

clearly defined how to run a school. It was only in 1599, having worked more than 50 years in education, that Father General Acquaviva promulgated the





the International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education (ICA-JE) is producing a new document: *Jesuit Schools: A Living Tradition in the 21st Century – An Ongoing Exercise of Discernment*, or, in short, *A Living Tradition*.

A Living Tradition consists of three interrelated parts. In the first part, the document is set in the context of the aforementioned founding documents, such as the *Characteristics* document of 1986 and the IPP of 1993. In this sense, as Father General Sosa states in his letter of promulgation, *A Living Tradition* “must be seen within the framework of the process of discernment that our educational apostolate has kept alive since *Characteristics* and the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm* were first published.” Thus, “*A Living Tradition* does not replace the previous documents; rather, it complements and updates them as an ongoing exercise of discernment. The three should be taken together as the contemporary framework of Jesuit Education.” In this first part, the document also shares the spirit of the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* (UAPs) of the Society of Jesus, inviting us to

Ratio Studiorum; the first official document on education that would guide their educational works for centuries to come. This document often reiterates what St. Ignatius strongly insisted on: responding to “times, places and persons.” Thus, the first Jesuits had to *learn by doing*.

In 1906, General Congregation 25 “judged that no rewriting of the *Ratio* for Lower Studies should be undertaken” (d. 12, § 1). But a new long process of discernment began which took shape in the 1986 document *Characteristics of Jesuit Education*. This document put forward 28 distinctive features of Jesuit education and successfully achieved a sense of unity amid the diversity of the many national education systems in which Jesuit schools function. Shortly after, in 1993, *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (known as the “Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm,” IPP) was published with the goal of introducing the core elements of the pedagogical style that guide the teaching-learning process in the classroom.

However, the Society of Jesus is aware that our world has kept on changing, that we live in times of swift transformations at every level, and that, in response to this context, our educational works must maintain a constant discernment to recognize the challenges and opportunities that this frantic shift brings. This is why, after more than eight years of discussions,





discern how, through our educational processes, we show the way to God, we walk with the outcasts of the world in a mission of reconciliation and justice, we accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future and collaborate in the care of our Common Home.

In the second part, *A Living Tradition* sets out some of the world's new realities from the standpoints of society, politics, education, religious practice, and within the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus, in order to discern the context in which we serve.

Finally, in the third part, *A Living Tradition* provides 10 global identifiers meant to help educational institutions in the process of discernment from the perspective of the UAPs. These indicators can be easily linked to the four *Preferences* and should be interpreted as paths to help to put them in practice as part of the process of discernment demanded by them in the area of education. The 10 identifiers commit the educational works to:

- Be Catholic, and offer in-depth faith formation in dialogue with other religions and worldviews
- Create a safe and healthy school environment for all
- Educate on global citizenship
- The care of all creation
- Promote justice
- Be accessible for all
- Educate on interculturality
- Being a global network at the service of the mission
- Educate for human excellence
- Educate in life-long learning

Each identifier, as every section of *A Living Tradition*, goes with questions that are oriented toward dis-

cernment and must be understood within the broader context of the discernment the *Preferences* call for.

In short, *A Living Tradition* lies within the larger process of the UAPs and becomes a crucial tool for the educational institutions of the Society that seek to answer the call to serve the mission of reconciliation and justice with God, humanity and creation. In these indicators, educators, school administrators, students, and parents will find concrete ways to approach the UAPs, understand their implications, review what they are doing, and move forward in their implementation.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <https://www.educatemagis.org/>



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Engaging diversity, generating new stories: the Jesuits and youths in Indonesia

Jesuit Communications Team
Province of Indonesia

“I am going to break fast at the church,” says Eli Yudoyono, a Muslim who leads a local neighbourhood in Semarang, Central Java. In the evening, along with many other Muslims, he attended an annual event organised by the Jesuits during every Ramadan at St. Theresia Parish in Bongsari, Semarang. The parish priest, Fr. Eduardus Didik Chahyono, worked with the parishioners to provide their Muslim guests with *iftars*, the meal taken by Muslims at sundown to break the daily fast during Ramadan. Warmth and hope filled the atmosphere of the room as Muslims and Catholics sat side by side, eating together and sharing stories.

During Ramadan, similar events can easily be found across Jesuit works in Indonesia. Aloysius Adi, a member of the youth ministry at another Jesuit parish, St. Yusuf in Ambarawa, Central Java, sees such events as a genuine expression of faith. For him, “Organising a social event with other reli-



gious groups, such as inviting Muslims over for breaking fast, is not merely an expression of respect for others, but also a way of celebrating the diversity which God has presented as a gift for all of mankind.”

For Indonesian Jesuits and their collaborators, this precious yet fragile gift of diversity has always been an existential thread in their personal narratives, as well as apostolic works. In a time when intolerance and division is often flamed for political gains, Jesuit works in Indonesia continue to provide inclusive spaces in which differences are not only welcomed, but also celebrated. Every so often, the warm welcome and the experience of encountering diversity in our Jesuit institutions lead to transformations.

At Sanata Dharma University, the Jesuit university in Yogyakarta, its 12 000 students come from almost every province in Indonesia’s vast archipelago. As part of their formation, they are frequently asked to reflect upon their experiences of encountering people from different religious traditions and cultures. At first, many find it intimidating. After the university’s orientation week, however, their perceptions

began to change. Instead of fear, they see beauty.

Anak Agung Istri Sari Ning Gayatri, a Hindu student from Bali, shared her reflection. “I have only been at Sanata Dharma for around three months. But I have fallen in love with this university. I am in love with its tolerant atmosphere that shines bright like a jewel on a crown. I am in love with the way its people treat diversity as a precious treasure. For me, Sanata Dharma is a reflection of Indonesia. Different ethnicities, religions, races, cultures, and traditions are everywhere. There is tolerance all around the campus.”

These stories shed light on how to allow the third *Universal Apostolic Preference* (UAP) to flourish in Indonesia. To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future is a call to become what Pope Francis refers as “custodians of wonders.” In Indonesia, one of the wonders is precisely how the creative spirit of God continues to gather people from



diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to share the gift of life. For this sense of wonder to blossom, our ministries also need to show that the way to God (the first UAP) can at times requires us to embrace “the religious others.”

The call of the UAPs requests that we help young people to discern, so that stories of differences may be gazed at as stories of God’s own boundless diversities. Experiences teach us that by providing spaces for young people from different religious backgrounds to enter into respectful conversations, we can help them to grow in their knowledge of God. They become exposed to new stories, which will allow the eyes of their hearts to see that the rich tapestry of our common humanity is all the more beautiful when diversity is embraced. Such stories allow hope to grow, and on several occasions, they lead to the birth of common initiatives to walk with the poor and the marginalised or to protect the earth.

As young people all over the world begin to rise to the challenge and present themselves as champions of environmental issues, the youth in Indonesia are hearing the call to immerse themselves in the same direction. Due to their familiarity with various digital platforms, they can see borders as pathways. With their youthful dynamism, they join their peer in promoting stories that foster unity amidst diversities, solidarity with the poor and the marginalised, as well solidarity for the care for the environment. As their stories spread, their lifestyles change.

The UAPs are rooted in the challenges of the present. They have become a call to the whole Society of Jesus to discern God’s presence in a world marred by so many worries. God’s vibrant presence, however, allows us that hope can always become the more dominant narrative. As Jesus in Indonesia and their collaborators walk in paths set out by the UAPs, new stories of hope continue to emerge and bring about transformations. Such stories are the ones we create together.

- **WEB:** Magis for young People
- **URL:** <https://www.jcapsj.org/2017/08/path-magis-young-people/>





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The ESEJOVEN Network: the commitment to youth in Peru

Emilio Martínez, SJ
Province of Peru

Accompanying young people has been a constant challenge for the Jesuit Province of Peru. This is made apparent by its apostolic plan, in which a priority is established: “To effectively seek the integral formation and accompaniment of young people.” Now that the Society of Jesus has made working with youth one of its *Universal Apostolic Preferences* (UAPs), the mission has been confirmed for the Jesuits of Peru, being directed towards “the creation of a hope-filled future.”

It is not an easy mission. Young people are exposed to fast social change, to exclusion, to a culture that enables consumerism and superficiality, to a rise in digital life. As for Jesuits, they are usually trained in a more traditional cultural background. However, thanks to initiatives that have been in place for some time, valuable meeting places have arisen in Peru where young people share their experiences of faith, their love of life, their authenticity and creativity, and where Jesuits share with them the treasure of Ignatian spirituality. The youth network ESEJOVEN, a platform that coordinates the various youth programs, groups and communities accompanied by the Jesuits, enlivens these spaces.



I am ESEJOVEN

The ESEJOVEN network was born in 2011 with the goal of spurring the mission of each youth group, strengthening their Ignatian identity and fomenting their integration into a single apostolic body. At present, the network is made up of the Christian Life Community (CLC) youth section, the “Íñigo” Communities, the *Grupo Universitario Cristiano* (GUC - Christian University Group), youth groups of the Jesuit parishes, the *Movimiento Eucarístico Juvenil* (MEJ - Eucharistic Youth Movement), and the volunteer groups “*Compartiendo el Pan*” (Sharing the Bread) and “Magis”. Through these groups, the network is present in nine regions of Peru and brings together about 1200 young people. A special feature of the network is that, as well as being fostered by the Province’s National Youth Pastoral Commission, it is animated by a Regional Youth Council

in each region, which is made up of delegates from each of the region’s groups, with the mentoring of a Jesuit. In this way, young people drive the network forward themselves, undertaking initiatives on a regional scale and suggesting actions to the national network.

Communities and Volunteers

Among the groups that make up the ESEJOVEN network, the “Íñigo” Communities are the most recent initiative. They are meant to accompany the students on their journey of university education. “The Íñigo Communities are places for meeting and dialogue for young people who wish to explore their spirituality by sharing their personal, academic and background experiences,” says Emily Rojas (24 years old), a psychology student in Lima. Indeed, Íñigo communities give young people the

opportunity to mature in their faith while accompanied by a community experience.

Without a doubt, the youth group with the strongest presence in the country is the “Magis” volunteer program. This platform was founded in 2005 by a group of young Jesuits concerned with making their fellow students aware of poverty and exclusion. What sets Magis apart is that not only do they promote solidarity, but also arrange spaces for reflection to internalize action. Over time, the volunteers themselves took over the management of the volunteer program who, along with the Society of Jesus, gave it a more institutional character and helped it reach most of the regions where Jesuits can be found. “From Magis, I value their work with vulnerable communities and the fact that, while a faith-based program, they are open to all young people who are willing to help others,” says



Sebastián Arévalo (25 years old), advisor to Magis in the city of Chiclayo.

Powerful experiences

Besides, the ESEJOVEN network offers an array of intensive training experiences. One of these is the Youth Colloquium, the meeting of Ignatian youth where about 300 young people gather every year to take part in formation and integration activities. Another powerful experience is the Ignatian Way, which each year brings together about 35 youth leaders from Peru, and also from Ecuador and Bolivia, aiming to offer them a deeper and more incarnate knowledge of Ignatian spirituality. Other important experiences are the Spiritual Exercises organized in various regions, the voluntary work of insertion into realities of poverty during university breaks, and the *Pascuas Rurales* (Holy Week and Easter celebrations in a rural environment), which brings in the urban youth to share Holy Week with rural communities.

Youth Apostolate and UAP

Recently, the youth apostolate of the Peruvian Province has also sought to



take up the UAPs adopted by the Society of Jesus. This is why the National Youth Pastoral Commission has made a commitment to strengthen the three other preferences in its work. These preferences, as we have just seen, are already present in the projects of the different groups, but their global spirit could inspire the whole youth project of the Jesuits in Peru.

- Showing the way to God, through discernment and Spiritual Exercises: fostering the experience of personal and communal discernment in the formation of youth.

- Accompanying the poor and the excluded: giving priority to personal encounter with those who live on the fringes of society and favoring social transformation.



- Collaborate in caring for our Common Home: through a deep ecological conversion and through advocacy in other youth spaces.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <http://esejovent.pe/>



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A network for justice

The Province of Brazil lives by the UAPs

José Ivo Follmann, SJ
Province of Brazil

The Society of Jesus has been in Brazil since 1549. After more than four centuries of history, which at a point in recent times even spanned three Provinces and a missionary Region, we have gone back, since 16 November 2014, to a single Province model. The process of establishing this new Province, in spite of the usual

difficulties, took place in a favorable and inspiring environment, bolstered by three factors: the assessing of the Common Apostolic Project of the Conference of Latin American Provincials (CPAL); the preparation of the 36th General Congregation; the new challenges presented by Pope Francis. In this sense, the priorities

of the apostolic plan for the newly formed Province were defined closely in line with the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* (UAPs), which we are called to follow from 2019.

From the beginning, networking was specifically encouraged. The Network for the Promotion of



Socio-Environmental Justice operates in keeping with the paradigm of integral ecology and reconciliation. The *Observatorio Nacional de Justicia Socioambiental Luciano Mendes de Almeida* (OLMA - National Observatory for Socio-environmental Justice Luciano Mendes de Almeida) was established in Brasília, DF. As a “networking observatory,” it gives encouraging support to the promotion of justice and its impact by means of the different levels and lines of apostolic action. The Observatory’s main strength is its five social centers, which serve the purpose of production of knowledge, documentation, counseling, training and advocacy.

In addition to these centers, the following groups should be highlighted: the *Servicio Jesuita para Migrantes y Refugiados* (SJMR – Jesuit Refugee and Migrant Service), with five units and some welcome centers; the socio-educational work of *Fe y Alegria* (FyA - Faith and Joy), with 24 units; and the attention paid to youth in the centers and spaces of the Magis Brasil program – MAGIS, with 17 units. Seven other social works must be counted alongside these, dedicated to specific communities in need.

The promotion of justice in the networks of basic education (17 units) and of higher education (six units) is expressed in the work for social and educational inclusion (grants and integration of deprived youth) and in many social and environmental projects. In the area of higher education, some Institutes and centers focus on reflection and training in the perspective of integral ecology. They seek to play a leading role in social innovation in the world of work, in the recognition of cultural, religious and gender diversity, in ethnic and racial education, in awareness of the environment and public policies, as well



as awareness of issues of fair economy, economic and political ethics and bioethics.

This same perspective can be seen in the training and specific projects of some parishes. All this shows a spirit in search of coordination among the networks. This spirit is also seen in the formation sessions in Ignatian spirituality and in the moments of prayer that the teams of the social centers and social works join in, provided by the spirituality network SerVir.

The UAPs, promulgated in 2019, had a positive effect on the apostolate of the Province on all levels and lines of action. We received various signs of great harmony and willingness to dive deeper into ongoing initiatives: “Starting from popular education, Ignatian spirituality and pedagogy, and integral ecology, the world must be ‘Amazonized’ to defend the life of the peoples of the Amazon” (Juscelio, Pará). One of the programs deals with “public policies for women and *quilombolas* (persons of African descent), with a focus on the promotion



of gender equality and active participation in areas of socio-political control” (Andrés, Mato Grosso). The strength lies in fostering “conversation circles centered on strengthening democracy and human rights, where teenagers and young people debate on the topics of their daily lives, such as education and political involvement” (Jonas, Paraná). The Ignatian Youth Network (MAGIS) makes “*being more Amazon*” a focus of its work in 2020.

The work with recycling material collectors in the parish of Russas (Ceará) is a task that is “on one hand social justice and on the other hand

care for the Common Home” (Fr. Luiz Araújo). In Bahia, the novices of the Province are deeply involved in a similar project. This has repercussions “on the change of mindset in the way we consume and deal with objects in general” (Fr. Jair Barbosa). According to Mary Nelys (Amazonas), “taking care of the Common Home is everyone’s obligation.”

In this regard, another interesting example is the *Semana de Estudos Amazônicos* (SEMEA - Amazonian Studies Week). According to Luiz Felipe, from the OLMA observatory, “it is an annual and itinerant event that tours universities located outside

the Amazon territory, furthering the sharing of knowledge between the academia and traditional peoples.”

It is important to add the historic service of advising Church organizations on issues related to the promotion of justice. Throughout the network there are fields that feed back into the various levels and lines of work of the apostolate of the Society of Jesus in Brazil. They are fertile ground for the UAPs to resonate and deepen.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <https://cpalsocial.org/brasil>





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Integrating faith – life – mission

From the Itinerant Team (1998) to the Itinerant Network of the REPAM (2019)

Itinerant Team of the Amazon

Pope Francis begins his Apostolic Exhortation with these affectionate words: “Beloved Amazon.” He invites us to “take the Amazon to heart” by walking with its peoples: “thought should be given to itinerant missionary teams and support provided for

the presence and mobility of consecrated men and women closest to those who are most impoverished and excluded.” Journeying geographically and symbolically, learning to understand, love and defend the Amazon and its people.

Laudato Si’ affirms that “everything in the world is connected” (# 16) and puts forward an “integral ecology” (# 10). The four *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus can only be taken up from a loving, integral, connected and “heartfelt”



understanding: “to show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment” leads us to “walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.” It encourages us also to “accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future” and to “collaborate in the care of our Common Home.”

This interconnection demands a conversion of the heart, “the driving force of feeling,” a *metanoia* which Fr. Claudio Perani, SJ, founder of the *Equipo Itinerante* (IT – Itinerant Team) formulated following his intuition: “Walk through the Amazon and listen to what the people are saying. Take part in the everyday life of the people. Observe and take note of everything carefully, with the same words the people use. Do not worry about the results, the Spirit will show the way. Courage! Begin where you can.”

In the IT’s life-as-mission, out in the open, the four UAPs are bound together, they are “held close to the heart.” A true spiritual journey towards God complicates our lives

wherever life is threatened, loving the poor, caring for the future of young people and defending the life of all beings in the Common Home with whom we the make up the community, “nursed by the same bosom,” of creation.

The Itinerant Team integrates faith-life-mission, spirituality in the open that allows us to leave our comfort zone: “*be with those nobody wants to, where nobody wants to, the way nobody wants to be,*” where the wounds are most

open and life most threatened. Laypeople, religious men and women, priests who make “community-on-the-road” through cities and villages, like Jesus (Luke 8,1 ff), serving the Kingdom of Justice. Their mission is a geopolitical one: to love-nurture-safeguard the abundant Life (John 10,10), Amazonian Good Living / Living Together. It is a “Church which goes forth,” that is, on a journey: “The Church’s closeness to Jesus is part of a common journey; ‘communion and mission are profoundly interconnected’” (*Evangelii gaudium*, # 23).

The IT promotes a connected Amazonian territorial worldview, which is also geopolitical, “from within,” it discerns the mission with the people, walking together a synodal path; the IT generates processes and weaves transnational networks to face the great Amazonian challenges. Bringing together various charisms, cultures, personalities, congregations, institutions, to accomplish together what we could not and should not do alone. Diversity is a theological Trinitarian principle of the IT: the more diverse, the more divine, as long as we maintain unity in diversity and complementarity.





takes care of us and leads the people and the poor by the hand.

The final document reinforces this **OVERFLOW** of ITINERANCE:

“In this way Jesus pointed out to us, his disciples, that our mission in the world cannot be static, but is itinerant. The Christian is itinerant” (# 21).

“Itinerant missionary teams in the Amazon, weaving and building community in their travels, help to strengthen the Church’s synodality. They bring together various charisms, institutions and congregations, lay people, men and women religious, and priests. Together they accomplish what cannot be done alone” (# 39).

“We propose a network of itinerant ministries that brings together the various efforts of teams that accompany and energize the life and faith of the communities in the Amazon” (# 40).

“We support the insertion and itinerancy of consecrated persons amongst the most impoverished and excluded” (# 98).

May the Spirit of God encourage us to journey; to row out to deeper waters and cast the nets for a catch (Luke 5,4) with our **BELOVED AMAZON**.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <http://amazonia-casa-comun.org>



Confronting and combating inequality:

75 years of Hogar de Cristo in the light of the Universal Apostolic Preferences

José Francisco Yuraszeck Krebs, SJ
Chilean Province

When in 1944, Alberto Hurtado created the *Hogar de Cristo* (Home of Christ), the principal kind of suffering he sought to relieve was that of the homeless, as well, of course, as indifference to their plight. In a letter written from his deathbed in August 1951, he observed, “Whenever the needs and suffering of the poor become manifest, may the *Hogar de Cristo*, which is the sum of the hearts of anonymous and generous Chileans, seek ways of helping them as though they were helping the Master himself.” Seventy-five years later, we can safely say that our founder’s mandate is more relevant than ever: now we are present throughout Chile, providing eight separate types of service, each corresponding to differing kinds of pain and social exclusion.

Friday, October 18th 2019, the very date that we were celebrating in Santiago, the Chilean capital, our 75th anniversary, saw the start of an explosive and widespread social





uprising. Chile has long been signposted as an oasis of calm amid Latin America's fractious social panorama, yet neither its stable macro-economy nor the healthy reduction in poverty statistics of recent decades, nor a substantial increase in life expectancy or a considerable improvement in subjective well-being, seemed to be enough. A lingering inequality in various areas of daily life and a huge burden of debt were just two of the many, subtle factors which led to a slight rise in the cost of underground rail fares in Santiago, lighting the spark that spread social unrest like wildfire throughout the whole of Chile. It is within this context – which we still find somewhat puzzling – that I would like to offer this brief outline of the activities of the *Hogar de Cristo* on its 75th birthday.

For some time, we have understood poverty to be the greatest possible violation of human rights. This has led us to deepen our engagement with all our direct social action programmes, which help, among others,

the homeless, those with mental disabilities, the elderly, alcoholics and drug addicts, teenagers excluded from school, and the unemployed. The aim? To encourage those we help on their journey towards social inclusion and self-empowerment, so that, by the end of their time with us, they thrive, using their own skills, and are fully able to stand on their own two feet. In 2019, we helped more than 32,000 people. Recently, the number of migrants we assist, especially Haitians and Venezuelans, has gone up. In our refuges, programmes for the homeless, and 38 nurseries and crèches, migrants from other Latin American countries are gradually changing the ethno cultural profile of those we welcome.

As well as our direct action programmes, we also try to influence culture and public policies through our residential and day centres. We have developed several pilot initiatives in homes for children and young people, in schools for re-integrating ex-

cluded pupils and through our work with the homeless. Our aim is to innovate, build up knowledge and help transform common practices, which, in fast-changing social contexts, are not always helpful. We are in dialogue and partnership with state institutions as well as many other civic organisations, from whom we are also learning.

Within our two-fold mission of welcome and outreach, we understand volunteering as a transformational tool for individuals, which changes social structures, and instigates life-changing encounters. Although we have volunteers of every age, we prioritise outreach to schools, colleges and centres of higher education. Not only do we involve them in our own programmes, we also offer them training workshops in their own classrooms. We also reach out to individuals and businesses who can become our associates and thus financially support our activities. Currently,





we have more than 300,000 associates whose contributions finance nearly 50 % of our work.

We also run two other related programmes, the *Funeraria Hogar de Cristo* (Home of Christ Funeral Parlour) and the *Fondo Esperanza* (Hope Fund). The Funeral Parlour offers its services free of charge to those in need, while its paying clients partially finance the *Hogar de Cristo's* social engagement programmes. The *Fondo Esperanza* is the largest micro-finance body in Chile: most of its 120,000 partners are women who join community banks, which back their entrepreneurial schemes, thus allowing them to support their families.

I am happy to say that much of what we are doing in the *Hogar de Cristo* is in harmony with the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus. Some of the particular challenges which lie ahead are based on the observation that the poor are those worst affected by the socio-environmental crisis. We therefore wish to contribute to the reconstruction of the social fabric in specific regions and communities. We also feel challenged to implement good environmental policies in all our programmes. Another permanent undertaking is updating the services we offer so they are equipped to meet the new needs of the poor. In addition, within the context of the current, profound ecclesial crisis, we also sense an urgent call to renew the ways we live out the spirituality we have inherited from St. Alberto Hurtado. Following in the footsteps of our master, St. Ignatius, he shows us that love needs to be shown more through deeds than through words. For what would Christ do in our shoes?

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: www.hogardecristo.cl



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Jesuits on the southern frontier: at the service of the most vulnerable

José Luis Vázquez, SJ
Nador, Morocco

The Moroccan city of Nador is located on the Mediterranean coast, just a few kilometres from the Spanish populace of Melilla. This strategic position makes Nador a key point on the migratory routes between West Africa and the European Union. Many young men and women from countries including Mali, the Ivory Coast, Burki-

na Faso, Guinea or Senegal arrive here in the hope of continuing their journey northwards to carve out a better future. However, the difficulties they encounter often mean that their stay in Nador is longer than expected.

For several years, a few Jesuits have lived and worked on this stretch

of the “southern frontier” (between North Africa and Southern Europe), today deemed the most dangerous in the world. The Jesuit community, part of the Spanish Province and linked to our house in Almeria, is formed at present of three people; two Spaniards and a Frenchman who belongs to the Near East Province, was born in

Morocco, and has a long history of missionary work in the Maghreb.

Our work serving the migrant families occurs within the framework of the Diocese of Tangier's Delegation for Migrants, created in 2011 by the previous Bishop, Santiago Agrelo. In the Nador region, the Delegation has a great team of 20, including us. We work alongside women and men, Muslims and Christians, Africans and Europeans.

Those arriving here on the migrant route have survived tough experiences after leaving behind their countries and families: they have been stripped of even basic belongings. Moreover, all too often, their human dignity has been wounded. In the Delegation, we pull together to try to accompany them and alleviate their suffering, by offering them material assistance, medical and psychological help, infor-

mation and advice... but above all, we listen to them, approaching with great respect this "sacred territory," in other words, the broken lives of so many men and women.

