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# Of Kingfishers and Dragonflies: Faith and Justice at the Core of Jesuit Education

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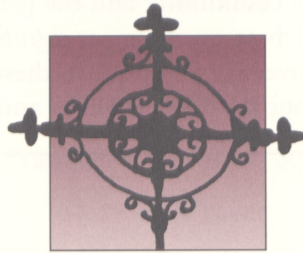
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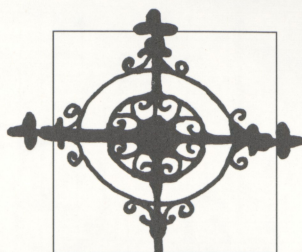


**“Of Kingfishers and Dragonflies”**  
Faith and Justice at the Core of Jesuit Education

**Joseph Daoust, S.J.**

Public Lecture  
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## Of Kingfishers and Dragonflies Faith and Justice at the Core of Jesuit Education

Joseph Daoust, S.J.

The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote of how all creatures shine forth most beautifully when they act out of their deepest selves.

*As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves—goes itself; **myself** it speaks and spells  
Crying **What I do is me: for that I came.***

*I say more: the just man justices;  
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—  
Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.<sup>1</sup>*

Like kingfishers and dragonflies, to *selve itself*, Jesuit higher education<sup>2</sup> must act out its faith and justice commitment as something at the very core of its mission as a university. Commitment to faith and justice cannot be something peripheral or added on, but has to be intrinsic to its central activities, part of its very essence, at the heart of its educational character. If not, then no matter how many service programs or politically correct speakers series are provided, or fair employment policies or prayer services, the Jesuit university is not being true to its inmost self, its identity. It risks being gilded with the cynicism with which our culture rightly views cigarette companies sponsoring health fairs or petroleum firms running environmental ads. The marginal good that is promoted is not consonant with the central mission of the enterprise.

It is usually said that the central mission of any university is to seek truth. This is certainly a necessary part of its mission, but not sufficient. As children of the Enlightenment, or perhaps its grandchildren—postmodern deconstructionists, it is hard for us to remember that universities were not the creation of the Enlightenment. They came into being well before then in a number of cultures, based in religious conviction that the fullness of

being, or reality, could become ever more known.<sup>3</sup> And when it was known, it would be known with all the transcendentals together; it would be true and good and beautiful integrally. When Alexander IV wrote to the *Universitas magistrorum et scholarium* in Paris 750 years ago, he described them as a community which had come together “in a common love of knowledge for the good of humanity.”<sup>4</sup> Truth and goodness were united as the core of what the *Universitas* was about. (It was also arguably about the beautiful, but that is a subject beyond the topic of this lecture.)

Universities that are faith based and focused on serving the good of society, then, are not some aberrant trend; they are in the mainstream of what universities have historically been about. This has been especially true about the character and mission of Jesuit universities since the first of them was begun by Ignatius Loyola four hundred fifty years ago.<sup>5</sup>

### *Ignatian Inspiration*

Jesuit universities were born as part of the humanist movement, which was reacting against the desiccated state of scholastic education prevalent in medieval universities. The humanists were especially vociferous about the failure to relate learning to a life of virtue and public service.<sup>6</sup> They shared the general Renaissance belief in the power of education to form and reform the moral character of individuals and of entire societies. And they were convinced there was an especially strong relationship between exposure to good literature and virtue. Prime among the virtues they hoped to inculcate were faith and upright character (*pietas*), the latter being the dedicated commitment to the good of one's society, (as found in *pius Aeneas* of Virgil's *Aeneid*, rather than the meeker English transliteration “piety”).

While there were many goals the early Jesuits hoped to achieve through schools, chief among them were that students would develop good habits and virtue, and would direct their studies to the service of others, for “those who are now only students will grow up to be pastors, civic officials, administrators of justice, and will fill other important posts to everybody's profit and advantage.”<sup>7</sup> Reasons given for opening particular schools were: Tivoli (1550) “for the benefit of the city”; Valencia (1552) “colleges are a powerful instrument for the reform of cities”; Murcia (1555) “colleges are of great benefit to the republic by producing good priests, good civic officials, and good citizens of every status.” In 1556, Ribadeneira wrote to Phillip II of Spain that “all the well being of Christianity and of the whole world depends on the proper education of youth.”



