



Secretariat for Secondary and Pre-secondary Education
Society of Jesus
Rome

Highlights of JESSEDU-Rio2017

Fr. General at the International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates

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Highlights of JESEDU-Rio2017

**FR. GENERAL AT THE
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
FOR JESUIT EDUCATION
DELEGATES**

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Index

- 1 ... Presentation**
- 2 ... Interview with Fr. General**
 - 3 Context
 - 5 Discernment Paragraph
- 6 ... Homily**
 - 6 Context
 - 9 Discernment Paragraph
- 10 ... Keynote Address**
 - 11 Context
 - 24 Discernment Paragraph
- 25 ... Conversation**
 - 26 Context
 - 33 Discernment Paragraph
- 34 ... Action Statement**
 - 35 Context
 - 38 Questions

Presentation

From October 16th to 20th, 2017, the International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates was held in Rio de Janeiro.

The Congress produced many documents: lectures, group work, conversations, reflections, syntheses, etc. Among these documents, it is especially worth noting the **Action Statement** prepared by ICAJE (International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education) and approved by the delegates. This statement represents the consensus of the participants that emerged during the Congress, and it serves as an important roadmap to developing the global apostolic potential of our secondary and pre-secondary education.

The other group of documents that embody the spirit of the Congress are the valuable contributions of Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ during the final days of the event. From the very beginning of his term, Father General has understood the importance of JESEDU-Rio2017. As a result, as explained by the Education Secretary of the Society, Fr. José Alberto Mesa SJ, Fr. Sosa accepted the invitation to this Congress just a few days after being chosen as the new General of the Society by General Congregation 36, making this his first commitment in his new role.

This publication contains the record of Fr. General's four interventions during the Congress: his homily, Keynote Address, discussion and interview. The texts published herein have been approved by Fr. General, and can therefore be cited as his official words.

In order to provide support to those who would like to delve deeper into the contents and the spirit of the documents published herein, for each document the editorial team provides a discernment paragraph outlining some of its central elements, and proposes several questions to assist with discernment and a deeper understanding of the contents.

We firmly believe that Fr. General's message proposes a series of challenges and important guidelines to the education delegates that we can only face as a global network. We also believe that the richness of this message can be discovered through a systematic reading of his four interventions during the Congress.

We hope this publication serves as a useful tool for all educational communities and networks, and that this encourages us to work towards greater service in our shared educational mission.

AMDG
Editorial Committee



Interview with Fr. General



Context

Fr. General attended the Congress on Thursday, October 19 and Friday, October 20. Several months before, the Congress' communication team invited him to a brief interview. Fr. General graciously accepted; the interview was recorded on the 19th and was made public together with his speech on the 20th.

The interview took place in the library of *Colégio Santo Inácio*. During the Congress, Fr. General also stayed at the school's Jesuit community. The interview was conducted by Ciara Beuster, from Educate Magis.



Interview Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ with Educate Magis International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates JESEDU-Rio2017

October 19th, 2017
Original in Spanish

Interview granted by F. General to the JESEDU-Rio2017 communication team.

October 2017.

Interviewer: Ciara Beuster (Educate Magis)

Ciara: Hello everyone, we are in the final days of the International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates JESEDU-Rio. Fr. General, it is a great pleasure to have you here with us.

Question 1: We know that schools, teachers and students in general are following the Congress. What message would you like to send to them?

Fr. General: Thanks, Ciara. First of all, I would like to acknowledge something. As we all know, the Society's schools are very old. Nevertheless, I would say that they are no longer "that old"; today's schools are very different from the schools of 50, 40, 30, or even 10 years ago! They have undergone an incredible, creative and bold renovation process, in all aspects. The schools took the Mission of the Society of Jesus very seriously after the Second Vatican Council and General Congregation 32, and they connected with social volunteering and social work. They delved deeper into Ignatian Spirituality, with deep and varied reflections on what the Pedagogical Paradigm means. Today's reality is very different from that of a few years ago.

I want to start by acknowledging this.

At the same time, I want to say that this process is not over. Just the opposite. The world is changing rapidly, and it seems that today we have greater challenges than we had 50, 40 or 20 years ago. Today, we are facing challenges as notable as, for example, the new “digital culture” that involves another way of thinking and that, as a result, also demands another way of educating.