At the same time, in this encounter, we welcome the great gift of discovering – or at least intuiting – the human values migrants bring with them, values which no one can rob them of, and which have so much to offer Western society: hope, creativity, resilience, solidarity, a sense of community... as well as, quite often, a profound trust in God. They feel they are in his hands.

Our resources, fruit of the generosity of our benefactors and sup-

porters, are, however, very limited given the gravity of the situation. In addition, we are aware of the need to invest our efforts into preventative action, in order to try and break the cycle of this humanitarian disaster. This is why, since last year, some members of the Delegation have been running a pilot project to raise awareness in migrants' countries of origin, specifically in Guinea-Conakry. We are currently evaluating the possibility of a similar intervention in Senegal.

In addition to our work with migrants, the Jesuits have been entrusted with two other main tasks in Nador. We manage the *Centro Baraka* (Baraka Centre), a professional vocational college offering training courses for





electricians, in cookery, I.T and languages to young men and women, with the aim of helping them integrate into society and find work. The centre also offers workshops to foster the advancement of women (including in literacy, sewing and baking). This is the most direct service we offer our host country and especially its most vulnerable citizens. All the pupils and teachers are Moroccan.

Our other daily task is to offer pastoral support, through the parish of St James, to the small group of Catholics in Nador, most of whom belong to two congregations of female religious: *Hijas de la Caridad* (the Daughters of Charity) and the *Esclavas de la Inmaculada Niña* (Handmaids of Mary, the Immaculate Child). Christians are insignificant number wise in Morocco, but we are significant as a presence, being a church with a strong sense of communion. We give witness to our faith not with words but through our welcome, service and works of mercy; all this being done within a context of respect and dialogue with our Muslim brothers and sisters.

The richness of humanity evident on the southern frontier is stirring in the hearts of some believers a desire to engage with our ministry. Consequently, in partnership with CVX-Spain and our Jesuit companions in Almeria, we are offering the possibility of an experience here (akin to doing the Spiritual Exercises “on the road” either for individuals or small groups). This is designed to help participants find God in this challenging situation from a perspective of Ignatian contemplation. The journey here includes several stages: leaving behind the “plastic sea” of Almeria’s greenhouses to cross the Mediterranean, travel through Melilla and cross the border to reach Nador. The life of migrants, in all its hardship, is an appeal-



ing “theological place” which, if we allow ourselves to be touched by it, can transform us, generating a dynamic of conversion that may change our attitudes, making us authentic agents of societal transformation.

Migrants, young people, Exercises.... If we stop to contemplate all this within the lens of an Ignatian *examen*, we see that the presence of the Jesuits

and our daily commitment in Nador offers a place of integration, in the heart of life, for the Society’s *Universal Apostolic Preferences*.

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● **WEB:** Servicio jesuita a migrantes (frontera Sur)

● **URL:** <https://sjme.org/areas-de-trabajo/frontera-sur/>



Discern, protect, accompany, safeguard

The Arrupe Centre for Research and Training, Lubumbashi, DRC

Jean Nyembo Ngoy, SJ
Central Africa Province

At the coming together of the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* (UAPs)

Created in 2013 and based in Lubumbashi (Upper Katanga), the focal

point of mining activity, the *Centre Arrupe pour la Recherche et la Formation* (CARF – Arrupe Centre for Research and Training) participates, with its Christian standpoint, in the

efforts for human and social development in the South-East of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In this era of new *Preferences*, and with their help, CARF once again hears

the cries of today's world. Jesuits and lay people, men and women, teachers and activists, collaborate in furthering a discernment that protects the outcasts, that accompanies young people and that helps to safeguard the earth, the common home of our humanity.

With the UAPs in mind, joining research and training

Through its research work, CARF brings to light the shortcomings of Congolese society, so full of societal, economic and political unfairness. Thanks to the training courses it offers, the Centre seeks to address these shortcomings adequately. Research and training is built around three axes: "faith, justice, peace and reconciliation," "development aid," and "governance of natural resources." The Monsignor Munzehirwa Library, which is open to the public, is of great

help to us in technical matters because of its wide range of resources in key areas such as economic, political, social and legal sciences.

Faith, justice, peace and reconciliation

Within CARF, the platform called "Bâtisseurs de la Paix" (Builders of Peace) specializes in strategic research for lasting peace. Through shared dialogue, the different social actors are given the chance to look for avenues to stabilize and consolidate the structures of the State.

The "Motivational Talks" focus on the aspects of sustainable development and solidarity, cornerstones of true peace. These are monthly meetings aimed at young people, students or job seekers with the goal of sharing experiences and learning. There is a wide variety of conferences and seminars: film forums, morning business

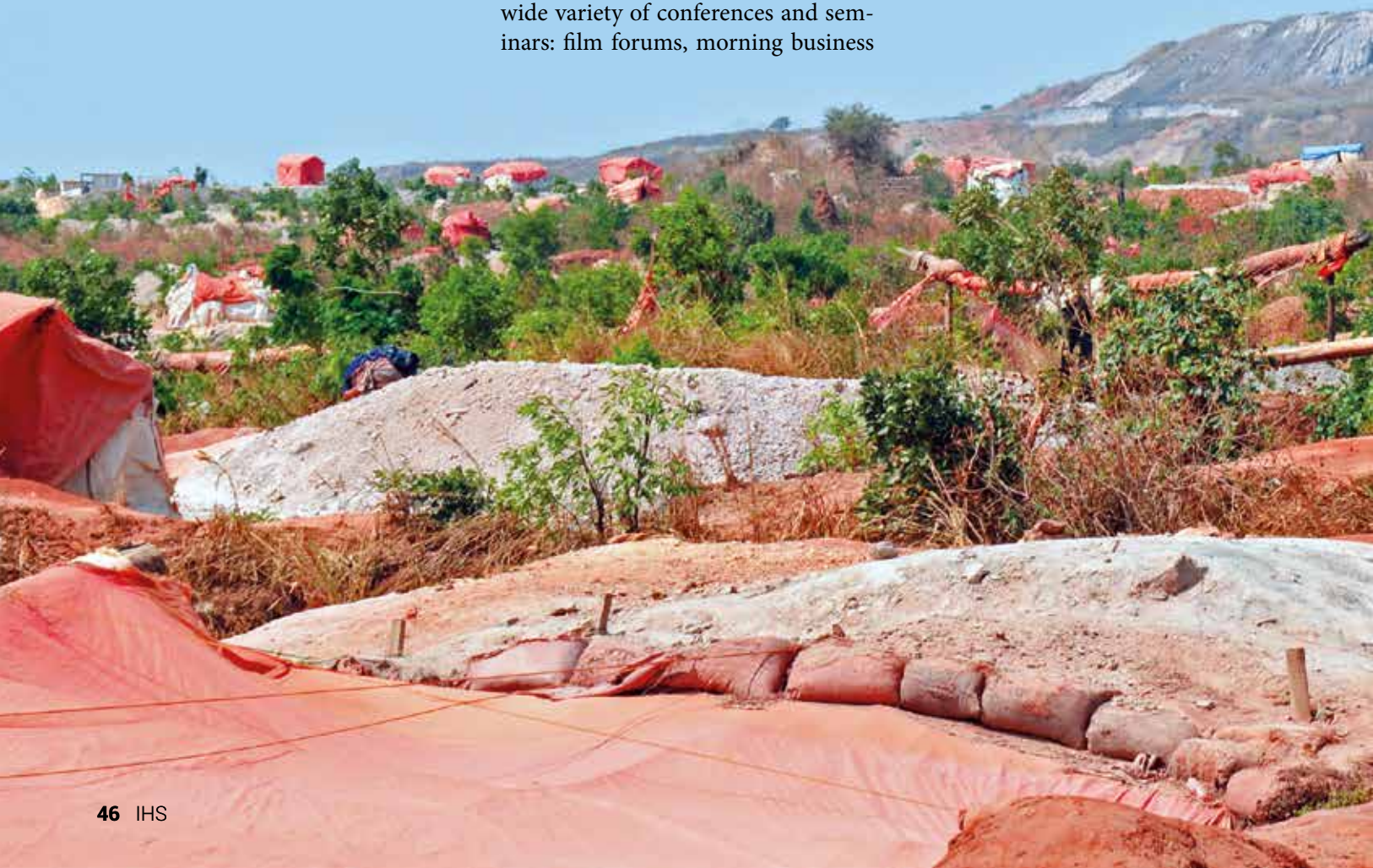
meetings, fashion and style shows, art and music workshops.

The so-called "CARF Forum," another activity of this department, is an annual meeting on current issues open to business men and women, public and private companies, scientists and students who wish to boost the effectiveness of their discussions.

In this context, there are also proposals directed towards the art of spiritual discernment, within the framework of socio-political and theological stimulation, as a path to social liberation.

Development aid

Through CARF's "House of Sustainable Development," particular



importance is placed on ecology: a sustainable development at the local and global levels is sought, which integrates justice by constantly moving towards a more ecological and brotherly society. In so doing, CARF collaborates in the harmonious growth of associative movements, political bodies and businesses. Courses in economics (accounting, entrepreneurship and business management, ethics and leadership), communication (English, computer science), civic culture (civility, elections, democratic processes) and Ignatian pedagogy are made available as part of the training offer.

Governance of natural resources

A special and strategic collaboration with organizations such as *Misere-or* and *Alboan* supports our on-site research projects, especially those dealing with governance and the furthering of excluded, vulnerable social groups. CARF is in direct contact with the communities affected by industrial mining activity, acting as a “body of social and political influence,” and working for transparency, responsible management and social accountability of mining companies. To survive, these communities have no choice but to turn to small-scale mining labor, yet their hazardous working conditions and their low production do not help in bettering their quality of life.

CARF backs them in their efforts by looking into alternatives to mining, coming up with training for men and women who wish to take part in the shift from traditional to small-scale mining and/or industrial mining.

Our training program is based on strategic research in mining mapping, the social responsibility of businesses, mining and human development, economic and social rights of communities, conflict minerals, certificates and traceability.

Moreover, for a year now, CARF has been connected to the different traditional mining locations through a computing platform. As a result, warnings of abuses and human rights violations that impact people working





in the chain of small-scale mineral quarrying or trading are received in real time. The platform also highlights the quarries that do what is right. Thus, all the information gathered and analyzed allows fostering prevention and social conflict resolution actions, and gives CARF the opportunity to have a more objective impact.

A dream that brings to mind the UAPs

The complex and unstable history of the DRC is still a great challenge. To face it, CARF wants to be a prophetic voice. Its actions lie within the framework of a fundamental aspiration sung in the Congolese national anthem: "A great people...!" A great people, yes, but one that scrutinizes the signs of God in its history thanks to a discernment nourished by the Gospel. A great people that digs deep to the lowest depths to reach out to those that history has left out of its pages. A great people with a liberated and fulfilled youth. A great people who care for the land they have inherited, and which it is their duty to safeguard.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <https://www.facebook.com/carf.lubumbashi>





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A journey towards Competence, Conscience, Compassion, and Commitment

50 years of the Servicio Social Javeriano
(SSJ) – Colegio Javier, Panama

Eduardo Valdés, SJ
Central American Province



We have reached the golden anniversary of our social service. It began in 1971 but we began to think the project through and test the waters in 1970, in response to a recommendation made in the 1960s at a gathering of the superiors, vice-provincials, and Provincials of Latin America. This reflection and approach took the shape of an invitation made to every Jesuit to work for faith and justice as the great renewal of “our way of proceeding.”

The *Servicio Social Javeriano* (SSJ – Xaverian Social Service) has become the symbol of the teaching of values we offer our students. It’s the culmination of a holistic formation that they begin in infant school (for 3-5 year olds) and end before their last year of high school. For a month (28 days), students are divided into groups and live alongside a poor rural community, who they help to build chapels, canteens, multi-purpose halls, toilets, etc. Usually, these are communities we work in alongside delegates of the Word and/or community groups.

As well as organising the camps, we aim to give each student appropriate training and sufficient prior preparation. The year before their SSJ, they have a brief experience of living together during a building project. They’re offered courses in first aid, leadership, or anything that might help to strengthen them as a working group. The evening before they leave, we celebrate a send-off mass for students and their families. Our database, containing the details of our past experiences, has given rise to our current regulations and the tools that help us to continuously discern the cultural changes our young people face and evaluate variables in the lives of rural communities.

For most of our students, the SSJ is the focal point of the school. It is



the crucible where their generosity of heart is tried and tested, even if only for us to encourage them and to grasp how much work we still need to do. In years gone by, we have been able to evaluate how much our young people are truly on track in their personal growth in competence, conscience, compassion, and commitment.

During the SSJ, they enjoy times of Ignatian rest, to reflect on what they are experiencing, attend Sunday mass, and take part in religious or leisure activities. They are impressed by the simple, deep faith of the delegates of the Word and the community. They feel moved by the situations the people in each community are going through. They see their economic poverty yet how rich they are in solidarity; their difficulties just to survive, yet how generously they share; their rivalries, fragilities, and resignation given the situations they face yet their capacity for hope, being realistic, and trusting in God. All this connects the students’ Ignatian formation to the real-life situations they witness and experience through the affection and closeness of the local people.

The roles assigned to some students force them, along with the rest of the group, to show how much they’re able to give or the work still required for the best of each to emerge and flourish. Their response is an insight into the way they think, their worries and vulnerabilities, but also into their strengths, creativity, and ability to give of themselves to the task at hand. For the school, it is both a challenge and an invitation to not let this deep humanity go to waste but to continually find ways to help our students to grow as fully as possible. With them, we have a future. And this future is built on the foundations of the Society’s *Universal Apostolic Preferences*.



Our young people are urban. Few have any experience of nature. Being in remote areas with no electric light, where houses are dotted sparsely through fields and mountains, offers them new ways of perceiving nature and the way of life of the rural poor. Also remarkable is the change in how they listen to sounds and bird-song, discovering animals, insects, and greenery that they barely knew of beforehand or only via the internet. They crave the meals and snacks they know from home but come across natural flavours largely devoid of synthetic ingredients. In fact, this process of nutritional “purification” proves for many a gateway to a more natural life-style.

The conversion of our students has a special ingredient. They are from Christian families: For them the SSJ is a time when the emotional side of their faith is stirred by the specific situations and individuals they encounter and who they begin to respect and

appreciate in the fullness of their dignity. What’s more, they leave behind them a visible, unforgettable sign of their experience: the building they’ve constructed with the local community. It is hard to evaluate how much impact this experience will have in their future decisions, but what they retain is a nascent desire to help others and

to face reality. What remains is left to grace, quietly at work within them.

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL:

<http://www.javier.edu/servicio-social-javeriano>





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From seed to tree

Children's Center in Kyrgyzstan

Damian Wojciechowski, SJ
Russian Region



Girls from high school in Suzak, one of the strongest Islamic centers in Southern Kyrgyzstan, go to the edge of the lake, Issyk-Kul, straight from the bus. You can see that such a large water-filled area makes them feel great. They are wearing hijabs, so they can only dip their feet in the water. This is the second year that Jesuit Father Adam Malinowski, from the parish in Jalalabad, organizes astronomical camps for Muslim youth. He



is running ten astronomical clubs in local schools – in Jalalabad and its surroundings. He also built a small astronomical observatory near the church.

Astronomy is close to theology – whoever looks at the sky looks in God's direction. In some schools, a photo of Father Adam hangs next to Jurij Gagarin. As a reward, the best students go to the camp at Children's Leisure and Rehabilitation Center at Issyk-Kul Lake. There is a condition in the agreement with the camps organization requested by the parents:

We are not allowed to convert the children attending the camps. However, young Muslims look at everything with great interest – they watch volunteers from Europe pray and attend the Holy Mass.

Aside from the astronomy camp, we organize a free camp for orphans and disabled children from Tschytschkan. At the same time, we run a camp for children from Catholic parishes, a part of our work for the growing future of the Catholic Church in Central Asia. Kyrgyz children were





curious about the makeshift chapel when they saw us during the Mass. We did not want to chase those kids away, making them feel unwanted. Because of that, we were at some point accused of “proselytizing.”

Children with disabilities, according to widespread opinion among local Muslims, are a punishment for the sins of their parents. Parents are stigmatized. Often, the husband leaves his wife and establishes a second family. So, a woman not only has a handicapped child, but she is left alone without support. There is no rehabilitation or activity for the kids who often suffer from extreme lack of basic care. The camp is an opening to the world.

A group of disabled children from Batken (south of Kyrgyzstan) are getting off the bus, on which they were travelling for more than one day. They are interested in everything – people, home, toilets, canteen, and, of course, water in which they can bathe. Some of them are on crutches, others in

wheelchairs. Children with Down’s syndrome are independent in terms of mobility and always ready for some mischief. Their mothers, thanks to the fact that the children are taken care of by volunteers, can have a few days of rest.

The parents of the invalid children from Jalalabad, all Muslims, from the foundation “Source of Love” founded with our support, asked me if the priest could pray over each of their children. They waited eagerly until a priest dressed in an alb and stole approaches each child, puts his hands on their heads, and prays quietly. Kyrgyz people are pious by nature and traditionally open to other religions. They are convinced that prayer and God can help their children, maybe more than doctors can.

Without doubt, the work of the Children’s Rehabilitation and



Spirituality Center is the greatest pastoral and charitable work of the Catholic Church in Kyrgyzstan. The project seeks to reach mentally, physically, and socially challenged children across the country, more than 1000 children every year. It is not difficult to understand that the center is a place where, in a largely non-Christian environment, the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus are brought together: cultivating the sensitivity of kids and their parents to God's presence in nature, to God's care for those in need. And, concretely, the center is, at the same time, the biggest Church activity among Muslims.

To answer the necessities, we need many things, including buildings. But we need even more and would gratefully receive Jesuits who are not afraid to work in a culture that is so different from what they might have known

in Europe, other parts of Asia, or the Americas. A place where people do not know Jesus and where the Church is less than a mustard seed. Jesuits who can also overcome the temptation to believe that poor people need only bread.

I am always wondering how it is possible that such a large tree, our center, has grown out of a tiny seed at such a rapid pace. How many people from so many countries have been involved in the creation and the running of this work! The vibrant activities of the center often resemble the huge waves that, during winter storms, hit the Issyk-kul shore lying just 100 meters away from our buildings: Children from all over Kyrgyzstan come to us, and undoubtedly those days spent in our center will remain in their memory for a long time, maybe forever.

● URL: <https://jesuits.eu/component/tags/tag/kyrgyzstan>



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Relationships and testimony

Jesuit struggles in Pakistan

Heru Prakosa, SJ
Inter-religious dialogue, Mission of Pakistan



What comes to mind when we hear the word *Pakistan*? Quite a lot of news on that country is not very positive. The country has been hurt by extremism, like the suicide bombing of a mosque in 2020 or of churches in 2015. The mother of a cook at the Jesuit house also died because of a bomb attack several years back.

Pakistan has a strong Islamic background. Christians are less than 2% of the population. Newcomers who enter into a church in Pakistan may be surprised, seeing that almost every female attendant wears a veil. Also, during the Lenten season, many Catholics undergo fasting as Muslims do throughout the Ramadan month. They have breakfast before sunrise and have no meals or drinks afterwards until sunset.

In collaboration with people of good will, through different communities in Pakistan the Jesuits try to hold the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* as their orientation. In the Pakistani context, the Gospel should be understood as Good News within a developed systematic theology that seeks to articulate faith comprehensively for the contemporary world. There lies a challenge for conversion: Could we, in Pakistan and in our daily life, encounter God, who has become flesh in Jesus, through our brothers and sisters, including those who have no faith in Christ? People may not believe in Christ, but at least they can believe in what He is doing (cf. John 10:38) through us.

Let us go back to history and see how the Jesuits ministries are, and can be inspired by the UAPs. A book of Fr. Jeyaraj Rasiah, *The Jesuits in Pakistan* (2019), specifies that the history of the Jesuits in that country can be generally divided into three periods. First, the Jesuit presence in the Mughal Empire, from Emperor Akbar's invitation in 1579 until 1760. Second, the period when the Jesuits from the diocese of Bombay, India, did much missionary work in Pakistani Hyderabad (1860-1935). Third, the period after the 1947 partition into two independent states, *India* and *Pakistan*. During the latter,



the Jesuits have been working in the Lahore diocese and have involved the provinces of Germany (1961-1982), of Australia (1982-1988), and of Sri Lanka (1988 until today).

The first Jesuit community in 1961 brought together a Belgian priest, Fr. Schockaert, a German, Fr. Schultz, and a Swiss, Fr. Bütler. To respond to the church's needs, Loyola Hall was established as a student hostel, study hall, and information centre. A library was built afterwards in 1962.

Later, a spirituality centre and pastoral-social services among the less privileged were also developed. Fr. Vernon Buyser, who had a heart for the poor, began to serve several hundred poor families. Br. Renato Zecchin conducted the youth ministry. Those ministries corresponded to the theological context of the post-Second Vatican Council, in which the church held the notion of integral evangelization as a multi-faceted reality. This perspective of integral evangelization was certainly not far from the spirit of the UAPs of today.

At present, the hostel no longer exists, but some young men live in the Loyola Hall complex. They pursue college education and prepare themselves for Jesuit formation. The ministry of the Spiritual Exercises for religious sisters and brothers flourishes incessantly. To complement the

human, spiritual, and theological formation, a number of workshops are offered at Loyola Hall.

As for the relationships with the Muslim community,

so far, with over 20 000 books, the library has become a venue where several Muslim leaders keep coming for their academic works. A Christian-Muslim discussion group is alive, with an annual two-day symposium and monthly study circle encounters. Related to this is a group of Non-Violent Communication (NVC) that focuses its activities on spreading the message of peace by training teachers who will in turn pass on a message of peace to their students.

Today, the Jesuits are in charge of three schools, one of which is dedicated to young children and called "kids campus." They have around 1500 students and 74 teachers, with lay principals and Jesuit managers. When a parish was handed over to the Jesuits in 1981, there was not a single Christian school in that area. Fr. Jacob Fernando played an important initial role in building an elementary school. Those

three educational institutions are by now recognized by and registered with the Government Board of Education in Lahore.

In 2019, about 30% of the students and teachers in St. Mary's Girls High School and St. Mary's Boys High School come from the Muslim community. Most of the teachers are female and hold university diplomas. Likewise is St. Mary's Kids Campus. With their formation in the Montessori Method, the teachers offer their services to kids who are mostly coming from families living under the poverty level. The cordial relationship among the teachers, Christian and Muslim, can be a remarkable example for the students to nurture the values of conscience, competence, compassion, commitment, in the spirit of reconciliation across cultural and religious boundaries.

Nurturing good relationships and creating an environment where good example is conducive to peace is the Jesuit way of proceeding in the Pakistani context. We have learned from Saint Peter that God does not show favoritism (Acts 10:34). Charles de Foucauld and Louis Massignon, whom the Jesuit pioneers in Pakistan viewed as inspiring figures, taught the same lesson.

● URL: <http://www.jcapsj.org/?s=islam>



In the company of the artists

Gustav Schörghofer, SJ
Province of Austria

Nowadays there is a widespread notion that the Church and art no longer have anything to do with each other. However, this notion is wrong. It is based on the presupposition that the Church is the same as the clergy. Indeed, for most members of the clergy,

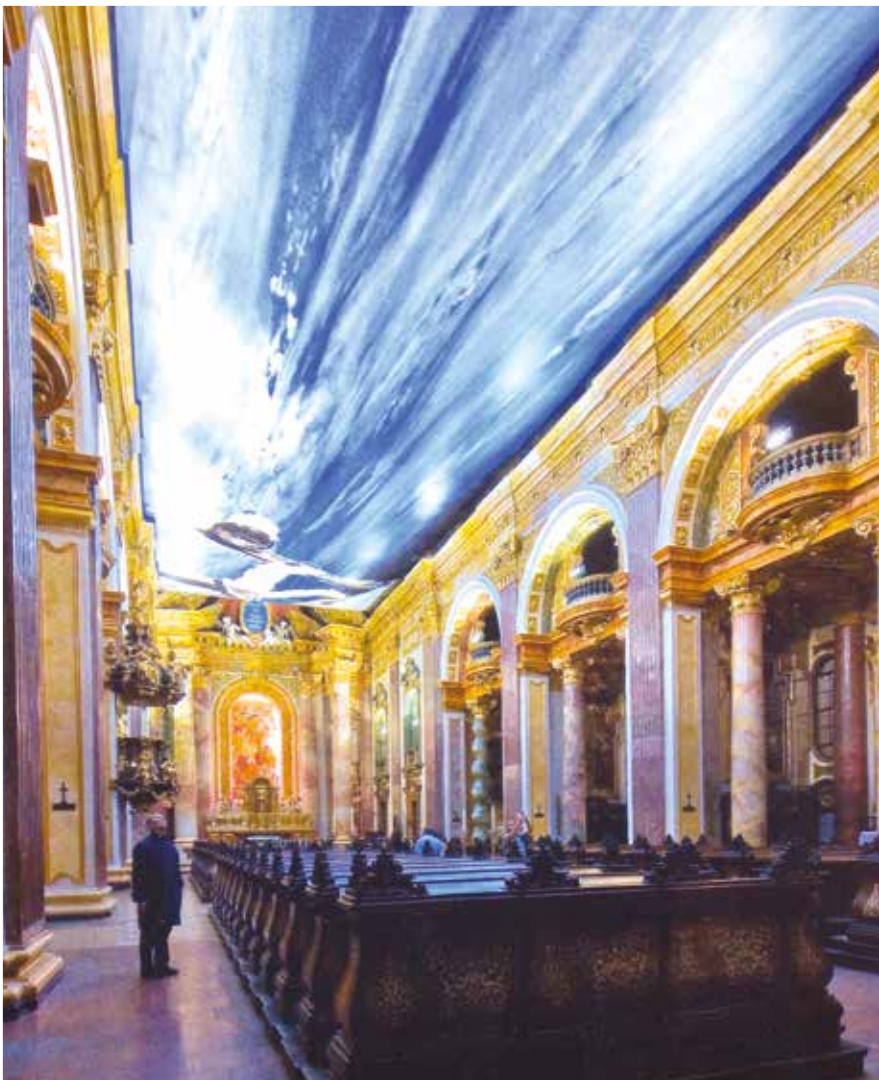
contemporary art has no significance. It is neither a source of inspiration for them nor an essential part of their lives. However, when the Church is understood as the community of the baptized, I come to the conclusion that art is meaningful to many people. For

many it is a life companion. Many find comfort in it. For many it provides the opportunity to give shape to what moves them, fulfills them and even torments them. Modern and contemporary art have much more to do with what moves the baptized in this day



and age than is usually thought. Not only does it open a path to God, but also a path with God towards the people and into the world. This is also the art form of the youth. It owes much to their creative abilities, their courage and their non-conformity.