Among the characteristics of 16th-century Jesuit education were two that are no longer followed today: they were tuition free, and the Jesuits were never allowed to use physical punishment on the students. (When fighting broke out in the school corridors, the Jesuits got around the latter requirement by hiring lay proctors to come in to beat the students;<sup>8</sup> such was the inauspicious beginning of lay collaboration in Jesuit education!) Other characteristics true of Jesuit education then, and still important today, included: They had special concern for educating the poor, but they aimed at a mix of social classes, rich and poor together; they stressed character formation and the inner appropriation of ethical and religious values; they were an international network, but involved in outreach to local situations of poverty; and the teaching was not just to be verbal or conceptual, but suffused with love for the students, treating them with *familiaritas*, using example as the “teaching under the teaching.”<sup>9</sup>

John O’Malley, the prominent commentator on early Jesuit ministries, summed up their approach to education this way: “The Jesuits looked more to formation of mind and character, to *Bildung*, than to the acquisition of ever more information or the advancement of the disciplines. . . . [A Jesuit *Ratio* of the time] rose above details of curriculum and pedagogical technique without claiming education to be the panacea for all the ills of church and society. It ended with a section on ‘topics’ or ‘common-places’ for speaking and writing, which climaxed with typically humanist considerations about ‘human dignity.’ That theme accorded with the benign relationship between nature and grace that the Jesuits espoused, and hence fitted in a generic way with the positive view of human nature that undergirded Jesuit enthusiasm for education in the humanistic mode.”<sup>10</sup>

For over four hundred years before Pedro Arrupe spoke of the aim of Jesuit education as being to form “men and women for others”<sup>11</sup>, such holistic education and formation for serving society have been at the heart of its mission. And it could not be otherwise, since the inspiration of Jesuit education, like every Jesuit or Ignatian enterprise, is rooted in the dynamic of *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola*.<sup>12</sup>

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, once one is healed and set free from sinful attachments in the First Week, the dynamic builds on the call to service at the side of Christ the King. That call is found seminally in the particular Ignatian contemplation on the Incarnation. There, rather than the typical scene of a peasant Jewish girl and an angel, Ignatius has the contemplation begin with imagining the Trinity gazing on the whole circuit

of the world, full of diverse peoples, at peace or war, healthy or sick, being born or dying. The Trinity, seeing all the peoples of the earth in such great blindness, doing evil, dying and going to hell, is moved with great compassion, and out of love, decides to send the Son to become incarnate as a human, leading the effort to renew the face of the earth. That is the mission for which the King calls us to his side; and much of the rest of the *Exercises* are focused on our understanding all that such a call entails, both in suffering and in resurrection. Finally, at the end of the *Exercises*, we are ready to go forth on mission, and to find God already at work in our world, in all things.

Such a dynamic underlies what has been called the Ignatian Educational Paradigm. In Ignatian spirituality, experience needs to be reflected on to find God at work in it. Then through analysis and discernment, decisions about how to join with what God’s spirit is doing leads one to decision and action, which then creates further experience to be reflected on, find God, and follow, etc. Recent Jesuit General Congregations call for all Jesuit institutions to use “the apostolic pedagogy of St. Ignatius, a constant interplay of experience, reflection and action. Experience is to be reflected on in the light of faith, including a well informed use of social and cultural analysis, and an inculturation which opens us to the newness of Jesus the Savior in the evolution of every people.”<sup>13</sup>

Experience, both personal and of one’s society and culture, is to be taken seriously as the starting point of education. Analyzing that, one can discern how God’s spirit is moving us to build up the reign of God, a reign of justice and peace on earth. Hearing the call of Christ to join in that mission, we have a sense of the meaning of our lives—to be about that mission, and can “find God in all things” as we continually learn through experience, reflection, and action all our lives. That is the Ignatian pedagogy that leads to forming “men and women for others.”