My message is for us to move forward at a faster pace so that we are one step ahead of the present, because the future will not wait for us and we have to be prepared. In other words, we have to be ready to keep on working creatively with an education that really makes it possible for our schools to contribute to the transformation of the world and of society. Today, this is not limited to the transformation of a small town or a nation; we are part of a process, a current, with which we want to help **CHANGE THE WORLD**. Not just part of the world, that is not possible. So, my message is one of encouragement. Many people have repeated the phrase I said at the beginning of my time as General of the Society: the “audacity of the impossible”. Well, that is what I am asking of all of you: that we have the audacity to know that what looks impossible today really is not. Everything is possible with faith, with creativity, if we place ourselves in the hand of God as the Virgin Mary did. Then, we accompany one another in this process.

Ciara: Thank you very much.

Question 2: What feelings are you left with after spending these days with the delegates at the Congress?

I have a feeling of great joy and plenty of hope. Joy, because this gathering has truly been something new, original. Nothing was improvised, it was all part of a long process, of this way of getting “tied up” in education. In addition, this Congress has had its stages. We did not come here wondering what could be done; there was a program behind it, a strategy. Really, I see the challenge of wanting to take the Society of Jesus’ educational commitment further.

I also feel joy being around so many people I have not seen in so long, and of course getting to know new people; it is very gratifying. I have seen how this communication has grown, this collaboration involving all of us and a great deal of spontaneity. Things were quite different a few years ago, and it gives me plenty of joy to personally experience this change.

The second thing I feel is hope. I see that there is a great deal of creative potential in the people involved. That gives me hope, but I also believe that no one is naïve about this. We all know about the difficulties; we experience them every day, they do not hide. For example, insufficient resources make things increasingly difficult for all of us, and we face challenges as significant as education on the African continent or in peripheral areas of the rest of the world. As long as we do not try to hide all this, I feel that we have a great deal of

spirit that comes from knowing that through education, we really are helping to form men and women who can see their futures with optimism.

Ciara: Thank you very much Father General, it has been a pleasure.

Note: The interview took place in the Library of Colégio Santo Inácio in Rio de Janeiro, on October 19, 2017

Discernment paragraph

Ciara Beuster of *Educate Magis* interviews Fr. General after his first day at the congress, the day before his keynote speech. Fr. General begins by acknowledging the **great effort of renewal undertaken by our schools** in the last 50 years. Our schools are now, in many ways, very different. However, this is a **process that must continue since the world continues to change**. Fr. General even invites us to **advance more quickly** practicing the **audacity of the impossible** of those who trust in God. Fr. General also expresses **the joy and hope** that the JESEDU-Rio congress means for the Society: **Joy** because the congress is a testimony to our desire to deepen our educative commitment; **hope** because of the enormous creative potential of our schools. Fr. General does not ignore the many difficulties our schools face but recognizes the **generous spirit that contributes to form men and women who can see their lives with optimism**.

Questions for the discernment:

(1) In his interview, Fr. General stresses the need for responding to the times. In what specific areas are our schools being called to be more proactive and innovative in this fast-changing world?

(2) In which areas in our school can we use **the audacity of the impossible** that Fr. General invites us to take?



Homily



Context

On Friday, October 20, the last day of the Congress, Fr. General started the day's activities by celebrating the Eucharist. After a week of hard work, the delegates were beginning to see the fruits of their labours, and Fr. General confirmed this collective discernment.

The Eucharist was celebrated on the fifth floor of the venue, in the same hall that had been used in previous days for conversations and lectures.

The ceremony was presided by Fr. General in Spanish, with simultaneous translation. The concelebrants were Fr. Joe Arimoso, SJ from the Region of Africa and Madagascar, and Fr. José Mesa, SJ, International Education Secretary.



Homily Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ
Closing Mass
International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates
JESEDU-Rio2017

October 20th, 2017
 Original in Spanish

Luke the Evangelist, whose feast we celebrated just a few days ago, takes care to indicate who Jesus is addressing. In the text we just heard, he speaks first to his disciples, and then to the many people who were crowding together, *so many [...] that they were trampling one another underfoot.*

We can easily identify with either group:

- We are part of the multitudes who are drawn by the signs that accompany the presence of Jesus, who are interested in hearing the word of the Lord.
- We also feel that we are his disciples. By contemplating Him, we have learned a way of living, a way of being human.

Therefore, today we are gathered around the table of the Lord to:

- Give heartfelt thanks to God for having invited us.
- Feed our journey with his word, and strengthen the communion between Him and us.