In the late 19th century, at the beginning of modern art in Europe, a profound decision was made. The artists – who were almost all men at the time – turned their backs on the earlier image compositions. They no longer painted Biblical stories, the images of saints, the traditional Christian topics. A statement by Vincent Van Gogh in a letter to his brother Theo illustrates this: “I am not



an admirer of Gauguin’s *Christ in the Garden of Olives* (...). If I remain here I wouldn’t try to paint a Christ in the Garden of Olives, but in fact the olive picking as it’s still seen today, and then giving the correct proportions of the human figure in it, that would perhaps make people think of it all the same.” (*Letters to Theo*, # 820). Paul Cézanne, another precursor of Modernism, also turned away from Biblical contents and painted landscapes, still life, and ordinary people. Both of them, van Gogh and Cézanne, were deeply religious Christians. What was striking about their shift towards the concrete world, to “the olive picking as it is seen,” was the preference for simple things and common people. This trend would become even stronger as time went on.

A decisive moment for modern art came around the 1920s. Many important choices were made at this time that would carry great weight for art throughout the whole century. Kurt Schwitters made the first paintings with waste materials in the style of “Merz” art invented by him. The Polish-Russian painter Kazi-





mir Malevich broke away from any form of figurative representation and created the “icon” of abstract art with his *Black Square on White Canvas*.

This shift to what is thrown away, to waste and garbage that took place in Kurt Schwitter’s art is remarkable. Used and thrown away materials had never before received such attention in the history of art. They had never been considered worthy of art. Kurt Schwitter’s art had an enormous impact on the work of later artists. To this day, many artists celebrate in their works the poetry of simple things. Moreover, what is true for the appreciation of things is true also for the appreciation of people.

The 20th century is full of works of art that look at the world of plain, poor, previously ignored people. The work of Käthe Kollwitz must be mentioned here. Or those two great photography albums that were created at the end of the 20th century: *In the American West* by Richard Avedon, and *Roma* by Josef Koudelka. Many films also follow the shift towards hitherto unnoticed things and people. An example of this is Terrence Malik’s film *A Hidden Life*.

The second great innovation in modern art, the development of abstraction, became particularly influential after the catastrophe of World War II. Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni, Yves Klein, the group ZERO, Mark Rothko, Agnes Martin are worth mentioning here. In the emptiness, in the nothingness after the great catastrophe, this art brought new opportunities to open up to what comforts us in the silence. It is an art that teaches us to be quiet so we can be receptive to the word of good will.

These few references show us clearly that many works by 20th century artists and current artists stem from a spirit that is surprisingly akin to the demeanor of Jesus Christ, as described by Paul in the letter to the Church in Philippi: “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” (Phil 2: 5-11)

The works of artists of the Society of Jesus are also made fruitful by the same spirit. I would like to recall particularly the wonderful work by Giovanni Poggeschi, SJ. The apostolate is also made fruitful by meeting artists and engaging with them, as we arrange for in Vienna at three different locations: the Jesuit church in the city center; the *JesuitenFoyer* art gallery in the 13th district; and the *Konzilsgedächtniskirche* (Church in memory of the Council) of the Lainz-Speising parish. All of this is inspired by the spirit of the Gospel and also by the spirit that today animates the four *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus.

Translated by Elliot Jensen

● URL: <https://jesuiten.at/english/>
<https://jesuitenkirche-wien.at/>



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The UAPs are inspiring...

...and they can inspire the youth in Myanmar

Titus Tin Maung, SJ
Myanmar Mission

After the Ignatian long retreat in 2000, our novice master told us that we had become more human. I personally took his words literally. I considered

it an affirmation of me having done the retreat well. My self-image, God-image and general worldview have changed ever since. A keen interest

in Ignatian spirituality silently grew in me over the years. It provided me a liberating path, to walk upon and to unleash my fullest potential as a

person. A Jesuit is a sinner, but is nonetheless loved and called by God, to take part in God's unceasing creation endeavor in the world. This perennial Jesuit insight has remained lodged deep in my memory.

Dreaming that more may discover the Ignatian path to God, my super-ego let almost no opportunity slip away. Soon after my priestly ordination, I agreed to conduct Ignatian retreats for youth and religious of different congregations, group-sizes and ages. The number of retreats has grown to almost 400 during the past three years. Adapting the Ignatian retreat has always been essential. Preached retreats, rather than individually directed ones, have often been more affordable for most in the local context of Myanmar. In any case, the basic theme of any preached Ignatian retreat covers the "sinner-but-loved" element. Sometimes, I offer a little taste of the respective theme of each week of the Exercises, in small doses, to middle-aged religious in their annual six-day or eight-day retreats.

In the midst of these activities, nothing has delighted me more than reading the first *Universal Apostolic Preference* of the Society of Jesus: grounding people in the Spiritual Exercises and discernment. Just a few months before the announcement of the UAPs, my proposal to pursue a course in Ignatian spirituality had been approved by the Superior of the Myanmar mission. A sense of confirmation ran through my spine as I read the first UAP. My personal acquaintance with Ignatian spirituality has largely been through my long years of Jesuit formation and my annual eight-day retreat. Finding myself now exploring Ignatius' abundant spiritual heritage at Jesuit College of Spirituality in Melbourne, Australia, has been nothing less than

a divine Providence. Half way through the course, I now realize that my knowledge of the rich Ignatian tradition has been but minimal.

I am currently dreaming with more excitement. I cautiously envision that the depth of knowledge of Ignatian tradition should equip me with creative flexibility, in putting more people on the Ignatian path to God. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. I have taken some initial steps in my journey to the dreamed land of Ignatian spirituality. Magis is a magic word that keeps me smiling along this personal spiritual journey.

Magis has also been a pathway to the hearts of Myanmar youth, too. I have had the privilege of playing a supportive role in the birthing of the Magis programme in the golden land of Myanmar. Myanmar Mission of the Society of Jesus (MMSJ) held its first national Magis program in 2019. About 120 youths across the 16 dioceses actively participated. Besides Catholic young people, a Muslim boy, a Buddhist girl and a few Christians of other denominations also joined. During the program, the participants encountered a leprosarium, the handicapped, an orphanage, and the garbage collectors in town; they also undertook a pilgrimage. The guided daily examination of conscience after their respective activities has helped the participants in becoming more conscious not only of themselves, but of those less fortunate people around them. Many have learned to be more







appreciative of the gift of life and nature through the program. In response to Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, the group of young people from Magis Myanmar has planted thousands of trees. This may have been like a drop in the ocean; yet a significant drop nonetheless. Instilling a consciousness of nature in the mind of our youth is the core of the matter here.




Magis has truly been an effective tool with which the Myanmar Mission of the Society should continue to nudge the hearts of many more local young people. It is definitely an essential way of accompanying youth who have long been deprived of creative human formation programs, due to the oppressive political system of their country. For MMSJ, to be close to the poor is to be close to the youth.

These lack a good educational system, economic opportunity and political literacy. Through the Magis program, MMSJ will touch the hearts and stimulate the minds of many more young people. Of this I am hopeful, and I'm willing to play a part.

Doing or supporting all the above activities with the UAPs in mind, life has been much richer for me as

a young Jesuit. The UAPs have truly unearthed the original richness of Ignatian vision and spirituality; they have not only provided me with new eyes to look at the world, but also with concrete steps to move toward it.

● URL: <http://jcapsj.org/?s=Myanmar>



It is my desire that at the heart of this Ignatian year we would hear the Lord calling us, and we would allow him to work our conversion inspired by the personal experience of Ignatius.

Arturo Sosa, SJ

Letter from the Superior General to the whole Society
27 September 2019

Ignatius



Seeing all things anew

An invitation to the "Ignatian Year"

Pascual Cebollada, SJ
Coordinator of the Ignatian Year Committee,
General Curia, Rome





The “*Camino Ignaciano*” (Ignatian Way) was designed several years ago in order to recreate the journey made by Íñigo from his house in Loyola to Manresa in 1522. Today, it is open to anyone wishing to follow the footsteps of the “pilgrim” in the North of Spain.

For Íñigo, it had all begun a year earlier. On May 20th 1521, he was gravely wounded in the legs while defending the castle of the city of Pamplona from the French. Taken to Loyola and in danger of dying, he spent several months convalescing until making a full recovery. As we know, God touched his heart through the religious literature he was reading: soon Íñigo’s household began to notice a change within him, sensing a deep psychological shift. It was genuine. In consequence, Íñigo decided to abandon his former way of life and go as a penitent on pilgrimage to Jerusa-

lem. In February 1522, taking hardly a thing with him, he left for Barcelona from where he planned to set sail for the Holy Land. However, before arriving at the Mediterranean coast, he decided to spend a few quiet days in the town of Manresa. He remained there until February 1523, nearly 11 months, a period that would prove decisive for his conversion.

In Manresa, he acknowledged that “all things seemed new” to him. Thus, his initial transformation in Loyola was consolidated. This is why, remembering Ignatius the Pilgrim some 500 years later, we chose the motto, “Seeing all things anew in Christ.” Throughout his life, Ignatius sought to walk in the footsteps of Christ, his Lord, the one he had discovered deep within, and whom he would help so many others to know, love and follow through the Spiritual Exercises.

Now, the Society of Jesus is offering the Society and all its friends and supporters, an opportunity for profound personal renewal inspired by the experience of our founder. A return to topics such as the spiritual journey, reconciliation, spiritual conversation, discernment, Ignatian and Jesuit identity and history, vocations and their promotion among the young, the mission to evangelise... will help us to recognise the work of God throughout history and up until the present day. The “Ignatian Year,” in particular will focus on two realities, conversion and poverty, as the springboard for evangelisation. This is what happened to Ignatius of Loyola, who, stripped of his attachments, allowed himself to be led, without pre-empting, by the Spirit. He lived a poverty connected to the poor and humble Christ, and linked simultaneously to Christ’s friends, the poor. This poverty we live out today in communi-



been working towards helping to facilitate these attitudes. The goal is for this conversion to be experienced in every sphere influenced by Ignatian spirituality: schools, universities, spirituality centres, drop-in centres, refuges offering hospitality and help to migrants and refugees, in parishes and shrines, through literature and the arts, the mass media, etc. Naturally, we are open to suggestions for organising all sorts of activities, so long as they do not distract from the main aim: helping people to benefit from Ignatius's interior "*camino*" between Loyola and Manresa and, subsequently, Rome. This is so that everyone, adapting the *camino* to their individual circumstances may, as the Spiritual Exercises ask, "draw profit" from it. Action should match contemplation in equal measure: our internal self-reflection matching our outward observation. Understanding how Ignatius let go as he followed Christ will help us to truly grasp the newness of all we experience post-conversion as an experience lived with Jesus.

If the beginning of the Year will recall Íñigo's battle wounds (on May 20th 2021) and its closure celebrate the date of the pilgrim's birth in heaven (July 31st 2022), the middle part will mark the 400th anniversary of St Ignatius's canonisation (March 12th 2022). St. Francis Xavier, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Isidore the Labourer and St. Philip Neri, were also canonised on the same day as Ignatius. This celebration will therefore be a chance to reflect on holiness in the Church and the ways God has led, since time immemorial, those who have put themselves in the line of fire for him, as, indeed, He continues to do today.

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: jesuits.global

ty, institutionally and globally, evaluating how best we may combat injustice against people and nature. Since 2019, the Society has advocated implementing these steps through the *Universal Apostolic Preferences*, which are widely discussed throughout this *Yearbook*.

The Ignatian Year celebrations do not seek to add any new elements to the *Preferences* but rather that the year's activities should be aligned to them.

Since 2017, several groups, especially in Spain and in Rome, have



Grace, change, freedom, mission

Key words on the multiple paths of conversion

James Hanvey, SJ
Secretary for the Service of Faith
General Curia



Whether we are born Christian or have become Christian, conversion is a central experience for everyone with a living faith. There would be no Christian community without it. In whatever way conversion actually happens, in a sudden moment or quietly and gradually over time, as event or process, it changes a life. There will be a new direction, energy and purpose. There will be a sense of peace and integrity in living the reality of faith, which does not diminish over time, even under the pressure of opposition. In many ways, “the ordinary” can remain but, somehow, we inhabit it in another way. The one thing that all “conversions” have in common is



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an encounter with the living reality of Christ. In this sense, conversion is always a turning to him.

Dimensions of conversion

Even though it may take many different forms, every genuine experience of conversion will reflect some common dimensions.

First, it will be experienced as a *grace*, that is, something that is given and has not come directly from ourselves and our own desires no matter how well intentioned. Of course, we will all experience many changes in our lives, some we have wanted and initiated, others not sought but which circumstances have made necessary.

With conversion, however, we recognise something different. Even when it is mediated, it will always have the character of something that comes to us from another. There will be a sense that we are “summoned”. At the same time, though it may have its own force and logic, genuine conversion cannot be imposed; rather, it invites our “fiat”, our assent and consent.

This means that in the Christian tradition, conversion will always have the structure of a relationship. It must entail the affect and the will as well as the intellect. It is more than a “eureka” moment of insight, no matter how momentous and original this may be. In this respect, as Fr. Pedro Arrupe says, it not only has the power of falling in love, but staying in love, and letting that love become the *raison d’être* of one’s life. Far from removing us from the world, such experiences of conversion open up another way of living in it more intensely and appreciatively.

Notice how, with all those we meet in Scripture or in the subsequent history of the Church, conversion is never a call to a solitary journey. It is the entry into a community, which is itself the fruit of conversion.

Second, conversion effects a *change*.

In this way, the reality of conversion becomes incarnate in the circumstances of a life; it becomes a shaping force, giving a new sense of purpose and direction. As such, it reaches out to other lives and has an effect on them. Over time it becomes more stable by building up new patterns of acting and relating. It becomes a “habit” or “a way of proceeding”. Nevertheless, conversion is never just a change

of behaviour it also needs to become interior transformation: a new way of perceiving and understanding, a new mind and heart.

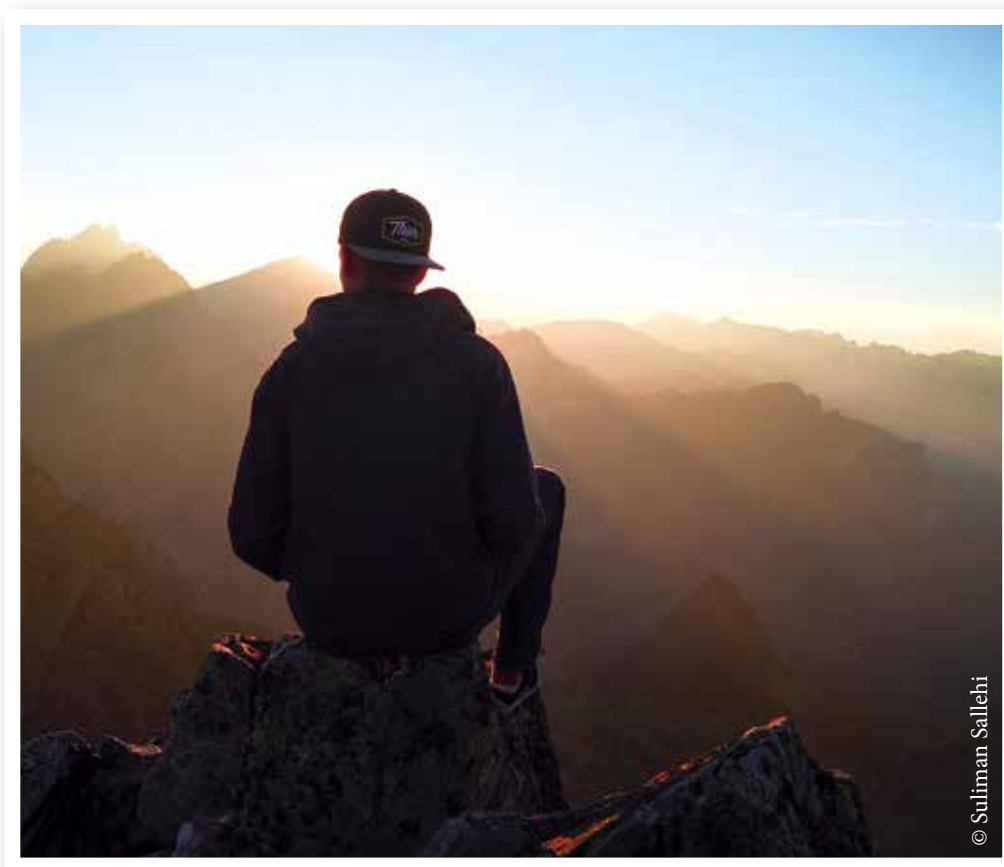
As well as transforming an existing culture, conversion often has the power to generate a new one. In doing so, it becomes an effective grace for others by creating the relationships, the cultures or environments through which others may discover and embrace redemptive and generative change in their own lives and communities.

The third dimension of conversion becomes recognisable from the two we have just identified. In fact, it can



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be seen as the first fruit or foundation of the change itself: **it is freedom.**

Conversion is grounded in freedom which is the presupposition of all authentic change. The very fact that God refuses to coerce us is already the disclosure of our own freedom. Freedom can only exist and have meaning in relationships not in isolation. The grace of freedom is that it lives in, from, and for, others. At its deepest level, the conversion which Christ calls us to, is a conversion into his own freedom. It expresses itself in the un-restricted offer of self-gift for the good of the other: love. Perhaps this is the deepest conversion of all. In that sense, it is the reality into which we are always striving to enter, the grace that we are always seeking but can only be discovered when we take the risk of self-offering.

The fourth dimension of conversion is mission. All the moments of conversion in Scripture confer some sort of mission. In mission all the dimensions of conversion that we have been exploring come into play. Mission is that which is conferred; it is not something that belongs to us but is given by another who has the power to send us. Every Christian life is mission-shaped for it participates in Christ's mission. Indeed, Christ himself receives his mission from the Father and he lives it in and through the Holy Spirit.

In whatever way we are called to realise our Christian-mission-identity, we will always be on this road of conversion, discovering anew in every circumstance of our lives, what it means for us and how we are called to realise it. For this reason, too,

conversion as event and as process will require discernment: that attentive search, with the mind and heart of faith, to find within our relationships and our circumstances how best to serve God who is offering the healing life of the Kingdom to every woman and man, to all created things.

Conversion for the Ignatian Year

Why then are we focussing on the theme of conversion for the Ignatian Year? Because it is a permanent call to recognize its grace, to be open to change, to exercise our freedom, to make our mission more fruitful.

● URL: <http://www.sjweb.info/sof/>

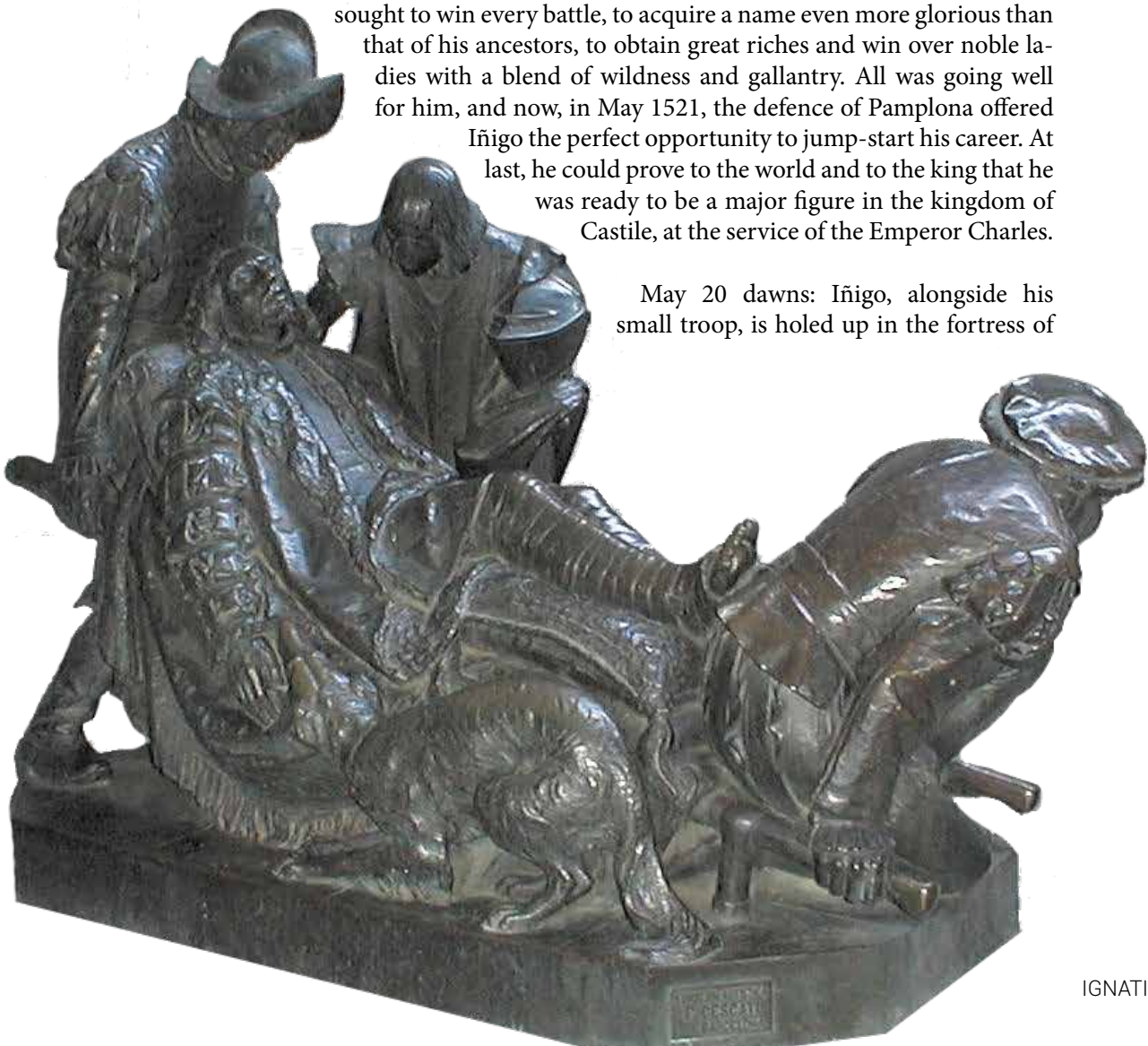
Iñigo of Loyola in Pamplona

An end – and a beginning?

Abel Toraño Fernández, SJ
Province of Spain

Iñigo was a little under 30. He had devoted his teenage years and twenties to preparing thoroughly for a life as a great knight, spurred on by hopes of attaining glory and the admiration of his peers. After learning to mingle with the most important noblemen of the kingdom, his ambition was limitless: He sought to win every battle, to acquire a name even more glorious than that of his ancestors, to obtain great riches and win over noble ladies with a blend of wildness and gallantry. All was going well for him, and now, in May 1521, the defence of Pamplona offered Iñigo the perfect opportunity to jump-start his career. At last, he could prove to the world and to the king that he was ready to be a major figure in the kingdom of Castile, at the service of the Emperor Charles.

May 20 dawns: Iñigo, alongside his small troop, is holed up in the fortress of



Pamplona, still resisting the French. Yet virtually the whole city has already surrendered, without a fight. To carry on seems futile, nay, utter folly: a bare handful of loyal soldiers holding their positions against the well-equipped 12 000-strong army laying siege to the fortress. The tiny troop holds out for as long as possible. Inigo has persuaded them not to surrender by arguing that they should stay loyal to the King, serve the Crown, fight with pride and never lose honour. Iñigo barely spares a thought for the suffering the fight may bring nor for the lives possibly lost. Nothing can brake his ambition: the time is ripe to dazzle the world

with the chivalric code of honour he is willing to risk his life for.