### ***Catholic Identity***

Jesuit colleges and universities are, of course, fully Catholic in their inspiration and identity. In 1990, Pope John Paul II outlined the essential characteristics of Catholic universities in the Apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*:

“Since the objective of a Catholic university is to assure in an institutional manner a Christian presence in the university world confronting the great problems of society and culture, every Catholic university, as Catholic, must have the following essential characteristics:



- (1) Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such;
  - (2) continuing reflection in the light of faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge...
  - (3) fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church; and
  - (4) an institutional commitment to service of others...in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life.”
- [*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, no. 13.]<sup>14</sup>

Christian inspiration ... reflection in faith ... fidelity ... commitment to service. Such is the vision that underlies the entire academic enterprise in a Catholic university. It gives the motive forces, the dynamic underlying the love for truth which is the *raison d'être* of the university. And the final goal of a Catholic university, beyond career preparation or advancement of disciplines, is to give meaning to life, to find “the *meaning* of truth, that fundamental value without which freedom, justice and human dignity are extinguished ... For what is at stake is the very meaning of scientific and technological research, of social life and culture; but on an even more profound level, what is at stake is the very meaning of the human person.”<sup>15</sup>

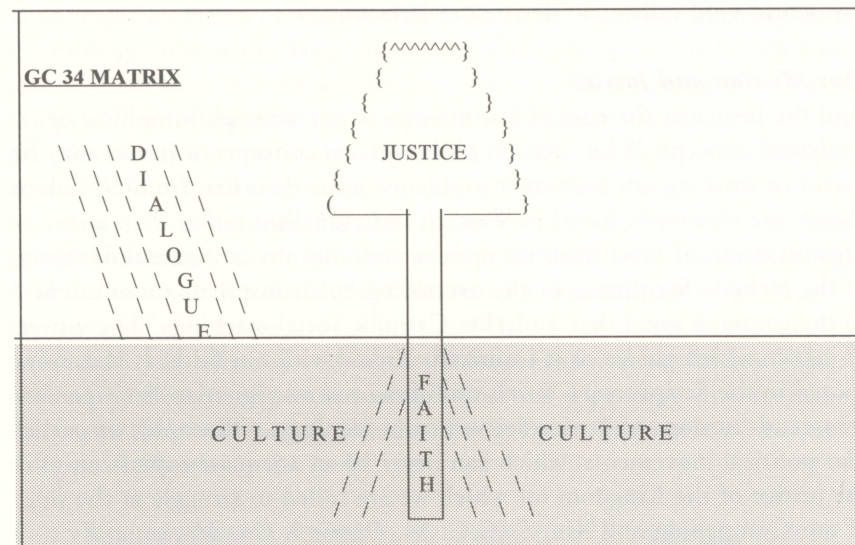
And central to that quest for meaning in the mission of the Catholic university is serving the larger society. It carries out this mission through studying the serious issues of society, such as human life, equal justice for all, the environment, peace, an economic and political order that will be more equitable and serve the human community better. And it educates so that its graduates will be concerned about these issues, enabling them to evaluate prevailing cultural values in the light of the Gospel, and challenging them to lives of service to others for the promotion of social justice. Thus every Catholic university has a responsibility to contribute concretely, as a university, to the progress of society toward the justice of the Kingdom.<sup>16</sup> That is at the core of the integrating vision which animates its identity as a Catholic university.

### ***Jesuit Mission***

Rooted in Ignatian spirituality and Catholic in their identity, Jesuit colleges and universities share in the core mission of all Jesuit institutions as this has been delineated by the 34th General Congregation, the most recent (1995) of the worldwide legislative assemblies of the Jesuit Order.<sup>17</sup> In that congregation, the work of all Jesuit institutions was placed solidly within the framework of the Church's overall mission, which is evangelization. But evangelization is not limited to the sometimes oversimplified

notions of proclamation, conversion, and creation of local churches; equally important in the Church's own understanding of evangelization are life witness, inculturation, dialogue, and the promotion of justice.<sup>18</sup> It is these latter aspects of Church mission which are the most appropriate focus of educational institutions.