Jesus warns the crowd, warns all human beings, and warns us that the fear of death enslaves.

- The Letter to the Hebrews (2:14-18) expresses this with great clarity. Jesus became one of us that *through his death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, and free those who through fear of death had been subject to slavery all their life*.
- Losing the fear of death frees us, so that with all our trust placed in the God of Life, we can give our own lives so that we can all have life more abundantly (Jn10:10).

He informs his disciples, and us as well, of how to free oneself from another death:

- Jesus calls it the *leaven of the Pharisees, or hypocrisy*.
- We die when we try to appear as what we are not; we hide our own weaknesses and inconsistencies behind a role. The Gospel refers to the Pharisees –religious ministers– but any other role can be understood, such as that of educator.
- We know that leaven is used in small amounts to ferment a large amount of dough. With just a little hypocrisy, our lives can go down the path of being false and opaque with others, which ends up with us fooling ourselves and being incapable of recognizing reality itself, with *its weaknesses and incoherencies*.

The consistency of life and transparency are how we can free ourselves from the *leaven of the Pharisees*.

- We cannot achieve consistency of life only with will; we need faith, and plenty of it. The more faith, the better.
- Volunteerism carries us in the opposite direction. It causes us to focus on ourselves, on false self-sufficiency, and the difficulty of recognizing our own faults.
- Is the C of consistency a fifth C we could add to our educational paradigm?
- In addition to conscience, competence, compassion and commitment, we also need consistency so that everyone can see what we carry within us, so that there is nothing hidden, and truth can shine.

In the passage from the Letter to the Romans we read in today's liturgy, Saint Paul uses the example of Abraham to explain how faith brings us towards transparency and consistency in life.

- Abraham believes, he sets out, and he leaves behind what makes him feel safe so that he can be free and available to accept God's inspiration.
- Abraham comes out of himself to set himself in the hands of God, he becomes transparent and he receives his consistency of life for free, as a gift of mercy and forgiveness.

Ignatian spirituality invites us to follow this path: recognize the Lord as the only absolute to recover our interior freedom and make ourselves available for whatever is best for leading a consistent, transparent life.

At the end of this Congress, we ask that the Lord increase our faith.

- Both so that we lose our fear, and to draw us away from the *leaven of the Pharisees*.
- Both to trust in one another, and to act as a single, universal apostolic body.

Our Lady of the Way accompanies us along this path.

Arturo Sosa, S.I.

October 20, 2017

Discernment paragraph

Fr. General reflects on the readings of the day and invites all of us in Jesuit schools--delegates, educators, administrators--to hear and respond to Jesus' call. Jesus invites us, once again, to share the table with him and **liberate us from the fear of death and the leaven of the Pharisees – hypocrisy**. Fr. General, like Jesus, invites us to a life of consistency and transparency that can really free ourselves. **Consistency** is a 5th C that highlights an important dimension of Commitment and the interior freedom and mercy that fulfill the apostolic mission our school communities. Fr. General will clarify after the congress that his intention was **not to add a new “C” to the 4Cs** (Competence, Conscience, Compassion, Commitment) but rather to call attention to an important dimension of Commitment through the concept of Consistency.

Question for the discernment:

(1) Innovation is a buzz word that many of our schools use today. In what way can we move beyond a fear that performs mere lip service to a faith that breeds courage and creativity in our ministry?



Keynote Address



Context

On the final day of the Congress, after the celebration of the Eucharist, Fr. General had coffee with the participants. Together with all the Education Delegates and other participants, he posed for the Congress' official photograph outside of the Joao XXIII Cultural Centre, where the event was held.

Fr. General spoke and posed for pictures with everyone who approached him. In addition, a group of students from the *Colégio Santo Inácio* in Rio de Janeiro offered a lively interpretation of the Congress' official song.

After the coffee break, the participants gathered in the Conference Hall where Fr. General gave a speech that was broadcast live to the entire educational network.



Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ

**Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings Reconciled with their Fellows,
with Creation and with God**

**International Congress for Jesuit Education Delegates
JESSEDU-Rio2017**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
October 20th, 2017
Original in Spanish

**Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings Reconciled with their Fellows,
with Creation and with God**

Introduction

1. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to those who have made this Congress possible: FLACSI, the Province of Brazil, the Brazilian network of Jesuit schools and the Secretary for Secondary and Pre-Secondary Education of the General Curia. I would also like to express my gratitude to you, delegates, for your hard work in your provinces and here at the Congress.