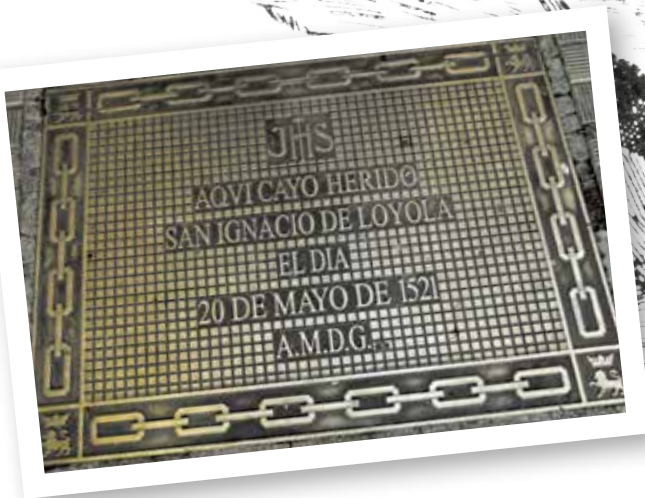
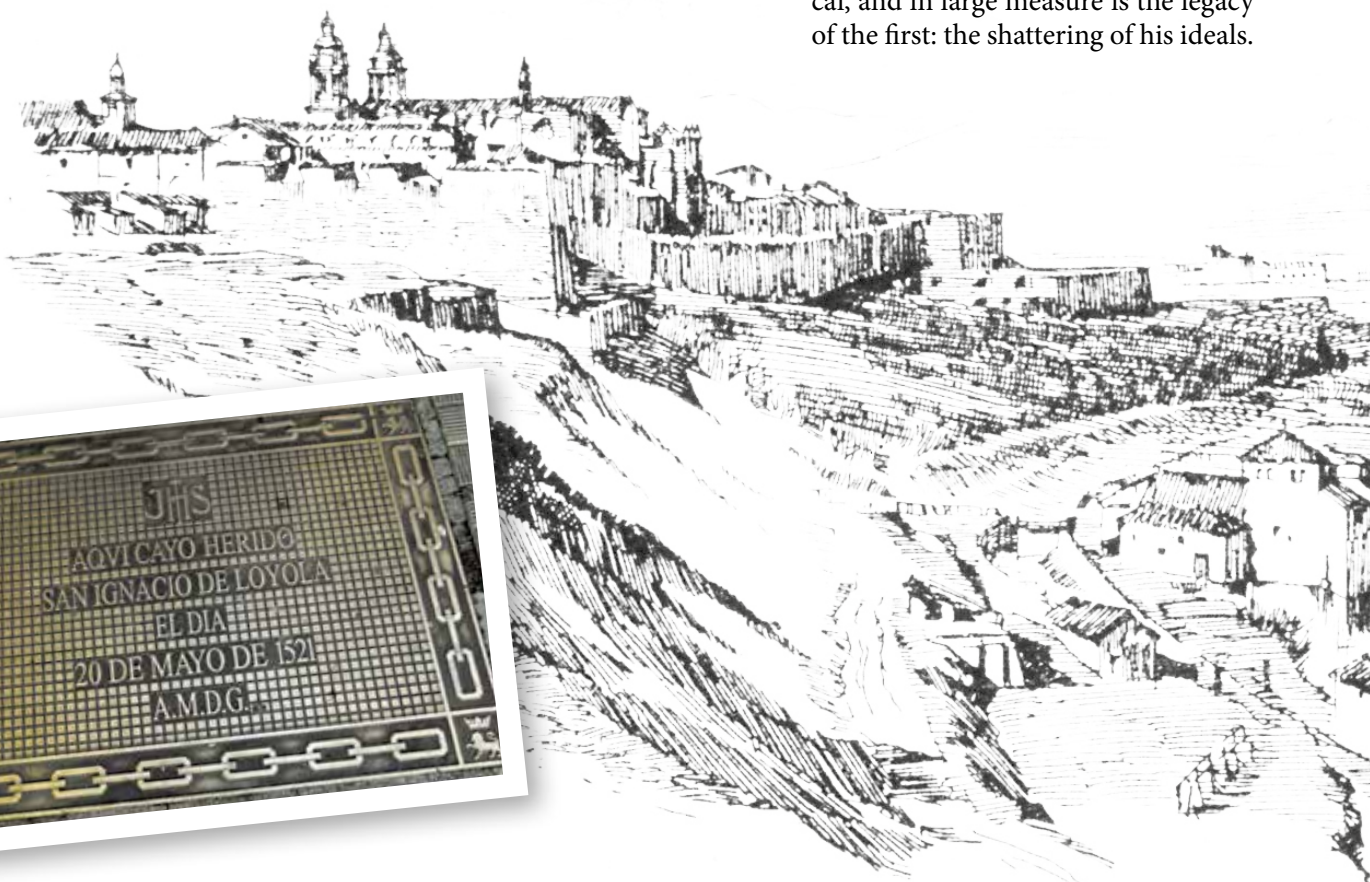
The day advances, the troops slacken, casualties mount up. The soldiers in the small fortress cannot handle much more. With every charge of the enemy, the city walls begin to crack, until a shot of cannonball sails through, shattering the legs of the young Guipuzcoan. He collapses, half dead. The battle reaches an end. The French have won. Iñigo has failed.

Thus we start the Ignatian Year commemorating the anniversary of a defeat, of a failure. In every life, there are times when the only certainty is that something is ending, and no one can

guess what lies ahead. At such times nothing is within our grasp, only emptiness. All that was once fought for has fallen apart. There is no way back, leaving us gravely wounded, without any meaningful prospects to give life meaning. That was Iñigo, at the end of May 1521.

Iñigo's first fracture is the most visible, that of his body. As a young man of high rank, he took care of his looks, his hair, his clothing. He liked to delight others with his youthful, manly, strong and attractive appearance. But that wretched cannonball had nearly yanked one of his legs off, leaving the other badly injured. His recovery was a struggle: In the end his legs were saved, but he would never recover his earlier good looks. For the rest of his life, he would limp and learn to bear this.

The second fracture is psychological, and in large measure is the legacy of the first: the shattering of his ideals.





Little by little as he convalesces in his family home in Loyola, Iñigo realises that it is not only his body that is broken. For how can he be a knight and perform great feats, given his physical handicap? How can he hope to seduce and captivate “ladies” of rank

now that he is so obviously ugly? How can he retain his youthful, knightly ideals when age has visited him prematurely, leaving its mark in his physical wounds and scars? He cannot fool himself. Nothing will be the same ever again.

The third and deepest damage is to his identity. How can Iñigo understand who he truly is now that both his body and ideals are shattered? Should he thenceforth be resigned to a mediocre life, crushed by his memories, yearning for what was not to be or simply never happened? Would the acclaim of others for his courage and boldness be enough or far too little to satisfy a man who once longed to conquer the world? What would remain of his heroism, his pride, that steely determination to make every kind of conquest?

In Pamplona, the journey has scarcely begun. What is obvious is his failure. What is undeniable are his wounds. Little did he imagine that God would, in his own way, use those chinks in his armour opened through battle to draw Iñigo close to him: in silence, giving much food for thought, through the healing of other, deeper wounds, and by revealing his mercy through the face of Jesus, the only Lord truly worth serving.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://ignatius500.org>





Availability and welcoming of the newness that comes from God

That is how Ignatius experienced conversion!

Patrick Goujon, SJ
Centre Sèvres, Paris



How can one fail to be moved, on entering the *camerette* of Ignatius in Rome, by the contrast between the tiny table at which he worked and the intensity of his desire to travel the world! With neither sadness nor resignation, he had accepted, however, living in Rome to write the Constitutions: this was the path Ignatius chose

so he might respond better to the love of God. The ardent soul behind the words *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* was confined to just a few square metres. Ignatius's spiritual pedagogy allows us to grasp exactly what permanent conversion meant to him. It was based on three attitudes which each of us is asked to coordinate however suits us

best: being available to God first, trusting in our ability to make progress, and displaying a calm resolve.

In Ignatius, the greatest resolve of all is to make oneself totally available to God. His small group of companions having been founded, Ignatius agrees to being elected

as Superior General. Now the Society, after being recognised by the pope, needs constitutions. With the help of his secretary, Juan de Polanco, Ignatius governs the nascent Society as new questions arise for the first time. The Society of Jesus does not develop smoothly, as though following a CEO's business plan: It adjusts to circumstances and new demands as and when they arise, for instance, for the foundation of colleges. But Ignatius tenaciously follows through on the insight he received right at the start: to remain open to the turn of events. This focus on being available to God's will first and foremost is fundamental for Ignatius and is particularly obvious in his *Diary*.

His *Spiritual Diary*, written between 1544-1545 during his stay in Rome, reveals how Ignatius wrestled with his conscience so that an ever new understanding of and response to the work of God might be evident in his decisions. Subject to bouts of tears, Ignatius even refused to accept that which the mystical tradition considered a divine gift. Instead, he discovered he had a thought "which penetrated to my very soul." He wrote on March 14th, 1544, "How much reverence and submission should be shown on going to Mass when I had to pronounce the name of God Our Lord, etc. No tears were to be sought, but this submission and reverence." Ignatius does not fight whatever is going to happen. He just acknowledges it is what it is and adjusts to it. His hunger for an ever-greater God who is continuously opening up new horizons takes root in his personal experience. This nurtures within him the ability to welcome the newness of the Kingdom that depends solely on God, who invites us always to cooperate with him. "Ignatius was fol-



lowing the spirit, he was not running ahead of it," Jerome Nadal observed of him.

Conversion means welcoming the work of God rather than taking a decision to conquer oneself, one's passions and sins. Ignatius vehemently reminds Francis Borgia of this when Borgia's admiration of the Jesuits leads him to desire to join the Society. Perceiving that his correspondent was upset by his internal obstacles, Ignatius replies plainly: "For my part I am convinced that I am nothing but an obstacle, both earlier and later." However, this statement of weakness does not in any way feed despair. God's mercy comes first, bringing joy. That is why Ignatius directs his correspondent towards the only thought that counts. In a letter written to Borgia at the end of 1545, he

encourages him to "experience humility and charity profoundly." No one could fail to recognise in this what the Exercises say about personal life reform: "For let each one think that he will benefit himself in all spiritual things in proportion as he goes out of his self-love, will and interest." (SpEx, 189). Conversion means "going out" of oneself, with love and humility.

A heart that rests on its foundation, which is God's work of mercy, allows itself to be led by the dynamic of the Spirit. The mission of the Society, which for Ignatius means helping one's neighbour principally through the preaching of the word of God and spiritual conversation, reaches its fullness first and foremost through the testimony of one's own life. This implies knowing how to correct each other, with charity, just as in a letter in 1546 Ignatius exhorts the companions he has sent to the Council of Trent. The mission is a training in perseverance, a key word in the Constitutions. It is the manifestation of that serene resolution to set forth on the journey and keep going, and the ability to handle any difficulties one may encounter in the quest for goodness. Conversion does not imply straining towards that which we wish to acquire, even when this may be the perfection of a virtue. It is rather the patience to put obstacles to one side and to welcome the newness of the gift of God, who is unpredictable and not defined by either our will or our efforts.

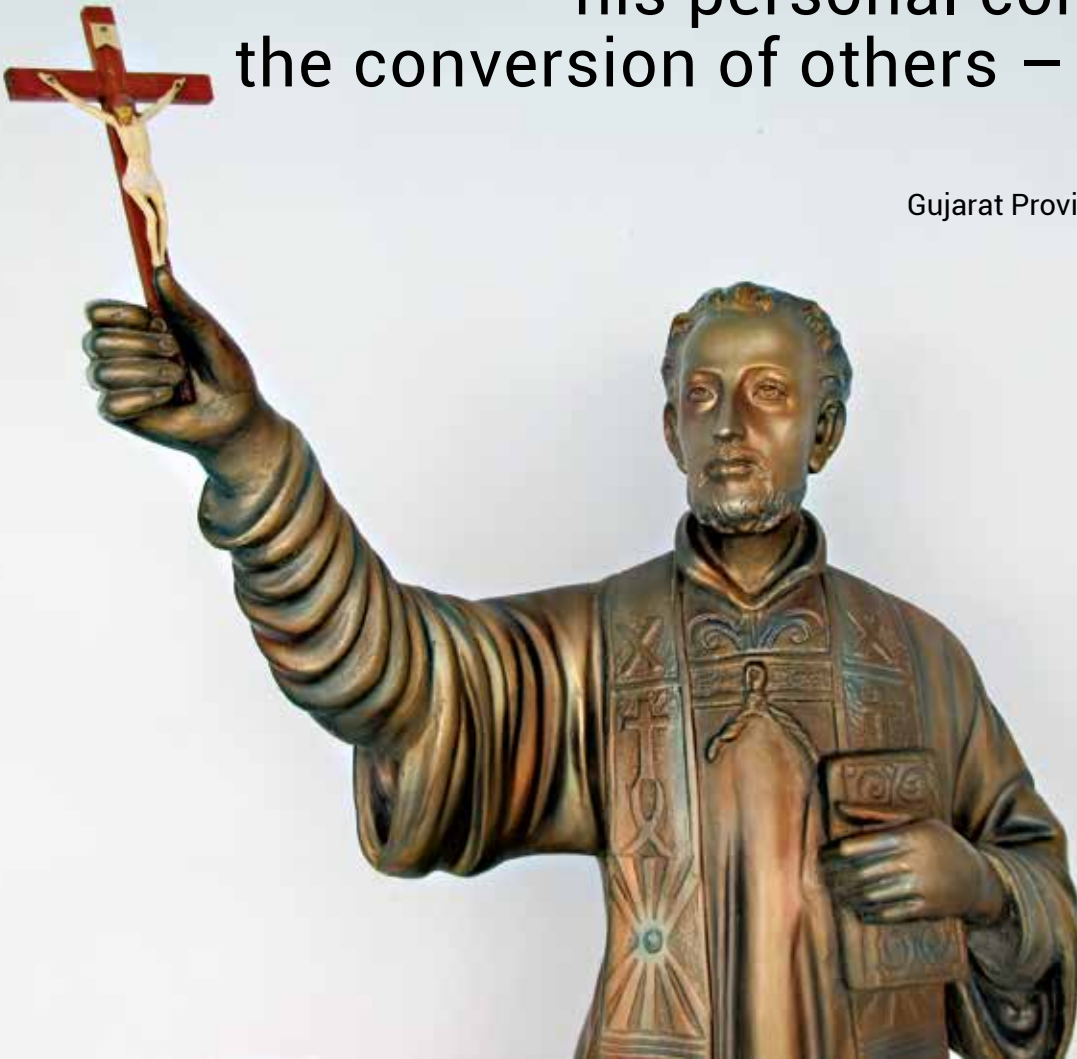
Ignatius sensed an ever-greater God. Receiving everything from on high gives life down here a shape that is ever new and directed towards God with purpose and joy.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://www.revue-christus.com/>

Francis Xavier: his personal conversion and the conversion of others – An interplay

Paul Rolphy Pinto, SJ
Gujarat Province and Gregorian University



It all began in 1528 when Ignatius of Loyola came into the life of Francis Xavier in Paris. Francis was pursuing a purpose that was considered normal at the time for a young man from an aristocratic family. He wanted to acquire a degree from the prestigious University of Paris, hoping one day to procure the bish-

opric of Pamplona. Ignatius laid his eyes on this ambitious good man and persisted for over a period of three years in order to make him embrace a transcendent ideal – to live and die for Christ and not for oneself. The fire was kindled and it never ceased to burn until his last breath.

Apparently, Francis did not feel the need for a conversion as nothing was seriously wrong in his life. This made Ignatius' task really difficult. Through his intervention, God brought about the seemingly impossible conversion in Francis. The spiritual exercises he made, accompanied by Ignatius, were decisive. He

was a champion of high jump at the university. During the “exercises,” he tied up his arms, hips, and feet so tight that they risked amputation.

He then no more sought personal glory. The exercises touched him so deeply that God’s ambitions become his own.

The Society of Jesus was founded chiefly for the defence and propagation of the faith. Francis, knowing the mind of Ignatius, ran fervently, and not in slow motion, to help neighbours and aid their salvation when he was sent to the East. The passage where Francis speaks of his arms becoming exhausted with the

baptism of multitudes has become legendary. But was his evangelising mission limited only to the saving of “souls”, lest they be damned if not ministered baptism?

Francis did not stop at baptism, but facilitated the grace of baptism to take effect in the lives of the



baptised through a corresponding change of life. He wanted those who came in contact with the person of Christ to be free from all enslaving human conditions, both internal (such as alcoholism, treachery, promiscuity...) and external. When the vulnerable Paravas of the East Coast of India came

under the attack of Badagas from north and were dying of hunger in the rocky islands of Cape Comorin, Francis risked everything, including his life, and ran to their aid. He protested with the king of Portugal

when his unjust captains exploited the poor pearl fishers.

Conversion for Francis, as he had personally experienced, is an encounter with the living Christ, who transforms the whole person. This holistic view lies beneath the prayer he composed for the Conversion



of the Gentiles (circa 1548). He affirms that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. The prayer concludes, “grant that they too may come to know Jesus Christ ... who is our salvation, life, and resurrection, through whom we have been saved and freed...”

We also read in his letters that Francis approved the destruction of statues of pagan gods and rejoiced at it. This disturbs our present day human and spiritual sensibility. How could a man so deeply touched by the love of Christ bear such an attitude? Didn't the inner faculties of Francis need further healing? They did. Conversion is a work in progress, and not a one-time event. The fire of his initial zeal ablaze fell short of dispelling all shadows from the intellect. Before his first missionary journey from India to Malacca, Francis retreated into the quiet at the tomb of St. Thomas in

Mylapore. While this period contributed to his ongoing conversion, the experience of his second missionary journey to Japan taught him some precious lessons in humility. Here is where Francis let grace touch the grey areas of his understanding. As a result, he did some out-of-the-box thinking. He changed his evangelising strategies. He slowed down. He made greater efforts to understand the other; his culture and religion, before converting him. Francis became willing to enter through the door of the other. As long as the Japanese came to the knowledge of Jesus, he was willing to lay aside his preconceived ideas with regard to conversion. His zeal for souls did not die down. Though the initial blazing flames grew short, the fire of his zeal burned more steadily and intensely.

Francis wanted to enter China for he believed that the conversion

of China would make the conversion of the entire East easier. An expression we can find in his later letters is “opening a way for others.” His initial frantic activity might give the impression that he was going to baptise everyone himself, wanting to be present simultaneously everywhere. Experience taught him that his mission was to make way for others, which in fact he fulfilled, benefiting future missionaries after him.

Francis' personal conversion and the conversion of others influence each other mutually. His personal conversion impelled him to aid the salvation of others and this same purpose became an occasion for his deeper transformation. In his missionary journey, he constantly conquered boundaries, both inner and outer. This has fittingly won him the Sanskrit title *Sant Aniruth* - the boundless.



Conversion in (and of) the history of the Society of Jesus

Let others write your history

Robert Danieluk, SJ

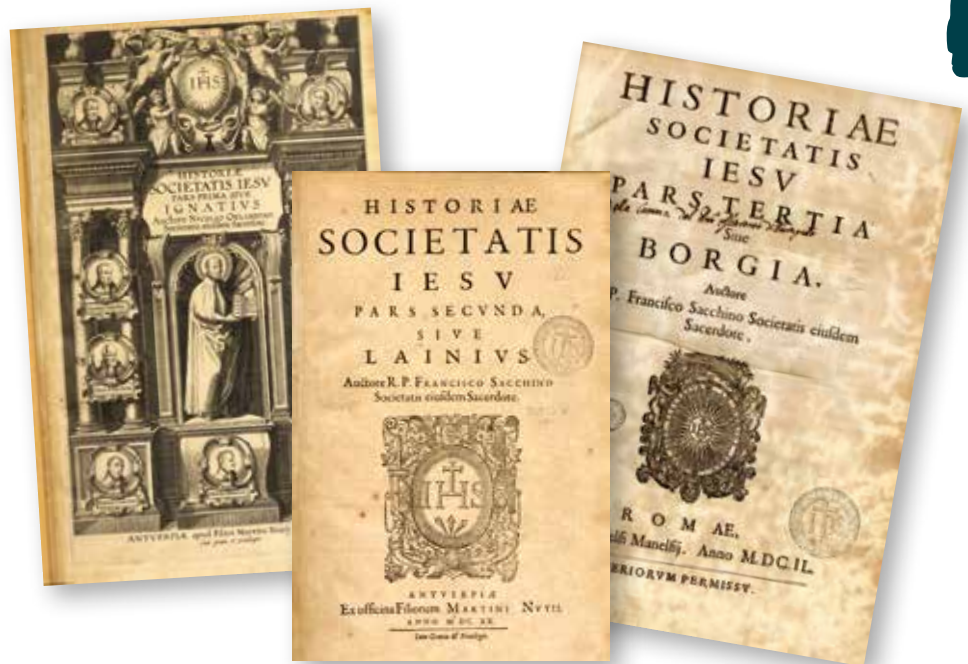
ARSI (Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu)

Conversion, understood as a radical change of life, is part of the history of the Society of Jesus, not only since its origins but even before the Society's foundation. Think of the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, and it is easy to see that the Society was born out of his personal conversion.

Even after the Society's canonical recognition, some events of particular note frequently obliged the Jesuits to have a conversion, i.e., to change a facet of their lives or behaviour and be in some fashion transformed, in order to respond fittingly to the call of the Lord. Consider, for instance, the great missionary openness of those sons of St. Ignatius who, on encountering the ancient, sophisticated cultures of the East, decided to adopt a new strategy for mission in Asia, based on dialogue with local culture, instead of imposing a European version of Christianity.

Other examples could be mentioned, although strictly speaking, a history of the conversion of the Society of Jesus probably does not exist. This article does not aim to redress the gap, but rather to invite reflection

on what we might call "the conversion of the history of the Society." In fact, one of the major changes of the past, both remote and recent, concerns exactly how the history of the Society has been told.



In the beginning, the Jesuits themselves handled the subject. From the Society's earliest years, there were always people aware of the importance of the events leading up to its foundation. In the prologue of the *Autobiography* (Ignatius of Loyola, *Personal Writings*, ed. Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean, Penguin Classics, 1996, 3-7) there is evidence that Fathers Jerónimo Nadal, Juan de Polanco, and Luis Gonçalves da Câmara were persistent in trying to persuade St. Ignatius to tell his complete life story. If, according to Jerónimo Nadal, "this meant truly to found the Society," it was because of the impact his story would have on future generations of Jesuits.

Other chroniclers and witnesses of the Society's initial years and decades, including Polanco, Pedro de Ribadeneira, and Gianpietro Maffei, continued to investigate this history through their writing. Finally, at the start of the XVII century, a monumental history of the Society, entitled *Historia Societatis Iesu*, saw the light of day. Published in eight volumes between 1615 and 1859, it was the work of the official historians of the Society, all of whom were Jesuits. They narrated the early vicissitudes of the Society from its origins until 1633.

During the 19th century, one of the "conversions" of the Jesuits' historiographic endeavours took place. By the end of the century, it had become obvious that the way history was written had changed. It was impossible to continue writing the series in Latin, as had been done at the start, more than 200 years earlier. Therefore, the Superior General, Luis Martín, promoted a long, systematic investigation of historical sources, with the aim of producing a history of each Province, Assistance,





or geographical area where the Society was present, written in modern languages and in accordance with prevailing methodology.

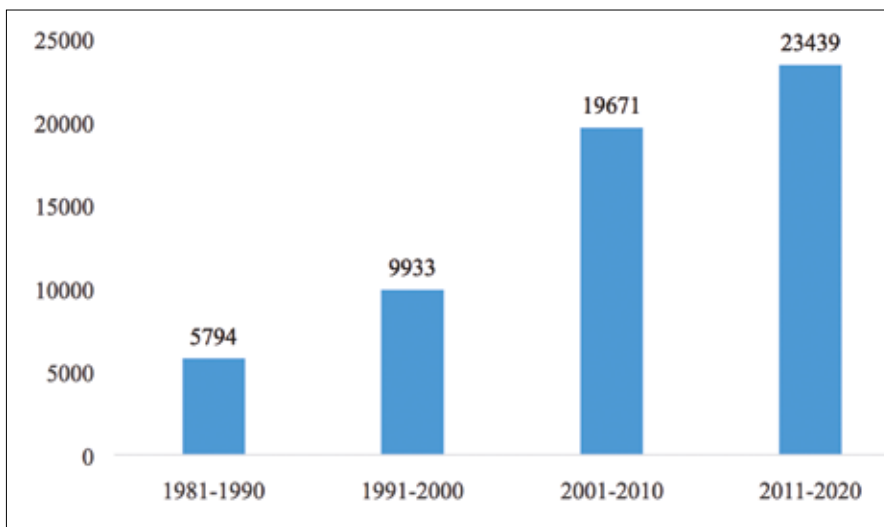
Just as in earlier centuries, one of the aims of this historiography was the formation of Jesuits themselves. Their history was to be read aloud, as indeed happened, in their refectories, a fact that led Fr. Martín to observe that a historian could achieve more for the formation of Jesuits than he could himself as the General of the Society, because while historians' work is read over the course of many years, a General only occasionally writes everyone a circular letter.

The Jesuits' history, together with the news from their most remote mission territories, proved a marvelous channel for making themselves known among their benefactors, friends, and the students of their schools, the source of many missionary vocations, as well as within the Society itself.

Another significant aspect of this history was defending the Society from the attacks and criticisms of its adversaries. As these had existed from the Society's beginning, it was understandable that the Jesuits should defend themselves with the very weapons used to attack them: the pen and the printing press.

But what has conversion to do with all this? And what does it involve? The following three observations will try to answer this question.

First of all, for several decades, matters related to the Society of Jesus have sparked a great interest, and even appear to be in fashion, among many scholars. There is no lack of writers within the Society



Number of studies on “Jesuit” topics published between 1981 and 2020 which are included in the catalogue <https://www.worldcat.org/advancedsearch> (consulted on 29 May 2020).

itself, of course, but these are now a minority.

Second, as these non-Jesuit scholars publish a great deal, the bibliography of the history of the Society is visibly increasing, as the graphic above indicates.