The General Congregation reaffirmed what had been articulated by previous congregations since the Second Vatican Council: that the service of faith and the promotion of justice are the heart of the mission of all Jesuit institutions. But it called special attention to the need to root these dimensions of mission in the culture, building on social forces that nourish such a mission, and working counterculturally against whatever undercuts it. And dialogue was stressed as a preferred way of fostering the growth of such a mission, especially in the midst of the pluralism and often cynicism of these postmodern times. A schematic of how these interrelate would be:



“The aim of our mission (the service of faith) and its integrating principle (faith directed towards justice) are dynamically related to the inculturated proclamation of the Gospel and dialogue as integral dimensions of evangelization. The integrating principle extends its influence into these dimensions which, like branches growing from the one tree, form a matrix of integral features within our one mission of the service of faith and the promotion of justice.”<sup>19</sup>

In the experience of Jesuit institutions in recent decades, justice has been



most able to flourish where it grew out of the taproot of faith, and was firmly rooted in an understanding of the cultural forces that supported it or militated against it. And dialogue with those of different perspectives had often nourished it more effectively than confrontation. Where these different dimensions of mission had not been integrated, little has been accomplished.

The faith that must underlie working for justice is not an exclusive or sectarian one. In some parts of the world where the majority of students and faculty are not Christian, all have been able to work very effectively together, sharing faith in the active presence of God, working in the world, calling us to work alongside the Spirit to renew the face of the earth. This is faith in God as portrayed in the *Spiritual Exercises*, which have often been made quite successfully by Christians of all denominations, as well as by Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists. It is the faith necessary to sustain us in the journey, in spite of all setbacks, toward the more just world God calls us to devote our lives to.

### ***Our Mission and Justice***

And the justice at the core of our mission is not some philosophical or analytical concept. While certain philosophical concepts of justice may be useful in working out particular problems, most theorists, from Nozick to Rawls, are ultimately based in Western individualism rather than an organic vision of social realities such as underlies the covenantal dynamic of the Hebrew Scriptures, or the overriding Spirit-inspired commitment to the common good that underlies Catholic social teaching. "The vision of justice which guides us is intimately linked with our faith. It is deeply rooted in the Scriptures, Church tradition, and our Ignatian heritage. It transcends notions of justice derived from ideology, philosophy, or particular political movements, which can never be an adequate expression of the justice of the Kingdom for which we are called to struggle at the side of our Companion and King." [G.C. 34, *Decree 3: Our Mission and Justice*, no. 3]

The Scriptural vision of justice is one of fidelity to the demands of relationship: God with us, and as part of that covenant, we with one another.<sup>20</sup> Justice is relational rather than rooted in self-interest, no matter how enlightened; it is radically social in nature. And it is not just procedural, such as notions of fairness; it is substantive, concerned with providing the full measure of participation in the life and goods of the community to all. It is less concerned with recognizing rights than with making

society "right." Allied in Scripture with love, compassion, and the fullness of peace, it forms with them a complex nexus characterizing a society where the reign of God is coming into being. It has a prophetic, active, challenging quality, always calling society and individuals beyond where we are to the vision of what God's spirit calls us to become. And God is not seen as impartial; God takes the side of the oppressed, and is deeply concerned with those who are most marginalized. God's preferential love for the outcast of our social structures—"the widow, the orphan, the stranger in the land"—is the Scriptural basis for what has come to be called the preferential option for the poor.