2. This is the first time that the Society of Jesus organizes a Congress for provincial education delegates and the regional networks that support our educational work in secondary and pre-secondary schools. It has been a beautiful opportunity to come together and strengthen our common universal vision of the Society's educational apostolate.

3. Other Ignatian networks that offer quality education to marginalized sectors of society have also participated in this Congress, like Fe y Alegría, the Cristo Rey Jesuit Schools, the Nativity schools from the United States and the Jesuit Refugee Service's educational program.

4. In the name of the Society, I would like to acknowledge the enormous task that all of you, together with your colleagues in this apostolate, carry out every day in extremely diverse and difficult circumstances to offer new generations training that will radically change their lives, offering them instruments to contribute to the humanization of the world.

5. This Congress is an expression of the thanks we give to God and our benefactors in this area, an affirmation of the importance of the educational apostolate and a push to seek the audacity of the impossible that can carry us even further.

I. Our educational tradition: an inspiration, not a burden

6. Education, and schools in particular, are part of the Society's missionary tradition. It all began with the perception that Ignatius and his first companions had of their immense apostolic potential. Polanco portrayed this early conviction by the Society in his 15 reasons for having schools.¹

7. Through these schools, the Society created an educational model rooted in the humanist tradition of the Renaissance, convinced that by educating individuals' character towards the common good they were carrying out an important apostolic task. When they realized how education could touch the hearts of individuals, they transformed the *cura personalis* into the defining characteristic of their educational model. The spirituality that emanated from the Exercises then became the spirit driving perception of the world, human beings and destiny.

8. With the Second Vatican Council and the formulation of the Society's mission at GC 31 (1965) and 32 (1975), our schools were profoundly renewed.

9. That humanist tradition, nurtured by Ignatian spirituality, was expressed prophetically and lucidly by Fr. Arrupe, SJ and by Fr. Kolvenbach, SJ, who stated that the purpose of our education is to train men and women for others and with others.²

10. Later, the Society expanded on this educational objective in the so-called 4 Cs, which

1. *Monumenta Ignatiana*, Vol. 4, p. 7-8

2. "It would be an error to expect that this Lyceum... were just the continuation of what Jesuit schools were in past centuries or decades. It's not a matter of re-editing the past, or importing models from elsewhere... It's a matter of responding with imagination and creativity to the challenges that today's world... places before our education." In: El P. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ *y la Educación*, Bogotá, ACODESI, 2009. *Speech at the Gathering on Education. The Commitment of the Society of Jesus in the Education Sector*. Gdynia, Polonia, October 10, 1998 p. 297.

stated that we are looking for human excellence in our students by training them to be men and women of conscience, competence, compassion and commitment. Thus, academic excellence, a fundamental dimension in Jesuit schools, was placed within the context of training for integral human excellence. It is this integral human excellence that gives purpose to academic excellence.

11. Our educational offering has also been renewed through an education for faith that promotes justice, encouraging dialogue between cultures and collaboration between laypeople and Jesuits. Sharing educational charisma with laypeople and religious men and women from other families has been a source of creative renewal of our educational model. New institutional models, born to offer quality education to the poor and excluded, such as *Fe y Alegría*, *Cristo Rey*, or *Nativity Schools*, in addition to the educational services offered by the JRS, enrich the Society of Jesus' educational apostolate in the world.

12. In addition, the creation of provincial and regional networks has improved the reach of our institutions. Our practice of permanent educational discernment was put into motion by a three-stage cycle (of which this Congress is the last step in an initial stage) that began in 2012 with the Boston Colloquium and continued in 2014 with the SIPEI in Manresa.

13. The online *Educate Magis* platform, which allows all our schools to understand and to develop the immense international potential in our hands, is another opportunity to renew and deepen the charisma of the Society of Jesus' educational apostolate.

14. The Superior Generals and the General Congregations of the Society of Jesus since the Second Vatican Council have recognized the enormous value of the educational apostolate and its contribution to the mission of the Society.³ On my part, I would like to take advantage of the opportunity presented by this important gathering to ratify my esteem, and that of the apostolic body of the Society of Jesus, for this apostolate. I would also like to underline its importance in the current context of the world, and our service to the mission of reconciliation, a result of the justice that brings about the peace that God carries out through Christ.