This number of publications presents quite a challenge for interested parties, who must navigate their way through hundreds of books and articles written in several languages. Several joint projects and particular collaborative ventures supply the proof of a true “methodological con-

version.” As their numbers diminish, Jesuits should begin to collaborate more effectively among themselves and also with others.

Third, and most important, the focus of most of this historiography has changed. With a few exceptions, it is no longer about defending or attacking the Society: What interests the majority of scholars today is improving the study of their subjects (whose variety is highly surprising!) by drawing on Jesuit sources. For its part, the Society is trying to keep the doors of its archives and libraries open, taking to heart the words of Pope Francis, who, on 4 March 2019, while announcing the opening of the Vatican’s Apostolic Archives for the period of Pius XII’s pontificate, said, “The Church is not afraid of history but, rather, she loves it, and would like to love it more and better, as God loves it!”

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <http://www.sjweb.info/arsi/>
<http://www.sjweb.info/bibliotheca/>





Awakening, awareness, action, and care

The culture of safeguarding

John Guiney, SJ, and Michelle Hennessy
Project of the Secretariat for Social Justice and Ecology
Promoting a Consistent Culture of Protection (PCCP)

Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent

the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated. The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults.

–Pope Francis, Letter to the People of God, 20 August 2018

The call to conversion

This call from Pope Francis, is a call for conversion. A conversion of





minds in reaffirming our commitment to protection, and a conversion of hearts in placing survivors and those at risk of harm at the forefront of our protection efforts. As we face the challenge to eliminate abuse, we need to understand and address the cultural factors within and without the Church which enable and perpetuate it, and to humbly accompany survivors on the long painful road to healing and reconciliation. To do this is a matter of justice. GC 36 entrusted the promotion of a “consistent culture of protection and safety for minors” within all communities and ministries of the Society of Jesus to our Father General. In response, Fr. General established the Promotion of a Consistent Culture of Protection (PCCP) project within the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES) in 2018.

The call to listen to survivors

For too long the response of the Church was cloaked in silence, secrecy, and denial. This culture of secrecy, silence and avoidance in Church structures and personnel ignites the call to conversion, to inner renewal and understanding of the root causes of abuse. This understanding is important so that we prevent harm and respond with more compassion where abuse occurs. This happens when we listen to survivors. Hearing the voices and stories of survivors moves us to care and protect in a more diligent and effective way.



A cycle of awakening, awareness and action

The PCCP was established to map and assess the culture of protection existing across the Society of Jesus globally today and to identify opportunities to enhance and promote protection. The project recognises that the provinces, regions, and apostolates of the Society of Jesus are travelling the same road towards the implementation of robust policies of protection. Some provinces are more advanced than others. For that reason, the project views the situation in a similar way to the pastoral cycle. It recognises a cycle of ongoing awakening, awareness, and action, where each of these aspects may require greater emphasis at a certain point in time as the protection response evolves. There is a recognition also that mere compliance with a set of protective guidelines of the vulnerable is not sufficient, but a commitment and conversion to accompany them in a truly Gospel way

is needed. A hopeful aspect of this approach is the reawakening and strengthening of awareness of the need for ongoing systematic training and formation.

What are we learning?

The Society is making progress in understanding Jesuit responsibility, accountability, and transparency in relation to protection. The *Universal Apostolic Preferences* have created an opportunity to come together to prioritise care and protection – clearly articulated in the commitment to walk with the excluded and to eliminate all forms of abuse and exploitation. We are encouraged to accept responsibility for how we care for and relate to each other; that we are accountable to those we serve and focus on protecting the minor or survivor rather than the institution; and that we openly and transparently face and challenge issues of abuse. We have observed a healthy shift in recent times to a more survivor-centred approach, which emphasises action in relation to listening, accompanying and promoting justice.

In the initial stages of the project, it is also

emerging that an ongoing proactive and reflective approach is key in effectively translating policies and guidelines into contextually relevant and culturally sensitive practice. Although we are dealing with a global issue, effective local responses are essential. This requires an understanding of cultural factors that enable abuse of power, sex and conscience.

A new way of caring

The Apostolic Letter issued by Pope Francis in March 2019 “On the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons” speaks clearly of a way of caring which calls for a change of heart in seeing, judging, and acting. Those who report abuse are not enemies but friends in need of accompaniment and care. In this way, we are invited – as Church and indeed as the Society of Jesus – to walk a path of conversion. As articulated in 2019 the by theologian Rita Ferrone in the magazine *Commonweal*, we must “enter into a paschal experience, a death of an old way of being and relating and resurrection to a new way of journeying with one another as community and Church.”

● URL: <https://www.sjesjesuits.global/en/index.php/culture-of-protection/>



Walking together or limping along **The role of women and the challenge to the Church**

Patricia Murray, IBVM
Executive Secretary – International Union of Superiors General



Writing this article on the day the Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia* is being launched has particular significance in the light of this topic. Repeatedly Pope Francis has emphasized that the Church cannot be herself without the presence, ministry, input, and vision of women. During the Synod on Amazonia, the role of women in the Church was

a question that continually surfaced. Yet, in parts of the world, it is clear that women are walking away from a church that they experience as hierarchical and clerical. They see that the church is expecting women to be key influencers in their children's faith formation and in faith formation in parishes, yet is failing to give women an official role in relation to

the formulation, development and preaching of the Catholic faith or in being the church's official presence in today's world.

During the synod, many of the bishops acknowledged the absence of women in decision-making and the need for much more effective participation by women since they



bring different and complementary points of view and approaches to every aspect of life. One participant spoke about the church needing men and women to walk together and decide together; otherwise, he said, “we will be limping along.”

On the other hand, in *Querida Amazonia*, Pope Francis speaks about the need to avoid the clericalization of women while acknowledging the creative strength and generosity of women that have often held the Christian community together. The document sees women occupying future positions in ecclesial services that have stability and public recognition. However if a true integral conversion requires us to listen to the cry of Mother Earth and the cry of the poor, among whom women are the most vulnerable, then the feminine needs to be given a central place at the innermost structure of the church. Remembering that “the rebirth of humanity began with a woman” calls for a significant shift in understanding how relationships

and processes are to be developed within the church.

So, what then is the call to conversion asked of the Society of Jesus and individual Jesuits in relation to women at this time in many different ministry contexts? There is a clear need for women’s presence within the Society from grassroots to congregational leadership level, in ways that are authentic, equitable and appropriate. There is a need to really listen to and respect the experience of women and to make space, continually, for their voices to be heard and to influence what is happening. Their voices will vary depending on their life experience, but these different voices, will open up the wisdom of the ages, in situations and contexts known and unknown. Give the voices of women space in schools and universities, in parish and pastoral ministries, in retreat and theology centers. Allow these voices to influence reflection and discernment; to shape the way forward and always give them a name: so often women involved in Church processes are unnamed and become invisible.

Secondly, women religious have increasingly been experiencing themselves as a global community as they



face their vulnerability and fragility together. Small or diminishing numbers, the absence of necessary resources, negligence and past failures in relation to the protection of those most vulnerable have called for a deep humility and created space for conversion and change. Many religious women are living in the place of endings, where they are letting go of things treasured. This is a place of great vulnerability and trust in the providence of God. However, they know that their experience of weakness, confusion, and searching places them among the men and women of their day. Their experience points



to the grace of engaging in honest conversations about fragility and vulnerability. As religious we are often seen as self-sufficient and secure, yet it is only in accepting our limitation and weaknesses as human beings that we truly witness to living as Christ lived. Can members of male congregations engage in such conversations among themselves and with others?

Finally, integral conversion calls for building collaboration partnerships that are mutual and creative. Many creative partnerships exist involving Jesuits and women, reli-

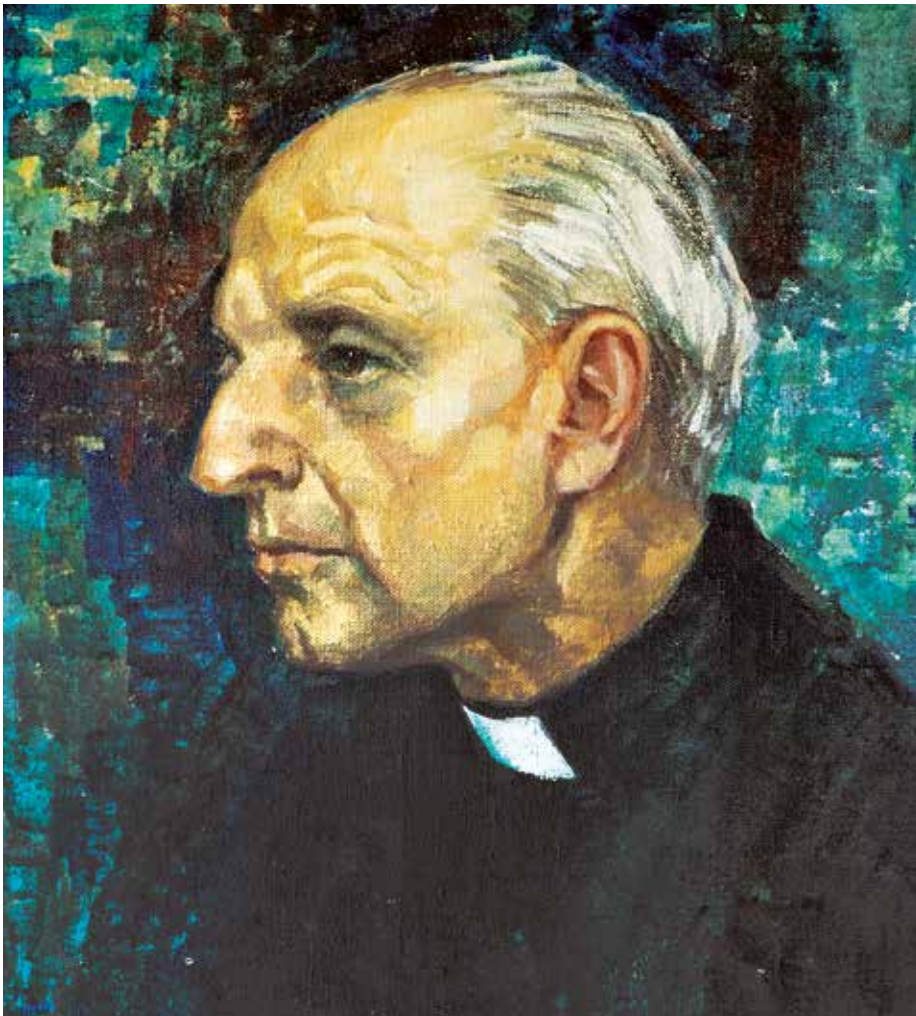
gious and lay, such as Jesuit Refugee Service, Cristo Rey, Fe y Alegría, and Christian Life Communities. It is essential that such partnerships be continually evaluated to insure that they encourage a diversity of perspectives to flourish and are marked by respect and mutuality at every level. Too often women find themselves excluded from initial decision-making but tasked with carrying out decisions already taken. True synodality requires in-depth reflection that includes everyone who is involved at any stage of an initiative in order to discern a common path. The experience of religious

and lay, male and female in new initiatives like Solidarity with South Sudan and Talitha Kum points to a new model of collaboration where no one congregation takes the lead but all are invited to become joiners. This helps to build mutual relationships that enable the gifts of each person and each congregation to flourish and enrich the mission of healing and restoration. In this way, we can begin to walk together and not limp or stumble into the future.

● URL: <http://www.internationalunionsuperiorsgeneral.org>

Pedro Arrupe, a cheerful giver in the field hospital

Yosuke Sakai, SJ
Japan Province



“We did the only thing that could be done in the presence of such mass slaughter: we fell on our knees and prayed for guidance, as we were destitute of all human help.... What could I do? Where to begin? Again, I fell on my knees and implored God’s help. It was then that he helped me in a very special way, not with medications but with a simple and essential idea. We quickly decided to clean the house as best we could and tried to accommodate as many of the sick and wounded as we could possibly fit inside. We were able to take only 150.” (From *Recollections and Reflections of Pedro Arrupe, SJ*)

This was a personal account of Pedro Arrupe with regard to his experience of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. His name became well known in the Jesuit world after World War II. Even young Jorge Bergoglio, then a novice, was inspired by Pedro Arrupe’s telling about the Japanese mission and the Hiroshima atomic bomb when Arrupe, then the Provincial of Japan, visited the novi-

tiate in Córdoba, Argentina, in 1959. Arrupe's telling of his story was a thorough and powerful testimony. It was no wonder that a young and passionate Bergoglio was animated by a desire to go to the Japanese mission.

On 7 August 1945, the day following the bombing, Father Arrupe and the other Jesuits were boldly engaged in giving aid to the wounded and were taking part in relief activities in the burned zone in the city center of Hiroshima. Using his medical skills, but with very limited medical supplies, Arrupe and his company gave treatment to more than 150 people who were brought into the novitiate in the suburb of Hiroshima. The novitiate was in fact transformed into a field hospital.

A field hospital. This is Pope Francis' favored image of the Church, as we know well. Arrupe and his companions embodied mercy in the blasted city of Hiroshima, manifesting goodness in a palpable form when such love and compassion were desperately needed. I suppose it can be said that Pedro Arrupe, when he later served as Superior General, wanted the Society of Jesus to be a field hospital in the world. Arrupe's vision for the Society was that we, Jesuits, could serve the people in a distinct manner. He was confident that faith calls neither for meticulous observance of proposition nor for deskbound discussions, but should be found and should flourish in the midst of the human reality. He encouraged the Jesuits to contemplate the human reality through the eyes of the merciful God and to labor in the spirit of hope. This distinction compels us to go beyond the immediate situation and ourselves. What led Pedro Arrupe to this vision?

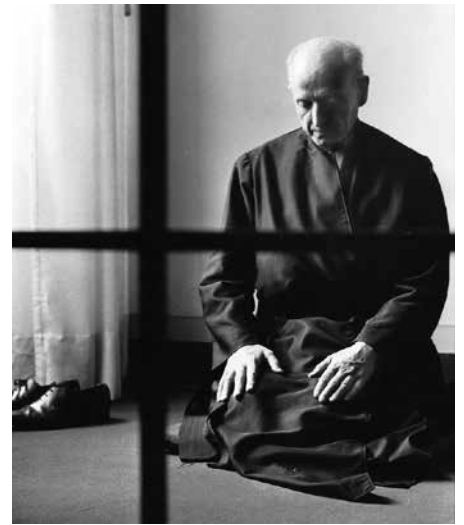






In Hiroshima, Pedro Arrupe felt the magnitude of the groans and pains of the wounded and longed for God's mediation in the midst of that human misery. Almost everything had disappeared in a flash. This was more than an ordinary experience but was for Fr. Arrupe an existential reality that was deeply engraved in his mind and heart. He never forgot this moment. This existential experience, etched on his memory, later produced another fruit in response to the plight of Indochinese refugees. On 14th November 1980, Arrupe announced the birth of the Jesuit Refugee Service. He gave a talk on 6th August 1981, as he visited a refugee camp in Thailand, referring to the situation of the refugees; he said, "This is like Hiroshima."

On both occasions, Father Arrupe was shocked and saddened in the face of misery and agony. Nevertheless, he did not despair as a result of such devastation. Rather, he grappled tenaciously and hopefully with human affliction, and he carried out his mission with cheerfulness and generosity based on his trusting devotion. Fr. Arrupe, feeling a craving for supernatural assistance, celebrated the Mass with the wounded in the novitiate become field hospital, finding in the liturgy that God became most near to those who were there. He proclaimed to them, "*Dominus vobiscum.*"



One of the hallmarks of Ignatian spirituality is finding God in all things, and this entails steadfast and hopeful trust that God is with us no matter where we are and what our situation. This ingrained confidence permeated the heart of Pedro Arrupe. He was able to find God in the most unlikely situations and was convinced of the intervention of God through human engagement and collaboration. Father Arrupe's cheerful and generous heart engendered his famous "incorrigible optimism" and sustained his dynamic and life-giving undertakings.

The Hiroshima experience was, for Pedro Arrupe, a radical awakening. The novitiate-field hospital was the vital venue in which he came to know his true worth as human, Jesuit, and priest. And the rest is history. Arrupe handed over the baton to the next generation of Jesuits and mission partners. We are called to be such cheerful and generous givers in the varied field hospitals to which we have been called to labor together and where we can be sure that our Lord awaits us.

● URL: <https://www.jesuits-japan.org>



He renews all things

The journey of conversion that has led to the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

Frédéric Fornos, SJ
and the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network International Team

When Father Adolfo Nicolás asked us not only to renew the Apostleship of Prayer but also to re-create it from scratch, the request might have seemed unrealistic. But in fact, this task doesn't depend on us because only the Holy Spirit is able to "renew all things," (cf. 2 Cor 5,17). What does

depend on us is our willingness to enter a process of conversion both as individuals and as an institution.

Today, this process of institutional rebuilding, although still continuing in many places, is virtually finished. On June 28th 2019, on

the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we celebrated, along with Pope Francis, and 6000 people representing 56 national delegations and the Eucharistic Youth Movement, the 175th anniversary of the Apostleship of Prayer which is known today as the Pope's World-

wide Prayer Network. Thanks to the internet, thousands of members were able to join the event “live.” It was a good opportunity to review the process of re-creation of the Apostleship that began in 2009 and to evaluate how it has gone so far. However, the re-creation process is still fragile, because it depends, above all else, on our journey of personal conversion.

A long process of conversion

In fact, the restructuring of this ecclesial service, which today is a Pontifical work, does not depend on us, nor our efforts, nor communication technology or the creative projects we have launched (“The Pope’s Video”, Click to Pray, etc...). Neither does it depend on the new forms of expression we have found, nor the new network of structures we have set up to incarnate our mission in today’s world. Our rebuilding depends solely on the Lord. What does depend on us is what we have now established at an institutional level: the launch of processes able to stimulate new growth and help us enter into a new understanding of our mission. It is down to us to unite ourselves to the Heart of Christ and to become, day by day, more docile to his Spirit.

Institutional conversion cannot exist without personal conversion. This is somewhat more complicated when this kind of process not only covers a timeframe of several years but also has to accommodate teams that are endlessly renewed in 98 separate countries, and representing a huge diversity of local and ecclesial contexts and cultures. And that is without mentioning the millions of people taking part, the majority coming from mainstream or parish backgrounds, and ranging age-wise from



the extremely elderly to the youngest members of the Eucharistic Youth Movement.

A necessary path of conversion

This process of re-creation leads us to personal conversion: the Lord is the only person who can truly

change our ways of thinking, seeing and perceiving things. Only he can help us to enter into the new reality he has prepared for us. Journeys like this teem with misunderstandings as we see clearly in the Gospels. It is always difficult to coordinate continuity and novelty. Does not Jesus himself speak of the “the new cloth and the old,” (Mk 2,21) or “new wine



© The Pope's Video

in old wineskins” (Mk 2,22)? On Easter morning, it is truly the Risen Christ who appears on the shores of Lake Galilee, even though the disciples barely recognise him. This has been our experience over these last few years with the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network.

However, in order to consolidate our new foundation, we should be able to accompany more people along this path of personal conversion. That is what we are offering through the “Way of the Heart” experience.



The Way of the Heart, a journey of conversion

Meditating on, praying and entering the Way of the Heart: this is the formation programme we offer. The

spiritual foundation of our mission, it is split into nine steps, one for each of the nine first Fridays of each month, and it aims to make us available to the Church for her mission of compassion for the world.

The Way of the Heart helps us to discover the challenges of the world through the eyes of Christ, so that, being docile to the Holy Spirit, we can mobilise each month for prayer and service. United to the Heart of



Christ, we discover his joys and sufferings for the world. Likewise, the Way of the Heart leads us to confirm our commitment to him, to be as close as possible to his heart, facing the challenges of humanity, and the mission of the Church. These challenges we discover every month thanks to the Pope's prayer intentions. Every day, we are more deeply transformed into apostles of prayer, leaving behind the globalisation of indifference and enlarging our hearts to embrace the whole world.

The Way is based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. It can be seen, for instance, as an adaptation of the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ which invites us to make an offering of ourselves. The Way of the Heart is our specific way of entering, from an apostolic perspective, the spiritual dynamic of the Heart of Jesus. In his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis invites us into just this missionary dynamic.

Without this journey of personal conversion, the reconstruction of this ecclesial service would not stand the test of time. This is why we have been immersed in the third phase since 2018. It is the deepest and most delicate because it depends on our relationship with God. Personal conversion to this new spiritual understanding of our mission can be compared to the invisible part of an iceberg: it is the invisible foundation of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network that is essential for our re-building to truly exist on solid ground.

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://www.popesprayer.va>



A transformative and enriching upheaval **The Spiritual Centre of Penboc'h in Brittany**

The community of residents of Penboc'h
Province of French Speaking Western Europe

In 1663, the very first house in the world to be totally dedicated to retreats was founded in the Breton city of Vannes by the Jesuit Vincent Huby. He became its first director. Some 20 times a year, the Spiritual Exercises were given there to groups of hundreds of men. However, the world's

first ever "retreat house" was shut down after the suppression of the Society of Jesus. Only in 1975 would this particular, and by then traditional, Jesuit mission re-emerge, when the Jesuit School in Vannes freed up a large holiday house in the idyllic spot of Penboc'h, on the shores of the Gulf

of Morbihan ("little sea" in Breton). This proved the ideal opportunity to re-open a spiritual centre. Over the next 40 years, classic retreats based on the Spiritual Exercises were the main activity on offer here. However, over time, the numbers of people open to this type of retreat has dwindled.





In 2013, a group comprising many sectors of the Society began an intense and open two-year process of reflection on the future of Penboc'h. This led the Provincial, Jean-Yves Grenet, to suggest the Centre should embrace new complementary approaches: It should be open to the poor and vulnerable and open up to professionals and the world of finance and politics. Along the same lines, the Provincial asked us to try out two new experiences: to have a mixed residential community composed of Jesuits, women religious, and lay people living at the Centre and to appoint a lay director to oversee it.

That is how in September 2015 we arrived here, discovering this magical place on the shores of the gulf of Morbihan. We began to get to know each other as well as the staff and volunteers – spiritual companions, guides, and session trainers – who had been working at the Centre for years.

Our mission, following the logic of the Provincial's insights, led us to reflect on our strengths and preferences. Little by little, responsibilities were shared out among us. Times of prayer and liturgical and other celebrations structured our community life, which was influenced overall by our experience sharing our daily lives and learning to respect each other's differences. Our individual perspectives on the world and personal faith journeys were gradually enriched as we lived together as men and women, with our own issues and in different states of life.

Opening ourselves up to vulnerability has shaken us up but also allowed us to become aware, little by little, that vulnerability is not an end in itself. Instead, we are learning that

embracing vulnerability transforms it into a sign of fraternity. In fact, it is transforming our every activity, retreat, course, weekend session, and workshop through the testimonies of people happy to be accepted for who they are in their needs.

After a positive three years of growth, the Centre was forced to relocate so that the buildings could be refurbished. This was due in part to their age and in part to changing regulations about health and safety and access for people with reduced mobility. We moved further inland, settling in slightly grim temporary lodgings. It was hellish. Yet thanks to the help of our many volunteers, we were able to make our lodgings cosy, even exuding a fraternal warmth. Our trials only helped to strengthen our community.

Around the same time, the encyclical *Laudato Si'* was beginning to make an impact, urging us, as indi-



viduals and as communities, to begin a journey of conversion and care for our Common Home. It has encouraged us to consider how we might live out this conversion in all the Centre's activities, even down to the management. So, we began to ponder how we might integrate the teachings of *Laudato Si'* into the retreats and sessions based on the Exercises; we also sourced local suppliers and transport for our provisions and looked into the possibility of setting up shared vegetable gardens at the Centre, etc.

We used our time as "exiles" inland to review our first three years

in the light of the Provincial's vision, although we never stopped our daily activities to do so. Everyone took part in this: our volunteers, staff, the community, the board of directors, and friends. This lasted 18 months, and each of us had time to express our thanks for the graces received, the obstacles encountered, and our hopes and wishes for the future.

In February 2019, after a universal consultation of the Society, the Superior General of the Jesuits promulgated the Society's new *Apostolic Preferences*. Again, we pondered how best to integrate the new

preferences into our review and how we could, without exhausting our resources, enlarge our mission by including them.

So, in a nutshell, that is us: a new team, an experimental community life, a new vision, house moves, *Laudato Si'*, welcoming all kinds of vulnerabilities... All these events have shaken us up and still do so, by helping us to transform often-hard situations into spiritual nourishment so that they may become the heart, soul, and bedrock of the Centre.

In 2020, once the building works are complete, we can at last return to the "real" Penboc'h. We will do so transformed by all these intense, at times difficult experiences, enriched by our many encounters, full of confidence in our capacity for change and for allowing ourselves to be changed, yet fully aware that it is God, not us, who controls the outcome of events.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://www.penboch.fr>

One Journey – Two Beginnings

Joseph M. Stewart and Timothy P. Kesicki, SJ
Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States



West Oak Lane Elementary School is a long way from Georgetown University. This inoperative one-room schoolhouse sits on land that was once the West Oak Plantation in Maringouin, Louisiana. Maringouin is a small town in Iberville Parish, far from the banks of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. But its connection to the

Jesuit Order and Georgetown University traces back to 1838, when the Society of Jesus engaged in one of the most sinful chapters of its 480-year history. In 1838, the Jesuits sold 272 enslaved women, men, and children to “Sugar-Cane Plantations” on the banks of Grosse Tete Bayou, where most of these 272 souls arrived 183 years ago.