Such a vision of justice is often more fully conveyed in stories with synthetic resonance, rather than in analytic concepts. The image in Micah 4 of the mountain of God's reign, where swords will be hammered into ploughshares, spears into sickles, and each will sit under his own vine and her own fig tree "with no one to trouble them," has echoed down the ages as an inspiring vision of what society is meant to be. More challenging to the existing order is the Magnificat (*Luke 1:46-55*) where God pulls down princes from their thrones and exalts the lowly, fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich away empty. The Beatitudes (*Luke 6:20-23*) and parables like Dives and Lazarus (*Luke 16:20-25*) parallel this subversive quality of God's call to justice. The scene of the Last Judgement in Matthew 25 has been paradigmatic for two millennia: "When I was hungry, thirsty, naked, a stranger, sick or in prison, did you care for me?" And the vision of Revelations epitomizes what humankind longs for as the outcome of the struggle for justice: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...the holy city coming down from God...beautiful as a bride... where God lives among humankind...God will wipe away all tears from their eyes, there will be no more death or sadness. The world of the past has gone." (*Revelation 21:1-7*)

This vision of justice is echoed in the traditions of the Church, both in practice by the people of God, and in social teaching especially of the last century. In their pastoral letter on economic justice,<sup>21</sup> the U.S. bishops delineate the model of a just community in Catholic social teaching. There they attempt to supplant the usual U.S. religious preoccupation exclusively with the individual's relation with a transcendent God. Rather, they point out that Catholic social teaching is based on the human dignity of all, each one of us having been created with that inalienable dignity by God. Created in the image of the triune God, we are inherently called into relationship.



Out of gratitude for what we have been given, God asks us in covenant to commit ourselves to the community, to solidarity with others, to the common good. And the touchstone of whether we are living up to that covenant is found in how we treat those who cannot do good to us in return, the poor and marginalized, the modern equivalent of the widow, orphan, stranger in the land of ancient Israel. Toward them, we are called not just to “works of mercy,” the charitable sharing of what we have been given by God. Beyond such distributive justice, we are called to “participative justice,” to give them a meaningful place at the table where they can participate in the creation of the community as equals. Then the community can all the better renew itself, and create a fuller community life, which in turn will build up the human dignity of all, again called into this covenantal cycle of building up the reign of God on earth. And the transcendent God is to be found immanently at the center of such community activity, working in our midst, calling us to join in renewing the face of the earth.

Thus justice is based in our faith, evocative of our traditions, at the center of the synthesis of human experience and religious values. It is also a complex, evolving reality as society itself is constantly developing new possibilities of progress as well as forms of injustice. It involves more than just economic or political structural change. The 34th General Congregation noted new dimensions where the call to justice must be played out: human rights, life, the environment, interdependence in a globalizing world, and special concern for those most excluded in these times: refugees, indigenous peoples, the unemployed.<sup>22</sup> Justice is allied with reconciliation, the preferential option for the poor, and solidarity; “the firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good.”<sup>23</sup>

### *Implementation*

There are, of course, those who do not agree that justice should be so integrated with faith at the center of mission. Some opt for a faith that may be connected with God’s justification of us in the Pauline sense, but with no incarnational connection with the justice we are called to in response to God’s covenant. Attempts to make religion innocuous, blessing the status quo rather than challenging it, have a long history. But even among those of good will, there can be resistance to this call to justice, particularly in education, since they interpret social justice solely as working directly with the poor, or advocating structural change in an activist sense, neither of which is at the heart of the educational enterprise in their view.

But there are at least three levels or ways of working for social justice, all

of which are equally necessary if justice is to be achieved in our complex world. The 34th General Congregation called upon every Jesuit institution to promote justice in one or more of these ways: (1) direct service and accompaniment of the poor; (2) developing awareness of the demands of justice and the social responsibility to achieve it; (3) participating in social mobilization for the creation of a more just social order.<sup>24</sup> Arguably neither the first (direct service) or third (advocacy) level is at the heart of what the educational enterprise is about; soup kitchens and political mobilization campaigns are organized around these ways of “doing” justice. But the second level, developing social consciousness and conscience, or conscientization as the Latin Americans call it, is of the essence of Jesuit education. A university which does not, in its main educational activities, concern itself with this mission is not, as we have seen, in the Jesuit or Catholic tradition.