II. Companions in a mission of reconciliation and justice

15. Education and, in particular, our educational institutions, are part of the human effort to bring about the germination of the seed of the Kingdom of God in history. As we've contemplated in the meditation on the incarnation of the Spiritual Exercises (no 102), the triune God has committed deeply to the redemption of humanity; when he sees and hears the cry of humans, he returns it to us as a calling, invitation or interpellation to collaborate in his commitment to redemption.

16. The 36th General Congregation took up this interpellation and confirmed that we're called to be companions in a mission of universal reconciliation and justice, born of the merciful love of God and put in motion by Him through the incarnation, so that all

3 Fr. Arrupe, SJ clearly stated that "...For the Church, the educational apostolate is of vital importance. So vital, that prohibiting education is the first –and sometimes the only– measure that certain political regimes impose on the Church to ensure the de-Christianization of the nation within two generations, without spilling blood. Education is necessary. And this can't be carried out on a certain scale and with the excellence I was referring to without a certain type of institutions." (n. 29) in *Nuestros Colegios Hoy y Mañana*, 1980.

humanbeings can live in peace, with full lives and in harmony with the environment. Aware of people's difficult living conditions, we take on reconciliation as a mission of hope. As ministers of reconciliation, we're messengers of hope for the future, called to cure personal wounds, to find new paths for producing goods and models of consumption that respect environmental balance. We seek new paths that generate a change in social relationships to favor improved living conditions for each human being, so that peoples can live in freedom and dignity, and with mutual respect.

17. Our mission comes from the Christian faith. It is a service of reconciliation and justice born of the life of Christ, and it must be completed in his way, according to the conditions of our world. Reconciliation and justice are but a single mission. True reconciliation demands justice. Therefore, the search for social justice and the creation of a culture of dialogue between cultures and religions are part of this service of reconciliation among human beings, between human beings and creation and between human beings and God. These three faces of the service of reconciliation are always united. True reconciliation with God is impossible, unless it comes with reconciliation and justice among humans and between humans and creation.

18. Of course, service of reconciliation and justice means building bridges to allow for dialogue. We know that the task of building bridges, or of "being bridges" in contexts of conflict, means being stepped on by both sides of the fight. That is the price of our service and, as we try and follow Jesus' example, we're ready to pay it.

19. This view of the mission asks us for personal and institutional conversion, it pushes us to rethink our evangelization strategies, how we carry out our pastoral activity, our educational model and how we contribute to the transformation of current social, political and economic relationships that are obstacles to the possibility of a life of dignity for all.

III. Education that paves the way for understanding the world we live in.

20. The service of reconciliation starts with understanding the world we live in, our home. In addition, the task of the educator, and in particular our educational institutions, is to help younger generations find their place in the world and before God, so that they can project their personal and social development, helping to build a better world.

21. This need to profoundly understand our world in order to offer the greatest and best service to the Glory of God is why we see our mission as an intellectual apostolate. We want to understand human beings and the world in all their complexity, so that human beings can configure the world in a way that is more compassionate, and therefore more divine.

22. If we make such a great investment in intellectual training, it is because we want Jesuits and our companions in this mission to be capable of understanding and thinking for themselves in each situation or context they face. In truth, we need to be true intellectuals in the world of human and social sciences, in social analysis, in education or in pedagogy, and in each apostolic field we find ourselves in. Simply working in higher education, in a school or in a research center doesn't make us "intellectuals". Becoming a "thinker" in a

certain discipline requires an ongoing process.

23. For those that share the mission of the Society of Jesus, being an “intellectual” means being an effective instrument of the apostolate. Being true “intellectuals” in our apostolic mission allows us to understand the world and its challenges, so we can proclaim the Good News in a way that’s pertinent, attractive and transformative. Education is truly effective when it manages to incorporate this dimension of the intellectual apostolate.⁴

24. In the intellectual reading of the world and its challenges, the 36th General Congregation knew that humanity today has its good and bad points. Nevertheless, the negative aspects are reason for worry, and they show that we’re in a profound crisis, in which social relationships, the economy and the environment are all affected, because of the structural injustices and the many abuses committed against human beings and the earth.⁴ A quick look at six realities of our world can help us to understand the reach needed for the service of reconciliation and the justice born of the good news proclaimed by Jesus:

25. First, we are witnesses to unprecedented demographic changes. Millions of people have become migrants or refugees because they’re fleeing conflict, natural disasters or poverty, all in search of a better life. Some societies have chosen to welcome them. Others have acted with fear and rage, seeking to build walls or put up barriers.