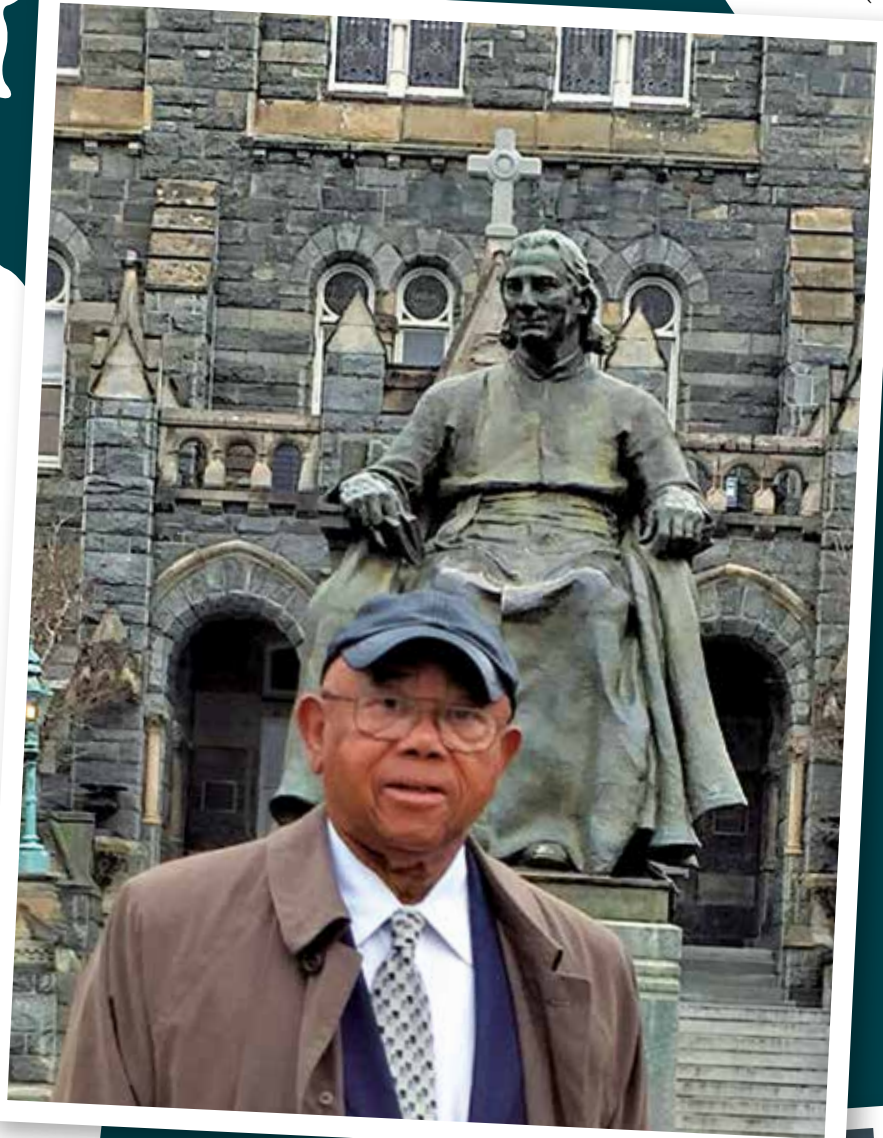
Joe Stewart was a student at West Oak Lane Elementary School in the late 1940s. His teachers taught him many lessons, but this tragic history was not one of them. Regrettably, the legacy of this shameful past was not fully recognized. It wasn’t until 2016 when he learned the full history of his ancestors who are buried at the Immaculate Heart of Mary

(1)

Cemetery. In April of that year, *The New York Times* published an in-depth article titled “272 souls were sold to save Georgetown. What does it owe their descendants?”

The *Times* article was the most publicized telling of this story. While the Society knew the events of its past, the living history had yet to be revealed. Suddenly the stories and the experience of those who descended from Jesuit slaveholding came to life before the world. What began in 1838 called forth what Joe Stewart calls “A New Beginning” for descendants and the Society of Jesus.

Mr. Stewart and other descendant leaders had petitioned the Jesuit Superior General to respond to this sinful past. Father Kesicki had publicly apologized for Jesuit slaveholding at a Liturgy of Memory, Contrition, and Hope at Georgetown University. Father General responded to the descendant’s letter by stating that “Jesuit slaveholding



(1) Mr. Joe Stewart at Georgetown University.

(2) Fr. Timothy Kesicki, SJ, offering apology at Georgetown University (Washington Post Photograph).



(2)



in the United States, and in particular the sale of 272 enslaved persons from the Jesuits in southern Maryland to purchasers in Louisiana, was both a sin and a betrayal because the Society robbed your ancestors of their human dignity.” Father General then called the U.S. provincials to dialogue with the descendants under the structure of the Jesuit Conference. In the summer of 2018, soon after receiving the Superior General’s letter, Joe Stewart called Father Kesicki, and the two met in person at Joe’s home in Michigan.

This first encounter, which has grown into a strong and binding



relationship, opened the door to a frank, honest, and constructive way to restore the human dignity that the Society had robbed from the an-

cestors. Within a year of their first meeting, they brought descendant leaders, Jesuit Provincials, and rep-



in our pursuits of a different future!” He went on to say, “Not a future focused on those of us who are here today – rather for the future of our children, and our children’s children for generations to come.”

Over the last two years, Jesuit Provincials, socii, and descendants met and discerned the descendants vision. What has emerged from this dialogue is a lifelong partnership and a shared commitment to transformation and conversion. The vision begins with a foundation that will achieve a greater common good for all of humanity. The foundation will champion efforts to enhance racial healing, transformation, and conversion. Redressing the sin of racism, with its roots in slavery, will be a priority in this partnership. The foundation will also assist present and future generations of descendants who choose to pursue education and skill-development programs that will enhance family economic security. The vision is for a billion-dollar foundation that will be a beacon for love and justice among all of God’s children.



representatives from Georgetown University into a formal dialogue process sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Kellogg Foundation is world renowned for its commitment to Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation. The restoration of human dignity would require a total commitment from all who entered the dialogue process.

In June of 2018, descendants leaders organized their first family reunion in Louisiana. Over 450 came to this momentous reunion. Joe Stewart presented to descendants a vision and aspirations for the future. In his address he said, “We cannot return to 1838; we must move forward. To plan our future, we cannot stand still. We must unite

In 2020, the Descendant Association leaders met with Fr. Arturo Sosa when he visited the United States. This historic meeting solidified this vision and our partnership for the future.

● **URL:** https://jesuitscentralsouthern.org/slavery_history_reconciliation

Truth and reconciliation: the terrifying connection

Peter Bisson, SJ
Province of Canada

It was June of 2015. We were at the Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre in Pickering, near Toronto in Canada. Community superiors, directors of Jesuit apostolates, and many others had gathered for a long-prepared discernment in common about how the Spirit of the Lord was trying to act among us. To our great surprise, a major theme that emerged from our prayer was indigenous relations. This did not mean ministry to Indigenous peoples, which we had been doing for 400 years. Instead, it meant changing our attitudes in order to learn from Indigenous people and to learn to act as partners with them in building the Kingdom of God. As we were finishing, an Indigenous Elder got up and declared, “At last I feel like a friend. At last I feel like an equal, and that I belong.” She had been working with us for 40 years! We were shocked to recognize how patronizing and paternalistic our attitudes had been. The Elder never abandoned us but waited this long for us to wake up.





This transformation of attitudes toward our Indigenous sisters and brothers began very painfully in the late 1980s. At that time, we began to hear allegations that some of our Jesuit companions had physically and sexually abused some Indigenous people in our parishes and in a school that we ran from 1913 to 1958 in Spanish, Ontario, in central Canada.

Our school was one of very many “Indigenous Residential Schools” set up by the government of Canada in

the late nineteenth century and run by Protestant and Catholic churches and religious orders. The churches were interested in education and evangelization, but the government intended to eliminate Indigenous cultures from Indigenous children. Despite the difference in goals between church and state, both usually shared similar attitudes of cultural superiority. Such attitudes were part of the shadowy connections between evangelization and colonization and led to abuses of many kinds. These schools continued until the 1990s, although most closed in the 1960s. They and their effects on Indigenous people became the object of a major national effort of truth-telling and reconciliation sponsored by Indigenous organizations, the churches, and the national government. The best-known aspect of this collective

effort was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which worked from 2008 to 2015. The Jesuits participated in its work.

I return to my story. When we first heard the accusations of abuse, we did not believe them. We grew indignant and angry and refused to listen. So, the accusers sued us. We grew angrier and responded using the law as a weapon. After a while however, we started to realize two things: that we were now treating old friends as if they were enemies and that many of these shocking stories were true. Our indignation and anger turned to shame, humiliation and sorrow. We started to put the victims’ interests and needs before our own, and began to admit responsibility, to apologize, to offer help and compensation, and to ask for forgiveness



The path from that moment to today has had many iterations of the shift from indignation and anger to shame, confusion, sorrow, and apology; then to humble, critical self-awareness and desire to learn from and with Indigenous people and to be partners with them. I will share with you one more such iteration.

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was working, the three commissioners who led the work met with church, government, and Indigenous representatives four or five times a year. Two of the commissioners were Indigenous, one was not. The meetings sometimes had moments of tension, but the commissioners were always courteous and respectful with us. At first, I thought this attitude was only reasonable. After all, we were imple-

menting an agreement. It took many years of meetings for me to realize that, despite the fact that every day the commissioners heard traumatic stories of the harm caused by colonization, they never treated us like defendants in a court case. Indeed, they always treated us like partners in a great, long-term work of reconciliation. When I finally figured out what they were doing, their welcome broke my heart.

Isaiah recounts his experience of conversion and call in his sixth chapter. Once he admits that he is a person of unclean lips and the angel purifies him, then the vision of God changes from terrifying to inviting. Isaiah realizes that God has been asking, for some time, “Who will I send?” but he had not been able to hear God until his own heart had

been purified. The same has happened to us. Once we accepted the shadowy aspects of our past and reached out for reconciliation, we realized that Indigenous people - at least the ones we knew - had been waiting for us all along. A wise person once said, “The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable.” The misery is worth the reconciling new life that comes on the other side.

● URL: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca>

Jaime and the keys... ...of his apartment, of his life

Michael Kennedy, SJ
Jesuit Restorative Justice Initiative
Los Angeles, USA

As I read over Fr. General's letter to the whole Society regarding the *Universal Apostolic Preferences*, I could not help but think he had actually been directly accompanying our work at the Jesuit Restorative Justice Initiative (JRJI) over the past few years. Three of the four Preferences connect directly to what this work of the Society is about:

To show the way to God... JRJI offers Ignatian retreats, counseling and spiritual direction to incarcerated prisoners all up and down the state of California;

To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world... No one is more of an "outcast of the world" than the incarcerated, whose dignity and worth has been stripped of them as they serve their time in prison;





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To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future... The vast majority of prisoners whom JRJI serves are youthful offenders, some of whom have little hope of being released any time soon.

For me, the best way to see how the UAPs apply to our work is to take the example of Jaime. He had been one of the prisoners who faithfully did the “inner work” with our JRJI staff members over many months. Jaime later wrote, “It had been 27 years since I had stepped into a Church when I attended my first JRJI retreat at Calipatria Prison. My heart was full of anger and resentment even though I had been raised Catholic... I had turned my back on the Church and my upbringing, but something about Fr. Mike inclined me to attend this retreat. Fr. Mike and I spoke. I shared a little bit about myself and my story, and the dialogue was pleasant – never felt forced or awkward. I kept attending the retreats until the very last one on the Monday before I was paroled.”

On that Monday before he was released, the men participating in

the Ignatian retreat with Jaime went around in a circle and shared out loud what Jaime had meant to them. They had all been working together to come to a realization of why they were in prison, what kind of healing and reconciliation was needed in their lives, and how to translate that realization into a more positive future. Using Ignatian Gospel meditations, and answering questions related to their own healing, Jaime and the other prisoners share their experiences in a group setting, which gives them the needed support to continue in their healing process.

The next morning, after 31 years in prison, including 18 years in solitary confinement, Jaime was out having breakfast with his aunt at a Denny’s Restaurant in Lancaster, CA. He didn’t own much but he had the keys to a new apartment. I wondered to myself what Jaime thought as he walked into that new apartment. He told me that he was so excited that all four of the keys ended up on the floor – he wasn’t sure how to use them. It had been 31 years since he has had keys that unlocked doors.



Two days before, we had been sitting in a Level Four Prison, and now we were eating Buffalo Wings together. The waitress intuited that Jaime had just gotten out of prison, so she was attentive to our group and served up a platter that included shrimp, cheese sticks, and even some lobster; all of it on the house. He was all smiles and even took some pictures with the waitresses.

I suppose it would be easy to chalk up that meal to just something ordinary on a Wednesday night in the month of March, in an ordinary restaurant, in an ordinary city. But looking back on that meal, I believe something extraordinary had occurred. Jaime is a symbol of what our work is about; he is a symbol of what JRJI has been doing in the prison system during these last 10 years. His happiness is manifested in the long journey of doing his own inner work. That simple meal was a resume of what we do: helping prisoners participate in the hard work of forgiveness and transformation.

As I write this, we are surrounded with fear and some panic from the coronavirus pandemic. Although this has only been going on for a few weeks, people are acting as if it is the end of the world. As you walk around during these days

of the virus, there are no church services, no movies, no embraces, no shaking hands, no gatherings of more than 10 people. Everything is different.

And right now, everything is different for Jaime. I think of how different Jaime's life is now after 31 years of not having any of those things that we take for granted. Jaime is one person whose life changed in prison, and now it has changed even more since his release. It seems that the world as we know it is changing all of us as well: from something that we were so comfortable with, to the uncertainty, the fear of the unknown. Will this moment bring out the best in us or the worst of who we are?

Jaime brought back some cheese sticks to his new apartment. Everything is delicious for him. Everything is new.

● URL: <http://jrji.org/index.html>



Ignatian lay apostles in Croatia

An occasion of “conversion” for the Jesuits themselves

Alan Hržica

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Community
Zagreb

We started The Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Community on 14 March 2012 in St. Ignatius Chapel on the premises of Sacred Heart Basilica in Zagreb. Inspired by his own experience of conversion and the need to be one with the Church in every sense, musician Alan Hržica decided to gather young people to pray and share life experiences. Learning about the

impressive life and spiritual path of St. Ignatius, we decided to follow Jesus Christ. During our first years, the spiritual director of our community was Fr. Ike Ivan Mandurić; currently, it is Fr. Petar Nodilo.

The carefully structured community currently gathers 130 members active in 14 different fields of

service. Since most of the members of the community are converts who met Christ at an adult age, we are often referred to, by sympathizers and people outside the community who follow our work, as “The Community of Converts.”

It is indisputable that The Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Community



was the first to start the so-called “street evangelization” in Croatia. The well-organized, well-prepared prayer meetings that take place on the streets of the city attract up to a thousand people. They are mostly young people with rosaries in their hands who witness their faith in this way and thus send a powerful message to the whole society about the values on which they want to build their future. It was after a year of our street activities, in March 2013, that Pope Francis was elected. In his first appearances, he sent an interesting message to all the faithful in the Catholic Church. He said he wanted the church to go out to the streets to meet every person and used the expression “street evangelization” for

the first time. In The Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Community that was experienced as the acknowledgment of our way of being and of our activities, which were spreading through other towns in Croatia at the time.

Since many of our members have musical talents, the community start-

ed another form of evangelization, namely big “praise and worship concerts” in city squares. The concerts ignited a fire in the hearts of young people, and that form of evangelization rapidly spread across the country. Other communities were inspired by those activities, and today there are a number of such projects and other groups of people who spread the joyful news in a similar way.

Speaking about the deeds of the prayer community, we should mention the service of the people in need (the poor, hungry, rejected, people wounded by hardships of life or those with serious addiction problems). Our members put a lot of love



into working with them and, in time, become attentive to the needs of the weak; they realize the necessity of concrete acts of mercy. Another step on the path of conversion.

Petar Nodilo, the present spiritual adviser, shares how his way of seeing his own ministry has changed with the leadership of the young, of the lay people around him: “It is God’s grace for all of us, priests from traditional Catholic societies, to be surrounded by dozens of young, educated lay people who burn with the desire to proclaim Christ. When I first conducted missions with The Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Community in the neighboring parishes where we had been invited, I discov-



ered the power of lay evangelization. Being in the midst of great musicians, singers, fervent evangelists – who joyfully witness their faith – was God’s grace for a priest who was used to having to do everything by himself.

We, Jesuits, we do a lot of planning; we encourage, we organize, but in the end we often experience disenchantment faced with failure. And then, without plans or human wisdom, the Lord allows to grow out, in our midst, alongside all the existing institutions for the youth and within the environment of the Sacred Heart Basilica, a new, fresh, great and powerful spiritual branch.

I thank the Lord for showing His presence, in our city and in our Basilica through these young people, and for pulling us, Jesuits, into this new community, thus revealing to us new ways of living the joyful news. A conversion experience for us as well.”

For Fr. Dalibor Renić, SJ, Provincial of the Croatian Jesuit Province, The Sacred Heart Prayer Community is a vibrant example of the fact that lay people can have a great influence on the Jesuits of his Province. He declared: “The Sacred Heart Prayer Group is a modern Catholic lay initiative from the base, inspired by Ignatian spirituality. Unknowingly, they are involved in all areas of apostolate envisioned by the new *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus. These young professionals, who often come from the world of media, business and entertainment, have discovered the Ignatian spirituality as their own path, and they show it to others. They walk with the marginalized and excluded through their various social initiatives. They have found new ways of evangelization adapted to the young people, and they are young themselves, sharing with us, Jesuits, their vision of the future. They are even starting new initiatives in the care for our Common Home. The most important: by their stories of conversion, by their struggle to live the Gospel, they are an inspiration to us all.”

● URL: www.isusovci.hr

A laywoman in a Jesuit team

Sonja Pungertnik
Ignacijev dom duhovnosti, Ljubljana

The St. Ignatius Spirituality Centre in the Slovenian capital, Ljubljana, was founded in 1925, but was nationalised and closed by the Communist regime in 1949. In 2009, the Society of Jesus re-opened the centre, whose organisation and retreat programmes are run by Jesuits, committed lay people, and volunteers. Sonja Pungertnik is the centre's director. Her testimony is a journey of interior growth which has led her to a place of wholehearted commitment.

I first encountered Ignatian spirituality during my student days. Today, I see this as the fruit of Divine Providence. In fact, the first time I did the Spiritual Exercises in silence, I had no idea exactly what I was getting into. My personal experience of God has profoundly influenced my personal and subsequently my professional journey. God, who previously had seemed distant and unreachable, thus became very present and real to me. He became someone who waits for me, keen for me to know him, while at the same time reaching out towards me. Above all else, for me, however, the most important discovery during my first Exercises was that he allowed me to doubt. At that time, my inner life was challenged by all sorts of blocks relating to my disability: I was born with serious damage in my reti-



na, i.e. with congenital blindness. I was profoundly struck by Ignatius' prayer in number 23 of the Spiritual Exercises. His invitation to not prefer health to sickness disturbed me. It was unexpected and felt quite impossible, even infuriating. But, as I have begun to savour this teaching over the years, it has become the source of my inner freedom.

As I began to work with people, I became increasingly interested in their spiritual world. With growing clarity, I began to perceive that psychology and other sciences only help to awaken what the Creator has already

placed within mankind: Only co-operating with the grace of God leads us to self-fulfilment. Consequently, I enriched and broadened my studies in pedagogy and psychotherapy by also studying spirituality and spiritual accompaniment. It was a huge gift as I set out on this path to partner directly with the Jesuits, for whom I began to work in 2007, running their adult formation courses.

I have needed time to find my place as a laywoman in this clerical atmosphere just about dominated by the "fathers" whose principal lifelong mission is teamwork with us, the laity.

For me, on the other hand, it was simply a job, because first of all I am a wife and mother. I have not found it easy to set boundaries with my working hours or even to enact employment law or solve employment-related legal issues. Overall, in managing the centre, I have been held back a great deal by the idealised vision I had of the Church, even more so of life in religious communities.

I come, in fact, from a traditional Catholic family, which viewed the Church and priests as all but untouchable, not to say on “sacred ground” and well nigh “infallible.” Finding the right boundaries within the team, both with responsibilities and relationships, has come at a price.

In fact, as a team member, I was entering a community which was already formed, but which I neither belonged to nor lived in. Despite receiving a warm welcome, I felt I was not remotely part of the community nor ever would be. At the time, I would have loved to receive the community’s help and support, but I know today that all of us still had a great deal to learn in this area. It would also be dishonest of me if I denied that for a long time I was trying to find my place as a woman in an exclusively male team and that this triggered loads of questions for me, as much about me as a woman as about the mission of women in society and the Church. There were also other, smaller problems related to being an employee in a Church institution, because this implies some form of discrimination. That is not always easy to deal with.

All this, however, has made me grow personally and spiritually, and my concerns have been markedly fewer than the blessings I have received over the years. Through my work and the formation courses we have organised, I





have slowly but steadily absorbed Ignatian spirituality. Gradually, I have been prepared to take on my mission of spiritual accompaniment and as director of the centre's spiritual programmes. To put this slightly better,

God has made me mature. In the St. Ignatius Spirituality Centre, I have found the space to be available and open to God. As well as being a spiritual guide to retreatants, I help out with giving the Spiritual Exercises in daily life



and with the formation of spiritual guides. I also prepare a women's programme and am involved in our annual course titled "The School of relationships and forgiveness." I witness God acting through his relationship with every retreatant and have been able to accompany people on some amazing personal journeys. This I find a huge grace. In 2018, the Jesuits entrusted me with management of the St. Ignatius Centre. I have accepted this new challenge with humility and a great sense of responsibility.

Ignatian spirituality, quite simply, is now part of me. Through me, my husband has also discovered the Spiritual Exercises. It's no coincidence that our son, although he is only 8, says that in his heart there are two "blokes," one urging him to lie, the other, to tell the truth. I am very grateful to God for allowing me to discover this gift, entrusted to humankind through St Ignatius.

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://www.jezuiti.si>

MARTIN, 25, on his first Spiritual Exercises in a silent retreat

The so-called Spiritual Exercises retreats (for young people) I've attended previously elsewhere have tended to be based on a lot of talking (too much for me, I now realise) and too little on savouring what is happening within us. After those retreats, I'd return home full of energy, but my enthusiasm would ebb away at the first sign of a problem.

With this retreat, on the other hand, I've found the peace I've been looking for all summer, in psychology books, with friends, through sport... And although it is now two weeks since the Spiritual Exercises ended, I still feel the peace that only Jesus can offer.

EVA, 18, a reflection on the Exercises in Daily Life

I'm grateful to have found friends who, like me, want to go deeper in their relationship with God, who I can chat with about God and prayer. This has allowed to discover new ways of looking at things. What's more, I've been touched by the Word of God through Psalm 27: "Yahweh is my light and my salvation. Whom should I fear? Yahweh is the fortress of my life. Whom should I dread?" Now, I need to go to more meetings to learn how to pray in a more orderly fashion. Thanks to the spiritual guides. With this retreat, I have taken a step forward in my faith.

Pathways of conversion towards religious life

Jesús de León, SJ
Novice Master
Antillean Province

What kind of faith journey do today's young people need to take in order to discern a vocation to religious life? Is conversion necessary? And if so, what kind?

The type of conversion that is bringing today's young people to consider a vocation to religious life requires us to re-evaluate our vocations ministry and take a new approach to promoting vocations. Although our schools, parishes, and traditionally Catholic families are still a solid source of vocations, they are no longer the only ones that lead a young person to consider a vocation. L.E confirms this when speaking of his experience of conversion: "I was born into a Catholic family that regularly attended Sunday Mass. I cannot deny how important receiving the Eucharist as a family, receiving Catechesis and what I heard about God through the preaching of those consecrated to religious life was to me. However, when the time came to consider the possibility of a religious vocation, I felt that those habits and what I had heard about God did not really help me to root my life in God as much as the witness of a nun who I met in an old people's home."



L.E, we might say, has had an experience – the nun’s witness – which falls outside traditional, guaranteed channels of vocations yet which nonetheless has been effective in drawing him into a lasting faith experience. Personal witness is what is left of our strongest convictions about how best to reveal God to young people. This approach means that our narrative does not appear unreal to them.

M.A lived in a poor area of Santo Domingo city, received a state education, and survived through odd jobs. An invitation from a friend to watch a film about Jesus led to a first contact with one of the groups for young peo-

ple in their parish. That is where M.A’s experience of the process of “*Formación para Jóvenes de las Antillas*” (FIJA – Formation for Young People in the Antilles) began. It led M.A to consider a religious vocation and later to enter the noviciate.

The same was true of M.E, a young professional who worked as an engineer for a state-owned company. At the suggestion of his sister, he decided to get baptised at the age of 25. During his

preparation for baptism, he was invited to join the “*Campamentos Magis*” (Magis camps) organised by the youth ministry of the Province of the Antilles. He said: “That camp experience was key because that is where I began a vocational process that ended with me deciding to join the Society.”

Such experiences, along with those of our other current novices, have led us to consider an up-to-date approach to vocations which allows young people







to work out, from their own understanding, the meaning of what we offer through our way of life. Or, to take this idea somewhat further, for young people to somehow discern the way of Christ through our way of life. A sense of cohesion between the ideal offered by our community's lifestyle and the reality appeals strongly to young people. It challenges them and is highly likely to awaken their interest in making a radical life choice.

So, what kind of approaches to vocation might ensure a gateway to conversion for young people today?