This is not to say that universities have no role at the advocacy or social service level. Complex institutions can and often should be active at all three levels, but always keeping focused on their core mission. For example, a soup kitchen, be it ever so active in advocacy, had better serve good, healthful soup; without doing that it loses its credibility as an advocate. But if it fulfills its core mission well, it would be a better institution if it cares about the social consciousness of those involved with it, and if it becomes involved in advocacy on hunger issues. Likewise, a university, no matter how much community service it offers, or if it joins in on campaigns for this or that issue, fails at its mission if it is not effectively engaged in educating for consciousness and conscience. Given that it is carrying out such a mission, it can best engage in service programs that will advance the consciousness and conscience of its students and faculty—e.g., service learning rather than just community service. And it can credibly speak to social issues in the larger community insofar as its critiques are based on solid research and scholarship.

A final word about where Jesuit universities carry out their mission: It is no accident that most of them are located in urban centers. (In fact, in the last century, Jesuits turned down an offer to start a new Catholic university in the rural town of South Bend because it was too far removed from the cities where immigrant populations were centered.) The 34th General Congregation spoke movingly about this deliberate urban focus of Jesuit institutions:

*“Ignatius loved the great cities” because they were the places where this transformation of the human community was taking place. The “city” can stand*



for us as the symbol of this modern effort to bring about a fulfilled human culture. That the project, in its present form, is seriously flawed, no one doubts; that we look at it now with more scepticism than we did even thirty years ago, is right; that it exhibits massive dislocations and inequalities is clear to all; that, in the totalitarian experiments of this century, it shows itself brutal and almost demonic in its intensity, none will dispute; that it is not far from the Babel and Babylon of the Bible is also true. But it is also our muddled, but inescapable, attempt to attain a community which, according to the Apocalypse, God will bring about—and God will bring it about—in the form of the holy city, the radiant New Jerusalem. . . . Until that day, our vocation is to work generously with the Risen Christ in the all-too-human city where there is poverty of body and spirit, domination and control, manipulation of mind and heart, and to serve the Lord there until he returns to bestow perfection on the world where he died<sup>25</sup>.

In conclusion, then, we have seen how Jesuit colleges and universities have at the core of their mission a commitment to faith and justice. They carry out that mission by educating so that students have an organic vision of social reality, and are challenged to lives of serving society after they graduate. They provide a context for intelligent commitment, giving students intellectual resources and forming character so that their graduates can truly go forth as “men and women for others.”

How to teach, model, inculcate this vision? That is the question we will be grappling with for the remainder of the weekend at this conference, and hopefully well into the 21st century. Let us do so with confidence that God is at work in our midst. To paraphrase Hopkins:

*As kingfishers let us catch fire, as dragonflies draw flame;  
As Jesuit universities we do one thing and the same:  
Deal out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves—become ourselves;  
Crying **What We do is faith and justice: for that We came.***

*I say more: the just university justices;  
Keeps **faith: that** keeps all our goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye we are—  
Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To our God through the features of our students' faces.*

## Endnotes

1. Untitled and undated poem (probably 1881–2) by Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J. *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by W.H. Gardner and N.H. MacKenzie, 4th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 90.
2. Here and throughout, whenever *Jesuit education* is referred to, what is meant is education in the Jesuit tradition, very much including all those involved in the enterprise, whether they are Jesuits or not. To be fully inclusive of the many lay women and men who make such education possible, the more appropriate term might be *Ignatian education*, but the former term seems fixed in the popular understanding.
3. Centuries before the Enlightenment, the Buddhist universities of north India (e.g. Nalanda), the Muslim ones in the Middle East, and those of Christian Europe all grew up as religious centers where faith was a compelling motivation to seek to know reality as fully as possible, as a reflection of the divine. It was only two centuries ago, during the French Revolution, that the goddess Reason was enthroned in Notre Dame Cathedral, symbolizing the attempt to separate reason from faith—a cultural phenomenon we have not completely recovered from yet. Cf. John Paul II's encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1998).
4. Letter to University of Paris, Pope Alexander IV, April 14, 1255. *Bullarium Diplomatum* cited in *Origins*, vol. 20, p. 275.
5. The first Jesuit university founded primarily for lay students was at Messina in Sicily (1548). Early Jesuit schools typically encompassed what would today be called primary and secondary as well as college level studies. By Ignatius' death in 1556, more than 50 such institutions had been begun on three continents. Cf. pp. 26-45, William Bangert, *A History of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1972).
6. One of the best descriptions of the moving forces behind early Jesuit educational ventures is found in *Chapter 6: The Schools* of John O'Malley's excellent book, *The First Jesuits* (Boston: Harvard Univ. Press, 1993), to which I am deeply indebted for much of this historical material.