26. Second, we are faced by growing inequity. Although the world economic system has created enormous wealth and has allowed some countries to remove large sectors of the population from poverty, inequality is growing at an alarming rate. The distance between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and certain groups, like indigenous peoples, are increasingly marginalized.

27. Third, polarization and conflict are on the rise. Fanaticism, intolerance, the desire to generate terror, acts of violence and even war are increasing. Although the causes for much of this polarization are based in poverty, fear, ignorance and despair, much of the violence is done in the name of god. The use of religion and the image of god to justify hate and aggression are one of the great antisigns of our time.

28. Fourth, the ecological crisis that affects our planet, what Pope Francis calls our “common home”. His encyclical *Laudato Si* is clear in indicating that the system for producing and consuming followed by humans generates a culture of waste, which significantly deteriorates both our social relationships and the environment, placing the sustainability of our planet for future generations at risk.

29. Fifth, the expansion of a digital habitat or culture. The Internet and social networks have changed how humans think, react, communicate and interact. It is not just a matter of new technology; it is a new world in which people live, especially the younger generations. It is the beginning of a gigantic cultural transformation that moves at unimaginable speed, that affects personal and intergenerational relationships and challenges traditional cultural values. This “digital ecosystem” or habitat has allowed for the expansion of information and solidarity, but it has also generated deep divisions with

4. General Congregation 36, decree 1, 29

the viral growth of hate and false news.

30. Sixth, the weakening of politics as a search for the common good. In many parts of the world, disappointment or disillusionment with politics has grown because of the actions of parties and politicians. Dissatisfaction and discredit have grown as a result of unfulfilled expectations and unresolved problems. This has allowed populist leaders to achieve power taking advantage of the fear and rage of the people, using seductive but unreal proposals for change.

31. In summary, these six challenges are emblematic of a change in era. More than ever, we are aware of being part of a single human community, that we share a single planet and have a common destiny. Although we experience the phenomenon of “globalization” in many aspects of our everyday lives, perhaps we’re less aware of the many deep and significant changes that will take place in cultures and in the relationship between generations.

IV. Interculturality: global communication among many cultures.

32. The planetary trend of intense communication in all areas has resulted in an idea we’ve decided to call globalization. Nevertheless, this is a phenomenon that includes many ambiguous processes. Some Spanish-language researches have chosen to use the terms *globalización* and *mundialización*⁵ to identify different dominant tendencies.

33. When they refer to *globalización*, they mean the tendency to make behaviors and cultures more uniform. One consequence of this is a reduction in cultural diversity, with a tendency to create a global, mono-cultural space, with the economic organization and the forms of sociopolitical interaction that favor transnationalized capital being imposed everywhere. On the other hand, *mundialización* is used to mean the universal recognition of the creativity that is characteristic of cultural diversity, and its recognition as the principal wealth of the exponential process of human interaction across the globe.

34. As a result, when we try to place our educational activity, it’s best that we refer to universalization, understood as the growing interaction among culturally-diverse human groups that are capable of sharing a common vision of the interests of humanity as a whole. This analysis helps us to discern the tendencies existing in a trend of growing human integration and the results of globalizing currents.

35. The dominance of a globalizing vision that tends to make cultures more uniform will produce a gradual restriction of cultural exchange that might even place multiculturalism at risk. This phenomenon is similar to how damage to the environment is reducing the planet’s biodiversity.

36. The predominance of a vision based on *mundialización* will favor multicultural spaces and will open up possibilities for interculturality. Here, the spiritual contribution of religions, understood as dimensions of cultures, will help to overcome fundamentalism.

⁵ This distinction can’t be clearly made in all languages.

⁶ “We live in a world of many religions and cultures. The erosion of traditional religious beliefs and the tendency to homogenize cultures has strengthened a variety of forms of religious fundamentalism. Faith in God is increasingly being used by some to divide people and communities, to create polarities and tensions which tear at the very fabric of our common social life. All these changes call us to the frontiers of culture and of religion.” General Congregation 35, d. 3,22

This was predicted by the 35th General Congregation in 2008, when it encouraged us to go to the frontiers of our cultures and religion to find, recognize and take up dialogue with others.⁶

37. To describe the idea of universality we are seeking in the globalization process, it might be useful to remember the original meaning of the concept of catholic, which referred to the universal nature of the Church, including a broad diversity of different situations. It is also useful to remember that Pope Francis preferred to use the geometric image of a polyhedron instead of a sphere to refer to globalization.⁷ Both the concept of catholic and the image of the polyhedron adequately include the meaning of interculturality.