Any vocations initiative that hopes to offer a failsafe path to conversion must be sure to set aside time within community activities to allow our young people the space to think about God's plan for their lives, grow in faith, and become

part of the Christian community. But it is also essential that we outline the basic tenets of a lifestyle through which our young people can find role models who may facilitate them becoming deeply involved as much in the surrender of "judgement and reason" (SpEx 96) as in a "greater and more important sacrifice." (SpEx 97).

A viable vocational approach for today requires a team able to put together a vocational initiative that does not present young people with a marketing strategy, whereby joining a religious congregation is sold like a product that guarantees the consumer "happiness" or "success." It is really about a presentation of religious life that places before young people the needs of the world, and its challenge to them to do something about this through their faith (SpEx 107).

We need to consider youth ministry initiatives within the context of the universal Church that guarantees young people the vocational choice of a Christian state of life. We live in a networking world, which makes it easy and also necessary to share our initiatives with other congregations, institutes of consecrated life, and dioceses. We could start by sharing deep experiences of God including the Word of God, liturgical celebrations, programmes of evangelisation, fraternal communities, etc., which may become signs which speak deeply to the heart of young people. Through this, they may understand with ever greater clarity the call of the Eternal King to place themselves under his banner with the greatest of generosity.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <http://www.antsj.org/antillas>

Redemptive suffering A testimony of my conversion...

Amaldass Maria, SJ
Delhi Province (India)

21 February 2014. I was on my way to preside over the festive Eucharist in Vannampatti parish near Dindigul, Tamil Nadu, India. I was tossed off from my motorcycle by a speeding truck. My right hand became completely dysfunctional, and many wounds were all over my body. I underwent ten surgeries in the course of four years and had to cope with relentless neuropathic pain during the recovery. I am not fully well yet! "How did you respond to such a major adversity at the age of 41? How did you engage yourself effectively during this prolonged period of convalescence? What makes you wait patiently and cheerfully?" These were some of the queries I was facing from those who visited me.

Here is the story of my inner journey and transformation. Lying in the hospital totally helpless and in a confused state of mind and suffering excruciating physical pain, many questions, doubts, and anxieties went through my mind. "True, God knows all things, but is He grinding my faith? God saved me from the clutches of death, but what is His purpose be-



hind this action? How is He working on me through these events and happenings?" I was unable to perceive positively God's saving intention behind the shattering event!

During this prolonged period, I experienced the Eucharistic Lord ever more closely; this led to a significant transformation of my life. What followed later deepened my faith and trust in the protective arms of Our Lady. On two occasions of Eucharistic celebrations, I experienced the healing touch of Mother Mary when I felt an

inner spiritual strength stirring from the crown of my head to my feet. The Eucharistic Lord became part of every tissue of my broken body, and His blood stimulated the fractured veins and nerves. This fueled up my spirit to be at ease with pain, and I obtained spiritual strength to say "Yes" like our Mother to God's will that necessarily included pain, agony, and suffering! These experiences enabled me undergo life's journey with enhanced faith.

As days passed by, I grew in trusting the Lord of life. I began to asso-

ciate with the character of Job, and his words of agony echoed my situation well. It affirmed God's footprints in my life during its real dark days! I kept reminding myself, "God leads me on...even in my pain." The inner voice whispered:

*Pain is undeniably a passing reality
Yes, it is, and it always shall be
It has no power to crush or defeat
Affirm the indomitable spirit within
Fathom the power of the risen Lord
Believe and you shall overcome!*

Undeniably, the realities of sufferings develop into meaningful segments only through the optics of spiritual dimension. The positive divine vibrations shaped my outlook, worldview and perspectives leading to an inner change – purifying my concerns, convictions, and commitments. I knew that God does not load me with burdens beyond my capacity. If trials come my way, I ought to submit to Him. My soul whispered:

*Get on to your shoes...
It's time for you to be up for the given mission
You are to embrace the second life bestowed by your Creator
Keep going with an enhanced passion for your mission
This mishap is not a stumbling block and it never is
So, fly over the negativities that weigh you down
Anchor your willpower, determination, and self-confidence
In faith to the one to whom your life belongs
For He will raise you up to the sky...*

*Affirm the spiritual energy within you
The courage to create and to see the opportunity
To seize it and the power to shape the future
Pursue the academics with firm dedication
Use your hands, mind, and your heart
Employ your imagination, courage, and be adventurous
No pain, no adversity can stop your journey...
Take it, rise up, and brave your world...*

I have learnt that the more I push myself undertaking reasonable risks and challenges, the better I utilise God-given potentials. For fear undermines self-confidence with self-doubt. The moment I plunged into actions – driving a car, a walk-through the fields, sweeping the floor, writing the doctoral thesis with my left hand while my right hand hung from a sling "lifeless" – I found enhancement in self-assurance and determination. Faith-filled statements shaped up my perceptions, thought patterns, and convictions. The lives of St. Ignatius de Loyola and St. Padre Pio had positive impact and inspired me to overcome despair and depression.

Amid people with a worldview that pain is a symptom of God's curse, I am tuned to God's time where I find that in His time, all is beautiful. The improvement in my arm is very slow, and it may take

a few more years! To this end, let me endure with patience... For, I believe in a God who accomplishes miracles even through mishaps...because suffering, accepted as part of the mystery of my life, becomes redemptive suffering, even when there is much pain and disability.





To see with the eyes of God **The UAPs as a call to conversion**

Michael Odhiambo, SJ
Eastern Africa Province

Since their announcement, the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* have made me reflect deeply about my identity as a Jesuit. As I ponder on how God looks at me, I am moved to reconsider my relationship with the people and the environment around me. I find myself asking, like the young man who ran to Christ, “*Lord, what good thing shall I do...what am I still lacking?*” And the more I think about these Preferences, the clearer it becomes that the UAPs are a call to conversion and to

see with the eyes of God. It is a call to total transformation from our ways to God’s ways.

With the promulgation of Father General’s letter on the UAPs, I saw new wine waiting to be put into a new wineskin. Seeing with God’s eyes means emptying ourselves of our preconceived perceptions in order to let God’s grace flow through us. As Jesuits, we take pride in the Ignatian heritage. A spirituality that is gentle and

close to reality. It also opens room for introspection and the desire for the MAGIS. For us, seeing with God’s eyes is a call to return to the basics of our Ignatian heritage and the zeal for service that pushed us to join the Society.

Nowadays, it is also a call to protect the resources God gave us and to use them in a sustainable manner. Returning to the basics calls us to internalize the Spiritual Exercises or at least the desire to be continuously

transformed by them. The Spiritual Exercises allow us to live the “La Storta experience” where Ignatius felt clearly that God “was placing him with Christ, His Son.” This proximity with Christ urged Ignatius to have a preferential love for the poor and the marginalized. Seeing with the eyes of God invites us to consider what Christ would do in our current situation, seeing people’s suffering and cry for help.

Having now lived in Zimbabwe for a year, I have come to appreciate the value of being sensitive to people’s needs. Zimbabwe, once dubbed the jewel of Africa, is a country with beautiful people who dream of one day reviving their economy and making a better life for themselves and their children. The country has suffered through decades of mismanagement, corruption and inflation that

has left the economy in shambles and destroyed hope for the young who are always seeking better opportunities in neighbouring countries. There is a tremendous need to journey with the youth and help them see the immense gifts that they are endowed with, gifts they can use to brighten their future and that of Zimbabwe.

As I undertake my apostolate with the youth at a nearby Jesuit parish, it is my desire to journey with them in their day-to-day life within a grim reality. Although the challenges they face are immense, the Ignatian spirit is alive in them. The Magis youth group is vibrant across parishes and university campuses. Occasionally, these young people

participate in an “Immersion week,” an occasion for reflection and sharing.

One of my memorable experiences during an Immersion week has been an outing to the outskirts of Harare to visit two elderly women. The younger one, 75 years old, was taking care of her sick sister, 83. Their relatives had sidelined them. The roof on their house was in terrible condition and when it rained, the house was flooded. We saw our grandmothers in these old women. In Africa old people are a treasure, they are living





our photos saying, “that generation gassed our future, polluted our air and water, and made the soil infertile”? Another lesson of our excursion is that we all seek to live harmoniously in the world. Therefore, listening to each other is essential; we must overcome the generation gaps. Because God looks at us as his children and we should all strive to live as brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, the UAPs show the way forward and their timing could not be better. They are the product of discernment in which the Holy Spirit guided the Jesuits to see the problems that we are faced with, namely pollution, loss of hope, poverty, poor leadership, spiritual dryness, diseases and the desire for meaning in life. The key question is what would Christ do in response to the challenges facing the world today, in this 21st century?

● URL: <http://jesuitszimbabwe.co.zw>

libraries. Listening to them, we pondered what would Christ do. We were moved by compassion and a sense of helplessness. We shared our thoughts in a deep spiritual conversation and deliberated on how we would help materially. Finally, we realized that our presence was key; it offered these grannies some human care and we saw hope rejuvenating in their eyes.

Seeing with the eyes of God calls us to be present in the lives of others.

It also invites us to think of the next generation; to look at the environment and imagine what accusations this generation might make against us. Will they think that we made the world a better place to live in or will they point a finger at

Rwanda: ongoing conversion

Marcel Uwineza, SJ
Rwanda-Burundi Region



In April 1994, Rwandans found themselves asking: Where has the God of Rwanda gone? Will the sun shine on Rwanda again? Twenty-six years since the beginning of the genocide against the Tutsi and the war, Marcel Uwineza, SJ offers some an-

swers based on the need for conversion, the country's progress, and his own journey.

The origins of Rwanda's wounds are multifaceted. These include the precolonial inequality, the colonial

racialization of Rwandans, the economic and political crises of the 1980s and 1990s, and the fragile regional and class base of a political faction determined to hold on to state power, the sensitivities of relations between Hutu and Tutsi in both Rwanda and



Burundi, and the politics of ethnic identification which was central to implementing genocide plans, etc. Analyzing Rwanda's tragic past, the genocide against the Tutsi did not occur only because leaders had given orders to their subordinates. Assassins did not submit only to authority. They were convinced that they had to kill not only because propaganda distilled fear and hatred, but also because their society had long been plunged into violence and was beyond any moral obligation.

Countless people died, including three Jesuits: Innocent Rutagambwa, Patrick Gahizi, and Chrysologue Mahame. The country was in ruin: dead bodies were everywhere, leaving innumerable widows and orphans; demolished houses characterized every hill. Every Rwandan was wounded, regardless of one's ethnic "label," though wounds varied by degree. Rwanda's appalling past is an affront to the ethics of responsibility. Théoneste Nkeramihigo, SJ notes: "unless it is accepted that belonging to an ethnic community constitutes a punishment deserving capital punishment, nothing justifies the extermination of so many human beings who are victims simply because of being who they were."

The Rwandan church ought to undergo moral, religious, and intel-

lectual conversions as theological imperatives. Almost from its beginnings, it has been shaped by bourgeois and class sensibilities, concern for respectability and material success, mere orthodoxy, a weak or facile understanding of the God of Jesus Christ, and lip-service to his Gospel. Moral conversion means that the standard for one's status in society ought to derive, not from one's ethnic or group affiliation, but from the inalienable dignity of each person created in the image and likeness of God. Religious conversion entails the ability to be grasped by ultimate concern. It is the permanent self-surrender to God without conditions. Intellectual conversion is an ongoing process in search of truth rooted in "cognition self-transcendence" with the desire to live a truthful life.

Under the leadership of Jean Baptiste Ganza, the current Regional Superior, we have been invited to constant conversion and there is more to be done. There have been Jesuit workshops and retreats whose theme was reconciliation. To mark the 25th anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi, an International Conference was organized and brought together theologians, bishops, and leaders in diverse fields to share their expertise of how to restore peace and build true and lasting reconciliation. Proceedings from this conference

will form a tri-lingual book. The Jesuit Urururi Center has taken the lead in accompanying young people, thus fulfilling one of our *Universal Apostolic Preferences*, that of caring for the youth, who form more than half of Rwanda's population.

At the national level, prior to 1994, students hoping to enter high schools and tertiary institutions were classified by ethnicity and preferential treatment given accordingly; this became a method to ensure the development of the future elite. While the quality of post-genocide education is still somewhat lacking,



the abolition of this ethnic identification of students and teachers is an achievement. Among Rwandan martyrs, one counts the children of Nyange High School, killed by *Inter-ahamwe* militia in March 1997 when they refused to divide themselves along ethnic lines. Their sacrifice is an inspiration for conversion of hearts. Moving from one (restricted in admission) national university in 1994 to more than ten universities in 2020 has also changed the mindset of Rwandans.

Conversion is a process, not just an event. Rwanda has still strides to

make. Conversion ought to start from the imperative of truth, one that must visit all “regions” of Rwanda’s histories, engaging also those wounds that are still uncovered. One year after the genocide, Augustin Karekezi, SJ, wrote, “we still have reason to dream.” On that first commemoration, he recalled the words of Jeremiah – words that inspire conversion for a new Church: “The Lord says: ‘I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope’” (Jer 29:11).

Here is a concluding note of hope! In the last twenty years, God

has led me through a school of forgiveness. I met the killer of my brothers and sister. Upon seeing me, he came towards me. I thought he was coming to kill me too. But I could not believe what happened: as if in a movie, he knelt and asked me to forgive him. After a time of confusion, by a force which I could not describe I took him, embraced him and said: “I forgive you; the Lord has been good to me.” Ever since, I have felt free. Yes, in some cases, forgiveness means doing the unimaginable!

● URL: <https://www.jesuitsrwb.org>



A response to the siege of Marawi: educating young people for interreligious harmony

Greg Soetomo, SJ

Coordinator for Dialogue with Islam,
Director of Asia Pacific Theological Encounter Program [APTEP], Indonesia

I stood in the silent and deserted city of Marawi surveying the debris and the ruins. The devastation shocked me. The siege of Marawi, a five-month-long armed conflict in Lanao del Sur, Philip-

pines, had ended barely two months before. A Muslim city in a predominantly Catholic country, 99.6% of Marawi's 201 785 citizens are of the Islamic faith. The Philippines Government estimates

that around 200 000 residents were forcibly displaced during the siege.

The fighting began on 23 May 2017 when Philippine government forces

attacked militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). 978 militants were killed, 12 militants captured, 168 government forces killed, and 87 civilians died.

In July 2019, two years after the siege, I again travelled to Marawi. The effects of the violence remain. Thousands of families still live in tents, despite pledges from the government to rebuild the city. Was the devastation of Marawi caused by religion? Was the late Christopher Hitchens right in his 2007 book *God is not Great: How religion poisons everything*?

In February 2019 Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, met in Abu Dhabi and signed a document which called for a “culture of mutual respect.” Entitled *Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, they state “Terrorism is deplorable and threatens the security of people be they in the East or the West, the North or the South, and disseminates panic, terror and pessimism, but this is not due to religion, even when terrorists instrumentalize it. It is due, rather, to an accumulation of incorrect interpretations of religious texts and to policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression and pride.”

What has been the Jesuit response to the siege of Marawi? On a practical level, Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro, a three-hour drive from Marawi, responded with a relief operation called #TabangMarawi (“Help Marawi”). While that group carried out much good work, it is my view that we need to contemplate the root causes of the conflict and educate young people about how to live in interreligious harmony.

Human Fraternity points out that “These tragic realities are the conse-





quence of a deviation from religious teachings.” We need to analyze and confront the political manipulation of religions. We also need to meet and talk with Muslims. To that end, we have developed a program of encounter with Muslims in Asia Pacific. In the program, Muslims and Christians sit together and share about the beauty of the teachings and spirituality of both traditions, and they also discuss how the local government system could be gradually changed based on the religious principles and foundations of both religions.

In September 2019, we conducted a consultation between Muslim and Christian scholars at Sanata Dharma University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. We wrote a curriculum for a program called “Education of Youth for Interreligious Harmony” based on analysis of Asian society and on documents like *Human Fraternity, A Common Word*, and the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*.

In October 2019, the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific held an extended council meeting; it used spiritual conversation. Members of the *Dialogue with Islam Initiative* then felt the need to collaborate with the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities-Asia



Pacific (AJCU-AP), Basic Education Asia Pacific, and Asian Theology Program in educating young people for interreligious harmony.

Fr. Heru Prakosa, SJ, the former Coordinator of Dialogue with Islam, has undertaken a composition of place of the Asia-Pacific region. He states: “The largest demographic of Muslims will continue to live in the Asia and Pacific region. Nearly three-in-ten people living in the Asia and Pacific region in 2030 (27.3%) will be Muslim, up from about a quarter in 2010 (24.8%), and roughly a fifth in 1990 (21.6%). By 2050, there may be almost 1.5 billion Muslims in the Asia and Pacific region. It would make Muslims the single largest group in this region by 2050, ahead of Hindus (about 1.4 billion), Buddhists (476 million), and Christians (381 million).”

What will be the social-political consequences of that demographic shift? The group that wrote the curriculum for *Educating Youth for Interreligious Harmony* hope that their program will be one means of laying the ground for a peaceful future in Asia Pacific.



● URL: <http://www.jcapsj.org/category/interreligious-dialogue>

COVID-19 and conversion

It is impossible to end this section of the yearbook of the Society of Jesus on the theme of conversion without reflecting on the Covid-19 pandemic which the world – and therefore the Jesuit sphere too – has experienced in 2020. In addition to all those who have succumbed to the illness, many others have suffered, not only due to the virus but also due to its dramatic repercussions for their socio-economic situation.

In this context, the temptation to spiritual discouragement may arise in the lives of many. The good news

is keeping us waiting. And yet, in the heart of a world battered by the storm, the eyes of faith have perceived areas of light. Faith allows for new insights that open up pathways towards conversion... and, therefore, pathways for our future.

We asked a sage Jesuit drenched in Ignatian spirituality, and at the same time rooted in the life of the Church and the world, to share with us his thoughts on how the worldwide experience of coronavirus has value in the light of the Gospel. We give you here the testimony of Fr. Federico Lombardi.

Towards greater humility and solidarity

Federico Lombardi, SJ

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has wreaked havoc on every continent during 2020, with the dramatic consequences we are all too aware of, should also be regarded and experienced from a faith perspective as a dramatic call to conversion.

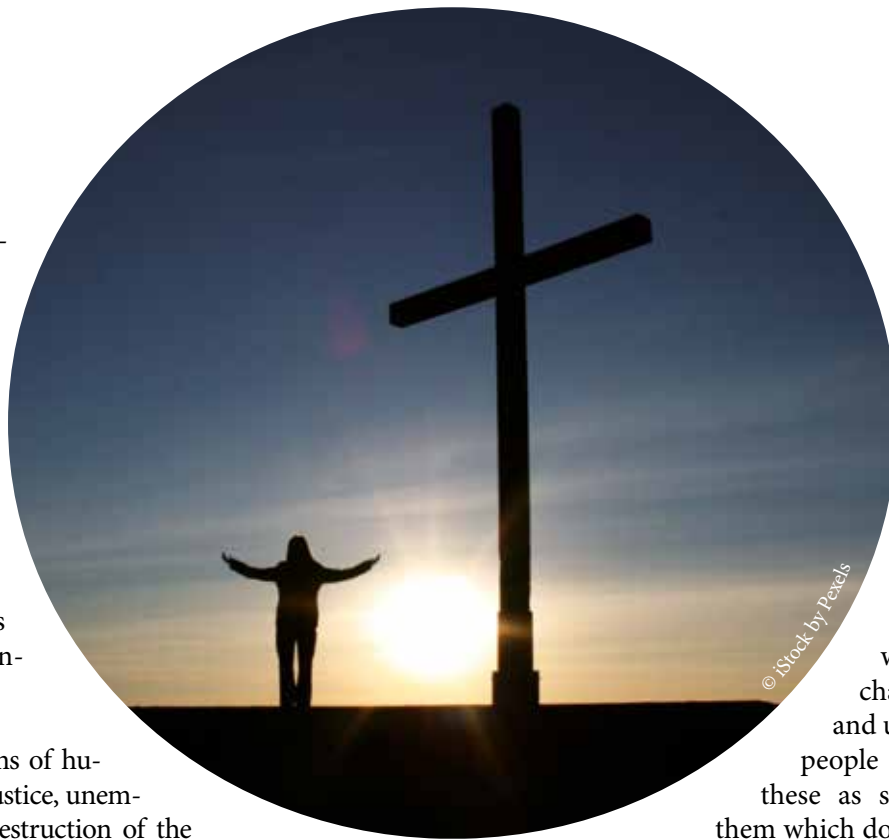
The great problems of humanity – hunger, injustice, unemployment, war, the destruction of the environment, climate change, the control and manipulation of our freedom – demand not only practical solutions but, above all, conversion, if reason and commitment are to address the salvation of human beings and creation, so that humanity may find, once again, a right and reconciled relationship with its fellow creatures, with each other, and with God. In the last part of the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis expresses this clearly when he speaks of “ecological conversion.” This is key: Speaking of spirituality and conversion at the end of an encyclical dedicated to the problems of the world is not just an add-on, a

kind of “pious and devout afterthought” tacked on after the more “specific” development of his thoughts on technology, the economy, and sociology. What it means is that nothing he has said previously has any point if we do not change our fundamental direction. St. Ignatius reminds us of the importance of this guidance in the “Principle and Foundation” of the Spiritual Exercises when he says “Man is created to... From this, it follows...”

The coronavirus pandemic relates to and affects all the major problems

of today. Many have grown worse, and certainly many aspects of development today and our normal way of life have been radically thrown into question. Many global challenges in the contemporary world, such as climate change, are very serious and urgent, but all too often people continue to perceive these as something external to them which does not affect their lives individually: They think that technology or money will provide them with the necessary protection. And, as a result, they do not choose to confront these problems responsibly. In contrast, the pandemic seems to have hit us more deeply, because we are all afraid of death and this invisible contagion. Seen from this point of view, the pandemic seems to be more efficient at shaking us out of our lethargy and laziness – the usual forms of slavery? – in which we continually seek refuge.

Ultimately, the pandemic has brought up to a deeper degree the is-







sue of the limits of human ability to control biological processes, despite our advances in science. It has reminded us of the possibility of unexpected and perturbing events on our planet and of the need to radically change our way of daily life if we are to avoid catastrophic damage. It has shown us that death may turn up in unexpected shapes and guises, to the point where it reduces our life expectancy. These are only some of the countless topics for reflection that the experience of the last months has forced us to tackle and about which there are very diverse opinions.

Very wise things have also been said about the need to review our values and priorities both in our life as a society and in our political programmes. The limitations imposed on socialising and on the life of ecclesial communities have sparked reflections on the family, on pastoral and religious practice, on sickness and death, on receiving the Eucharist, and on the importance of prayer in all circumstances of life. Nearly everyone has said that “many things will need to change” and that our world “will no longer be the same as it was before.” However, few people appear to have a demonstrably clear idea of the direction such a change should take. In fact, many fear and expect that everything will



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go back, as far as possible, “to the way it was before.”

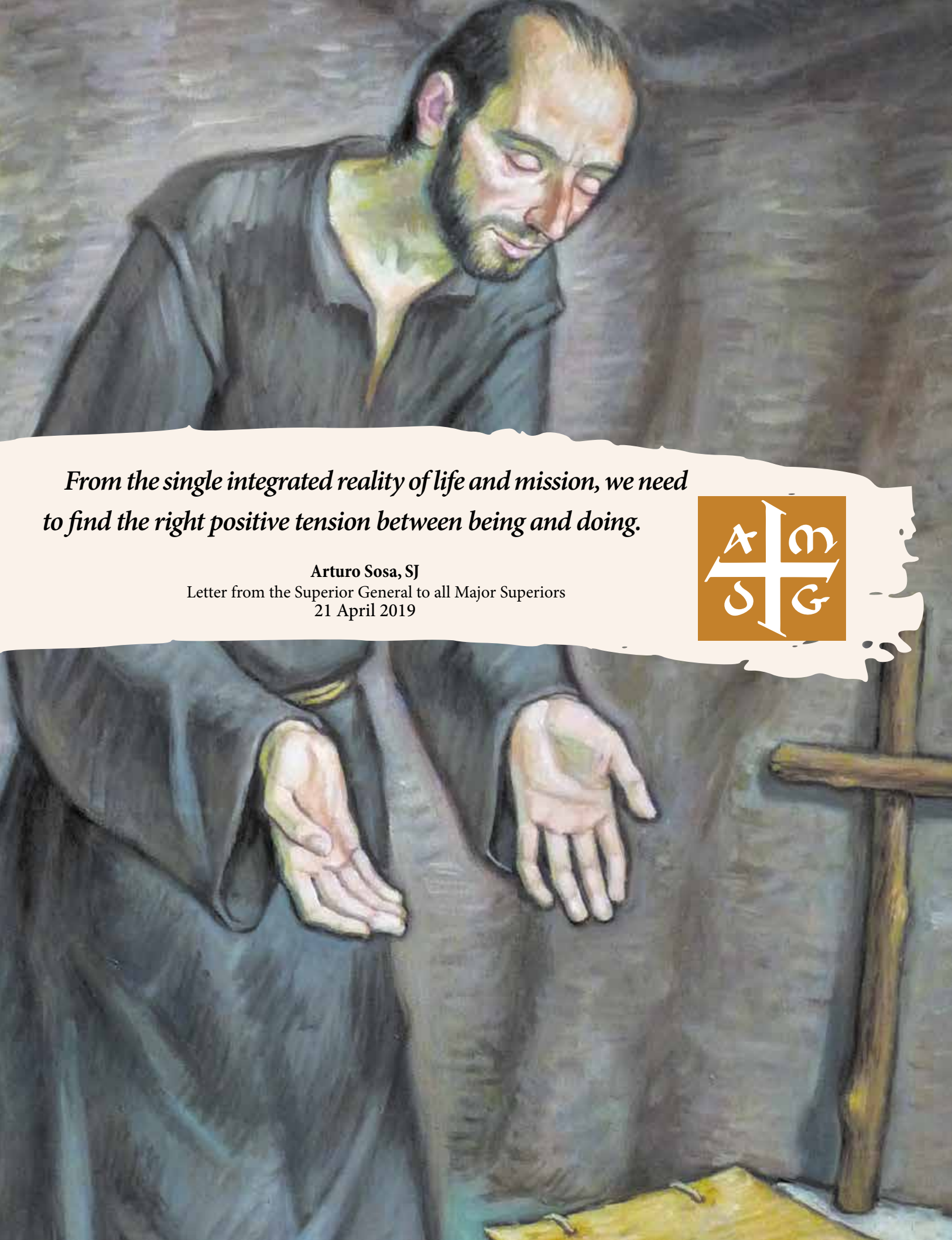
If we are truly living as Christians in our time, we will immediately grasp that these are all key issues if we are to contemplate the world of today through the light of faith, this world that the Trinity continues to watch from on high and which it chose as the place for the Incarnation of the Son. These are key issues in the confrontation between good and evil, Christ and Satan, and the choices made for the building of the Kingdom of God and in seeking God’s will for us, our communities,

and our Church. We cannot fail to find these themes continually cropping up in the course of the Exercises so that we may “order our lives,” in the context in which we live.