7. In 1551 Polanco listed 15 reasons for the Jesuits to open schools, ending with this overall benefit to the local community. For this and following quotations, cf. John O'Malley, *op. cit.*, 209–215.

8. "For those who fail in their duties, if they are little boys for whom words are not enough, an extern (i.e., someone not a Jesuit) is to be hired as a corrector to chastise them and keep them in fear. Thus none of our men will have to lay his hand on anyone." Ignatius' Letter to Araoz, Dec. 1, 1555. *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, Epistolae et Instructiones IV*, p.6. Cf. also Ignatius in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, no. 488.

9. John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 226–7.

10. John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 214.

11. The phrase "men and women for others" became emblematic for Jesuit education following the Superior General's Address to the International Congress of Jesuit Alumni in Valencia, Spain, July 31, 1973. But as his address made clear, the concern to educate agents of change who would promote social justice had always underlain Jesuit education. This address can be found, among other locations, in the collection of Arrupe's addresses, *Justice with Faith Today*, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980), 123–138.

12. Cf. George Ganss, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992).

13. *Documents of the 33rd General Congregation* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984), *Decree 1*, nos. 43–44. This constant interplay is not, of course, solely Ignatian. H. Richard Niebuhr noted that it is wrong to begin with the question "What should I do?" Rather, the prior question should be asked: "What is God doing in the world?" That is the context for answering the other question. Something analogous to the process of experience-reflection-action has been called the hermeneutic circle (Juan Luis Segundo), the circle of praxis (Paolo Freire) or the pastoral cycle (John Coleman). It is fundamental to political or liberation theological method. But for Jesuit universities, it is rooted in their Ignatian heritage, transcending any particular discipline's methods.

14. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae: the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities*, no. 13. The full text is in *Origins*, Oct. 4, 1990, vol. 20 no. 17. This fun-

damental charter for Catholic education worldwide has been universally well received, and is not to be confused with the more controversial *U.S. Norms for Implementation of Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, a set of juridical regulations under discussion in the U.S. Bishops' Conference (cf. *Origins*, Sept. 30, 1999, vol. 29 no. 16).

15. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, nos. 4 and 7, citing John Paul II to the International Congress of Catholic Universities (1989).

16. Cf. especially *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, nos. 32–34.

17. Cf. *Documents of the 34th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995). The core mission decree is *Decree 2: Servants of Christ's Mission*, which is amplified in the following three decrees on mission, dealing respectively with justice, culture, and dialogue. The discussion here focuses especially on *Decree 2*, nos. 3, 14–15.

18. John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1990), n. 41.

19. General Congregation 34, *Decree 2: Servants of Christ's Mission*, no. 15.

20. For the scriptural discussion of justice, I am greatly indebted to John Donahue's excellent work *What Does the Lord Require? A Bibliographical Essay on the Bible and Social Justice* (St. Louis, Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits, vol. 25 no.2, March 1993).

21. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1986); also in *Origins*, vol. 16, no. 24 (Nov. 27, 1986).

22. Cf. General Congregation 34, *Decree 3: Our Mission and Justice*, nos. 5–16.

23. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1987), no. 38.

24. General Congregation 34, *Decree 3: Our Mission and Justice*, no. 19.

25. General Congregation 34, *Decree 4: Our Mission and Culture*, no. 26.