38. Ideally, each human being, or each people, should feel like a part of humanity, and be aware of their own culture (enculturation), without making it absolute. They should do so critically, joyfully acknowledging the existence of other human beings with different cultures (multiculturalism), and establishing relationships of equality with them, enriching themselves with a diversity of cultures that includes their own (interculturality). Universality experienced in this way may become a way of promoting social justice, fraternity and peace.

39. We can imagine that this vision of human universality corresponds with the spiritual experience of the God of Jesus of Nazareth. The Church, as a community of the followers of Jesus, needed to overcome (not without tension) its local Jewish, Greek and Roman horizons, to step outside its cultural borders and live catholic-ness as universality with local roots. It is not strange, then, that the Second Vatican Council stated that “nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.”⁸

40. The recognition of diverse cultures and the ability to live in multicultural contexts while respecting diversity, or even enjoying it, is an important step. We might be tempted to settle for multiculturalism as an expression of universality. Nevertheless, people from different cultures simply living in harmony, as a juxtaposition, is not enough to really move towards the universality we’re referring to. The enriching exchange between cultures allows us to experience interculturality, and to build universality in a more human way. Interculturality⁹ makes us experience universality more fully, because it incorporates cultural differences as the revelation of the face of humanity created in God’s image, and it

⁷ “I like the geometric figure of the polyhedron, because it is one but has different faces. It expresses how unity is created while preserving the identities of the peoples, of the persons, of the cultures. That is the richness that today we have to give to the process of globalization, because otherwise it is homogenizing and destructive.” Pope Francis, *Dialogue with the members of General Congregation 36*, October 24, 2016.

⁸ “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.” GS, no. 1

⁹ The characteristics of the phenomenon we refer to as interculturality and the relative novelty of reflecting on it mean that we should not formulate a regulatory concept that might do more to hide its reality than reveal it.

is enriched by the ever-greater exchanges among them. Interculturality isn't an end in itself, it's the means with which we can create the conditions to fully experience humanity, contributing to the humanization of individuals, cultures and peoples. This is more than just recognizing the existence of many cultures in the future and the past (multiculturalism). It comes from building bridges and fluid conversation among them. This is a complex process that can't be free from conflict, one that's not just a "meeting of cultures" to create a supra- meta- or transcultural space.¹⁰ Rather, it is a "reciprocal exchange between cultures that might help transform and enrich all those involved."¹¹ Still, this is not about excluding or substituting enculturation; it is more about deepening it, because no one can offer others what they do not have.

41. Finally, interculturality is a participative and interactive process with the historical, social, economic and political culture in which it develops; as such, it makes the development of cultures more dynamic, promoting changes that allow for a growth in the understanding of the universality of humanity.

42. I should say that my reflections are not meant to impose a certain word or a concept; they are primarily to state the meaning of the different concepts analyzed. I do not aim to ask you to stop using the concepts *globalización* or *mundialización* or any of their derivatives; I just want to ensure that we can understand and always seek intercultural universality.

V. Challenges today to education that looks towards the future

43. I acknowledge that the educational segment of the Society is working to get up-to-date.¹² That is what is expressed in the document that the Education Secretariat and the ICAJE have been working on to collect the challenges and opportunities that our current context offers our educational model. It encourages us to add the vision of the mission as it was formulated by General Congregation 36 to the process, to work together in the service of reconciliation and justice, which will only be possible in a world understood interculturally, as we've seen. I am convinced that education by the Society, especially in our schools, can profoundly renew itself in this direction.

44. Renewal is an ongoing task in educational work. We need to go a step ahead of what we know and imagine today. Our educational models need to prepare young people for the future. We cannot lie stuck in educational models in which we as adults do not feel comfortable, and therefore we need to take a step forward. We need to be alert to the danger of the institutional inertia that prevents discernment and needed renewal. Within the context of a global trend like the one I just described, we need to ask ourselves: how can we better serve the mission of our schools? How can a school educate for

10. Cfr. STANISLAUS, L. – UEFFING, M. (eds.), *Interculturalidad, Estella (Spain)*, Ed. Verbo Divino, 2017, p. 586.

11. *Ibid.* p. 23.

12. This can be seen in the final declarations of the Colloquium in Boston, or in the reflections from the SIPEI in Manresa.