Furthermore, the pandemic is asking these questions of the entire human race, and we know that the Lord “is at work” in the conscience of countless people around us. This is why our spiritual discernment cannot be solitary and individual but must occur through listening to others and in solidarity with them. What does the Spirit of God want to say to us today?

What is it asking of each one of us, of our communities, of our society, through this trial? That is the question running through every aspect of our personal spiritual lives as well as through our apostolic and formation activities, and it will be with us for a long time. Certainly, this requires us to continue formulating projects and plans with greater humility and with an openness to a future that is completely out of our hands. This is also a call to daily conversion in order to seek and find the will of God.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies



*From the single integrated reality of life and mission, we need
to find the right positive tension between being and doing.*

Arturo Sosa, SJ

Letter from the Superior General to all Major Superiors
21 April 2019





Kohima Region: a seed blossoms

Walter Fernandes, SJ

North Eastern Social Research Centre, Guwahati (India)

The Nagaland Jesuit Mission in Northeast India was born on April 22, 1970, with three pioneers from Karnataka Province in South India. The seed they planted has blossomed into the Kohima Region, which works in all seven States of Northeast India. Its 157 members include 102 from different tribes of Northeast India that has more than 200 ethnic communities. They live in a mega-biodiversity zone and a biodiversity hotspot. Jesuits came at the invitation of John Bosco Jasokie, Nagaland Minister of Education. His sons were studying at the Jesuit-run St. Joseph's College, Bangalore, and he wanted Jesuits to run a university college in the State capital Kohima. Because of obstacles, Jesuits moved to Jakhama, 17 km away, where the village council offered them a steep hill to build a school and parish church. Discernment around the move to a

village led to a policy decision that the mission would run institutions only in the rural areas inhabited by tribes with little access to education and other services.

In 1970, the 11 villages including Jakhama of Southern Angami area of Nagaland had one high school. Inspired by the Jakhama school, today it has around fifteen, three of them Jesuit run, including one for destitute children, and two university colleges. Because of various reasons, more girls than boys gained access to their schools. As a result, two thirds of the graduate and post-graduate degree holders in Southern Angami are women. It has a significant impact on women's status. The 1970s were years of the nationalist struggle for Naga sovereignty. Jesuits have been fairly successful in tight-rope walking between its militants





and the Indian army. Discernment led the mission to new areas like St. Paul Teachers' Training Institute at Phesama because there was no such centre around. Today its alumni are found all over the Northeast. The mission then extended to Eastern Nagaland and to Manipur. Jesuits would not have been able to expand their work without collaboration with catechists and religious sisters.

When at the age of 25 it became Kohima Region, it had very few men to respond to requests from bishops of all seven States. Therefore, it handed over to the diocese some parishes and the college in Nagaland in order to free men for work elsewhere. They opted to work with the most marginalised tribes, beginning with the tea garden workers of Assam, originally from Eastern India. Rendered landless by British land policies, they were brought to Assam by British tea garden owners, in slave-like conditions in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Even today, these six million workers are the most exploited in the Northeast. Then came tribes struggling for a new identity. The Dimas of Assam, "hinduised" by administrators accompanying the British ruler, want, through education, a modern identity built on their past. The Region has five centres among them. The language and culture of the small Aka tribe of Arunachal Pradesh were endangered. To save their endangered language, Vijay D'Souza developed,



with members of the tribe, an internationally recognised orthography, and he has written four books. The Garo and Khasi tribes of Meghalaya were the next choice.

Fr Peter-Hans Kolvenbach declared intellectual work a priority of the Society. North Eastern Social Research Centre (NESRC) began its work in this field in 2000 with a mandate to combine serious research with networking with field groups, to work for policy changes in favour of the marginalised. It focuses on land and displacement, gender issues, tribal issues, and peace processes in this region of ethnic conflicts. The social apostolate uses self-help groups and other inputs to help women of different communities to

work together for development and peace. Legal Cell for Human Rights (LCHR) launched in 2007 in this region of violation of human rights, works for empowerment through legal awareness particularly among the tea garden workers. For formation, the Region has two pre-noviates and a novitiate. Around ten novices join it every year. In the retreat house attached to it, Jesuits and formed people have been set aside for Ignatian retreats and ongoing formation especially of religious sisters.

The Region looks back with pride on its Jesuit tradition of developing and handing institutions over to others. It gave six schools and a university college in the tea garden

area of Assam to Ranchi Province in 2006. More followed elsewhere. This progress has also had its problems. With 50 priests, 15 of them above 70, the Region runs 27 institutions. Many provinces, including the mother province, Karnataka, have been generous with men and money. Darjeeling Province has opened a college in Mizoram, and Kerala has sent its men to Tripura. Twelve Jesuits from six provinces work in the Region. Despite shortage of personnel, the Region has allotted two young Jesuits to the Society's common works, one to Myanmar, three to China, and one to US Midwest Province.

Today we ask ourselves whether we are expanding too fast and are compromising on quality and our original inspiration. With so few men running so many institutions, do we have time for discernment? In a Region of ethnic diversity and conflicts, do we prepare our men to work for peace and reconciliation? In this biodiversity hotspot, do we do enough in the field of ecology? During its golden jubilee year, the Region can turn these and other questions into challenges for future planning.

● URL: <http://www.nesrc.org>



In the footsteps of St. Francis Xavier

Jesuits return to Malindi

Sossy Luyembe, SJ
St. Charles Lwanga Parish
Malindi, Kenya

Yes, Francis Xavier did come to Africa! He stepped briefly into Malindi (Kenya), Eastern African Coast. This little known Malindi Township is coming out of its Jesuit historical shadows. Jesuit historians may have read and written about “Malindi” (sometimes appearing in historical documents as “Melinde”), but many Jesuits know little or nothing about it!



Malindi served as a brief home for Xavier as he journeyed to India in 1542, missioned by the Superior General, St. Ignatius. Francis Xavier stopped at Malindi for three days in March 1542, following the death of two sailors from the ship on which he was travelling.

At the time, Malindi was among key docking places on the Eastern African coast for Portuguese sailors headed for India in search of spices. Vasco Da Gama had built a pillar (christened as *Vasco Da Gama Point*) at Malindi in 1498, to give direction

to European sailors headed for India. While at Malindi, Francis Xavier held a lively dialogue with learned Muslims of the town. The “Letter of St. Francis Xavier, to his companions living in Rome, Goa 20 September 1542” documents this encounter. In his letter,



Francis Xavier describes Malindi as “a great city of noble buildings.” Moreover, during that brief stay he preached, worshipped and prayed in the historical “Portuguese Chapel,” now known as “St. Francis Xavier Chapel.” The deceased sailors were buried on the premises of this chapel.

The Eastern African Jesuits renovated St. Francis Xavier Chapel in 2006, as the Society of Jesus celebrated the “Triple Anniversaries” of the death of St. Ignatius Loyola (c.1491-1556), and the births of Francis Xavier (1506-1552) and Pe-

ter Faber (1506-1546). The renovation was commissioned by the then Provincial, Fr. Fratern Masawe. It is the oldest known Catholic chapel on the Eastern African Coast and it still stands firm today. Its walls are made of coral rocks and sand, and its roof thatched with coconut leaves.

Growing popularity of Malindi among Eastern African Jesuits

After the renovation, Eastern African Jesuits voiced the need for a Jesuit presence in Malindi to honour St.

Francis Xavier. Following the 2010 inauguration of a Jesuit tertianship in Nairobi, Kenya, the St. Francis Xavier Chapel in Malindi became one of the tertians’ pilgrimage destinations. Tertians have marveled at and cherished the spiritual enrichment they received as they prayed in this historical chapel. The yearly pilgrimages of tertians to the chapel greatly invigorated the desire for Jesuits to establish a permanent presence in Malindi. Eventually, in 2015, the late Bishop Emmanuel Barbara, OFM Cap., invited the Jesuits to establish a permanent apostolate in Malindi,



of Understanding states “Jesuits will run Muyeye Parish in perpetuity”... Therefore, the Jesuits are indeed in Malindi to stay!

Their ministry involves catering to the daily pastoral and spiritual needs of about six hundred parishioners who constitute the Muyeye Parish. The major part of the work, since the arrival of the Jesuits, has been evangelization, Christian formation, retreats and promoting devotion to St. Francis Xavier. On the socio-cultural front, they assist the community in tackling some social ills, namely, unemployment, sex tourism, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS infections.

The brief stay of St. Francis Xavier at Malindi, which took place almost five centuries ago, is finally bearing fruit as Eastern African Jesuits have now honoured him by taking the bold step to go to and stay in Malindi, and labour among its people. This initiative has started to put Malindi back in the limelight of Jesuit historical tracks. A request to the National Museums of Kenya to entrust the stewardship of the famous St. Francis Xavier Chapel to the Jesuits of Eastern Africa has been filed – an uphill task, but to God everything is possible! How wonderful it would be if the Jesuits could care for the chapel and promote it as a pilgrimage destination! We ask your prayers to support this project! Meanwhile, when visiting Malindi, Jesuits and friends can take advantage of the hospitality of the Jesuit Community and the people of St. Charles Lwanga parish, Muyeye! Come and see!

● URL: <http://easternafricajesuits.org/>

asking why, since St. Francis Xavier had been there, the Jesuits would not come and work in Malindi?

Finally, the Jesuits respond: “Malindi, here we are!”

The Provincial, Fr. Joseph Oduor Afulo, and the consultors responded to the Bishop’s invitation. Following two years of consultation, the Bishop and the Jesuits signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two parties in April 2018. That Memorandum paved the way for the com-

ing of the Jesuits into Malindi, 476 years after St. Xavier’s sojourn in the township.

The Jesuits settled in the Muyeye area. After laying the ground, on Sunday, 4 June 2018, the new Muyeye Parish was officially inaugurated with a Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Albert Buijs, MHM, the Diocesan Administrator, accompanied by the Jesuit Provincial of Eastern Africa, a number of Jesuits and diocesan priests, and the Christians of Muyeye. Currently, three Jesuits serve the parish, The Memorandum



Haitian Jesuits face the crisis in Haiti

Conversion requires the Society of Jesus to become more visibly involved in the public life of Haiti

Savien Doblaz

Communications and Development officer for the Jesuits in Haiti

Rarely in the history of the world has a people ever demonstrated in such anger against the violence shown by a country's authorities, both politically and in economic and social terms. In the last five years, Haiti has probably registered one of the highest levels in

the world of people's protests against the behaviour of the state. The protest movement is largely linked to the failure of the state to reconstruct Haiti after the terrible earthquake of 12 January 2010. This brutal wake-up call has since been fuelled by the

indifference of the ruling class to the suffering of the most vulnerable, and other factors including widespread corruption and social inequality.

In fact, every single report from national and international observers



has supported the protests, which is understandable given that nearly all Haiti's development indicators are in the red. Food insecurity affects more than 49% of the population. There is less than 2% vegetation cover while 50% of the population live beneath the poverty threshold, i.e, they subsist on less than two dollars a day.

Forced repatriation and the voluntary return of Haitians has reached record levels. Over the last two years, people have taken to the streets nearly every weekend to demand that the country's rulers should be taken to court and sued for squandering more than 4 billion dollars in funds received from Venezuela's "Petrocaribe" aid programme.

Consequently, thousands of young and not so young Haitians have abandoned the country to go to Chile, Brazil, Argentina, and elsewhere. Sadly, for the rural poor,



who are the main victims of the crisis, their only option for survival is to fell trees, which are then used to make charcoal. In poor districts, armed gangs instilling terror are widespread. It is just beyond belief!

Naturally, the profound social upheaval of Haiti stirs our conscience as Jesuits and as Christians. And we are aware that this crisis will have even more painful – even irreversible – social consequences should the various

stakeholders on the national stage fail to fully engage with the situation. Due to this, the Society is reviewing the co-ordination of its activities in Haiti, our organisational structures as an institution, and our criteria for deciding how to use our resources.

First, after assessing the level of impact of the Jesuits' activities in Haiti, the Society has realised the need for greater involvement, in order to make our engagement here more ef-



ficient and our presence more tangible nationwide. In fact, the Society has hugely increased its presence on the most popular local media platforms and social media. Periodically, we publish position statements on the socio-political situation, and as well as speaking out in the media, we grab whatever opportunity we can to share our views on the crucial issues in Haiti today. Up until now, public reaction to this seems broadly positive.

Now, the Society intends to conduct a far more institutional restructuring exercise in order to reinforce our capacity to undertake lasting and substantial action, as is now required by the situation in Haiti. This is why the new superior of the Jesuits in Haiti and his team are working mainly, if not exclusively, on strategies to allow us to standardise the operational methods we use across all our institutions. This is necessary to ensure that the Society can respond with greater efficiency to the challeng-



es our mission entails. We are working right now on a document that puts forward a raft of measures which we wish to implement in order to strengthen our capacity and operations.

In conclusion, given that the Society only has limited means and that it is subject, given the context of our mission, to increasing demands, we have decided to establish the Curia of the Territory of Haiti as our new governing structure. This will allow us to better manage the resources of the Society. We have updated our methods of expenditure and management and have re-organised the deployment of Jesuits throughout the territory, in the

hope of being able to contribute more efficiently to reconstruction efforts in Haiti. Thanks to this, we have already obtained satisfactory results where the Haitian state has failed miserably. One example of this would be the 200 homes the Society has given to families who were victims of Hurricane Matthew in 2016, in the South and Grand'Anse regions. A further 20 educational establishments have been built thanks to the educational network, *Fe y Alegría Haití* (Faith and Joy Haiti).

Translated by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

- **WEB:** Jesuites du Canada-Haïti
- **URL:** <https://jesuites.ca/haïti/>



At the service of the Church and Malagasy society

The Christian Movement of Executives and Professionals (MCCP) and the UAPs

Fridole Ravahatra, SJ
Chaplain to the MCCP, Madagascar

The *Mouvement Chrétien de Cadres et de Professionnels* (MCCP – The Christian Movement of Executives and Professionals) is an ecclesial movement for those who run businesses both in the public and private sector. Its principal mission is the *evangelisation of the professional world*. As a Catholic action movement, the MCCP is a member of ICMICA, the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, known since 2018 as Pax Romana. This is an international network of Catholic intellectuals and professionals who are at the service of dialogue between faith and culture.

Within this framework, the MCCP provides a forum for discussion which aims to put the faith into action. It offers formation to its members so they may become guides to others, in high-powered professionals who are efficient leaders in the Church and society, at the heart of their families and the professional

world. They are also asked to live in solidarity with the poorest of the poor.

In particular, according to its *Guidelines*, the movement works, among other things, for the promotion of:

*A more democratic society, which encourages participation, equality, freedom, and a sense of the common good.





*A vision of the human person that says being is more important than having, and where there is a seamless-ness between life and faith.

*Non-violence and the respect for human dignity: the value of human life is unique. It should never be oppressed or destroyed under any circumstances.

*The safeguarding of natural resources and the environment.



*The preferential option for the poor, the marginalised, and the abandoned within a social system that values money above all else.

People inspired by Ignatian spirituality

The movement's spirituality involves *finding God in all things* especially in the professional environment so familiar to executives. Evangelisation is one part of the movement. Its purpose is based on our faith in Jesus Christ, hence the importance of prayer, as much for individuals as for the whole group. To find God in all things, one needs to be familiar with God and have an intimate and personal relationship with him.

The practice of the Spiritual Exercises developed in the movement a few



2017 congress to the Pope's encyclical *Laudato Si'*, focussing on the question, "What kind of world do we want to leave the next generation, the children of to-day?" Three points in particular were the focus of our reflection: Madagascar's national policy on the environment, the main themes of *Laudato Si'*, and spirituality and ecology.

The movement concluded the congress by adopting the following resolutions:

- *To contribute to human ecology via reforestation and a ban on products harmful to the environment.
- *To devise educational programmes about the environment for primary schools, parishes, and families.
- *Monitoring the laws on the environment to ensure they are enacted.
- *Raising awareness of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* wherever its values need to be promoted.

The MCCP wishes to anchor its effective participation in public life and the life of the Church in being a movement of Catholic action. It always considers national circumstances in the light of its pedagogy of *reflection - commitment - action* but always giving priority to spiritual formation. This brief outline illustrates how this movement is living out the spirit of the *Universal Apostolic Preferences* of the Society of Jesus.

Translation by Elizabeth Twiston Davies

● URL: <https://www.icmica-miic.org/fr/>

years ago. Our annual retreat has already become a tradition. It is adapted to the circumstances of each retreatant and invites them to "order their lives" and practise true "discernment" in order to make a deeper commitment.

In 2002, the members, being rooted in their faith and willing to contribute to the life of the nation, decided, after prayerful reflection, to seek solutions to corruption, in response to the bishops' invitation to Christians to "fight against corruption" and get involved in "the life of the nation."

The option for the poor

From the start, the movement has regarded solidarity with the poor as a key component of its activity. Each team devotes part of its time to helping those in

need and to giving witness to solidarity through teaching literacy to children who do not go to school, helping prisoners, the sick, and the handicapped.

Aware of the role they occupy at the heart of society, in 2005 Christian executives pledged to place their skills at the service of the development of the country during a congress which took as its theme, "Christian businessmen and women as leading stakeholders in a changing political and economic context." They fully grasped their duty to support their fellow citizens and nation as much on a spiritual level as through social development.

Our Common Home

In response to the degradation of the environment, the MCCP dedicated its

Merci – **Thank you** – Gracias – Grazie – Danke

Gratitude strengthens relationships



the Society of Jesus. These expressions of gratitude strengthen these bonds!

The annual publication that you have in your hands is a manifestation of gratitude of the Jesuits to their friends, benefactors and partners in mission.

Continue to support the commitments of the Society of Jesus

This reinforcement of mutual recognition invites us to mutual prayer. It will also encourage you to support concretely the Jesuits and Jesuit works.

At the end of most of the articles, a link to a website is provided. Use this link to contact the works to offer your services and donations. You can also contact the **Development Office** of the Jesuit Province where you live. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

When Father General visits a Province or a work of the Society, his presence in the midst of his own people is a source of joy. It is also an opportunity

for those who receive him to express their gratitude to him. His presence is itself a form of recognition for the support that all these people offer to

Another way to cultivate our bonds:

<http://jesuits.global/en/newsletter/>

Subscribe to the **newsletter** of the General Curia.

Every two weeks you will receive news about the life of the Society.

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During the coming year, you will find invitations to the activities of the **Ignatian Year 2021-2022**.

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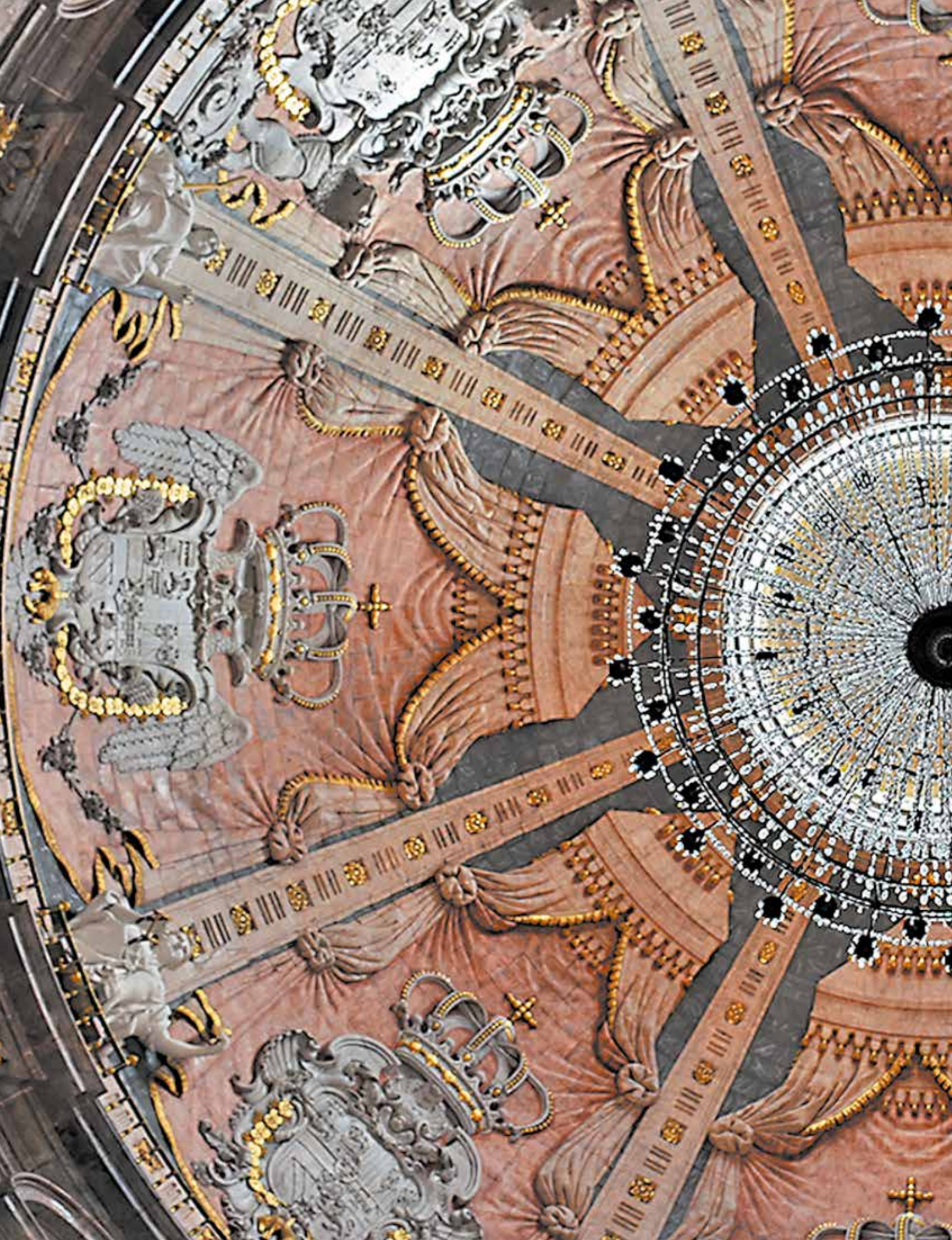
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Give what you have*

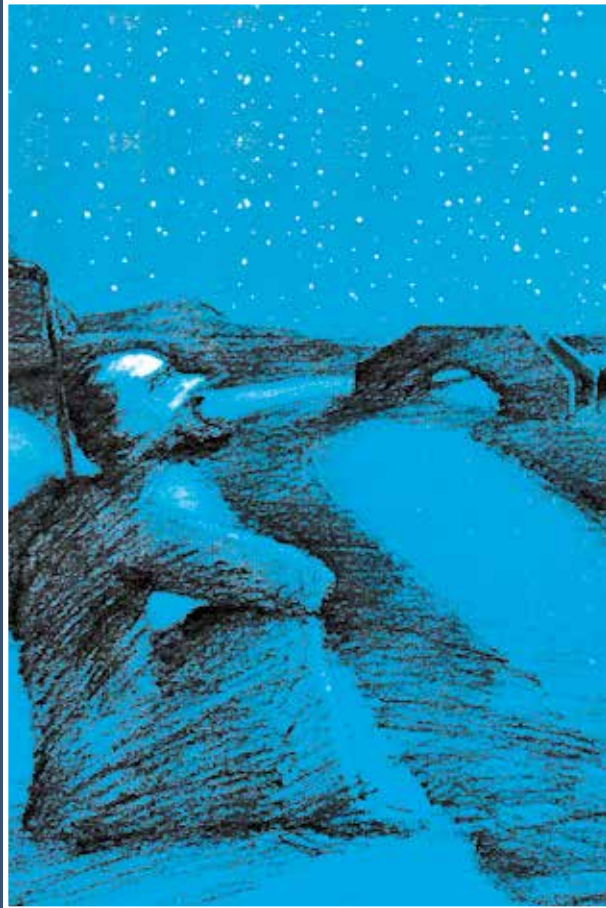
(Rose Ausländer, Jewish poet)



Please pray for vocations
to the Society of Jesus.







Ignatius 500
YEARS SINCE
IGNATIUS
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