13. Discourse by Holy Father Francis to the members of the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, October 24, 2016.

reconciliation? How can we go to our frontiers like Pope Francis asked us to in his speech at the 36th General Congregation, to generate processes of transformation?¹³ What frontiers should our schools reach, and what educational processes should take place?

45. We should answer with imagination and creativity, without forgetting that the goal of our education is to train individuals so they can give meaning to their lives and contribute to the common good within their context, their society and their planet. It is our job to create models.¹⁴ We should not be afraid to do so. When we do, we're providing a service to the Church, which has asked Catholic education to renew its passion for this service to the world.¹⁵ We should ask ourselves what Pope Francis asked the Society when celebrating the canonization of Peter Faber: Do we have great visions and desires? Are we risking anything? Are we flying high? Does zeal for the Lord consume us (Psalm 69,10)? Or are we mediocre, contented with repeating apostolic programs that don't reach individuals or address their needs?¹⁶

46. We should remember that the first Jesuits invested time and resources to create an educational model that may have been made up of eclectic components, but that was unified by the Ignatian vision of the world. We all know the great contributions of that model that the Society named the Ratio Studiorum. We're called to have the same creativity so we can respond to the challenges of the always-unsure future from our present context.

47. Although our schools, which some call "of brick and mortar", continue to be important, we need to have the freedom and the creativity to explore other models, even if they're hybrid. This includes online schools, or even cutting- edge educational models that embody the magis today. Fortunately, we are assisted in this challenge by the enormous creative potential of our companions in the educational apostolate, with whom we can work together to think, create and try out new possibilities.

48. Along these lines, I would like to mention some of the specific challenges we should take on as educators and as educational institutions of the Society of Jesus.

49. First, it is important for our institutions to be spaces for educational investigation, true laboratories in innovation in teaching, from which we can draw new teaching methods or models. This means that we'll explore what others do and what we can learn from them, as well as what educational science proposes for a world that's increasingly technical and shaped by the digital culture our students were born and raised in. Our institutions need to be aware of the anthropological and cultural change we're experiencing, and they need to know how to educate and train in a new way for a different future.

50. Second, without excluding any social class from our educational offering, we need to continue to make progress in educating for justice, with three elements in mind. First, the

14. Nicolás, S.I., Adolfo. *Profundidad, Universalidad y Ministerio Intelectual. Retos para la Educación Superior Jesuita Hoy*. Mexico City, April 23, 2010

15. *Congress for Catholic Education*, Rome, 2015.

16. Pope Francis, *Homily, Iglesia del Gesù*, Rome, January 3, 2014.

importance of reaching out to the poorest and most marginalized. Second, the need to train a critical and intelligent conscience when faced with unequal social processes, without participation, that are focused on consumption, the accumulation of wealth, and the exploitation of the environment. And third, a constructive attitude open to dialogue that can help us to find solutions. This should be reflected in our admission policies, our training programs, in the vision of science we transmit and in agreements with other schools and social institutions.

51. Third, respect and care for our “common home” demands that our institutions train our students in the environmental dimension of reconciliation. All human beings share responsibility for our planet, for its future viability, beyond our national, local or generational interests. It is important that we join in the efforts of many to create a sustainable society and economy, so that human beings and the environment are both protected. Our institutions should reflect this attitude in their actions and their physical structure.

52. Fourth, the development of a culture to protect minors and vulnerable individuals. Like the Church and society, the Society of Jesus participates in collective efforts to raise awareness and take the necessary measures to ensure that the children and young people families entrust us with have the protection they need. It should be evident that our institutions seek to protect minors and vulnerable individuals, preventing harm and acting immediately, effectively and transparently when needed. This is an essential commitment from the Society, and is vital to the credibility of our schools.

53. Fifth, the offering of religious training that opens students up to the transcendental dimension of life and that cultivates an experience of Christian faith that can transform personal and social life. Pope Francis told participants in GC 36 that true faith always involves a profound desire to change the world. Our challenge is to know how to communicate Ignatian spirituality so that younger generations want to love and serve in all things, and so that they seek the greater glory of God, in addition to belonging to the Church. The challenge is knowing how to transmit what Fr. Nicolás, SJ calls the “Jesuit virus”, and what Pope Francis later defined as the Society’s own virus. In other words, the “mark” that we expect those that have passed through our educational institutions will have: that they live in tension between the earth and heaven. This means tension between the faith they express in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit with what is going on today in the world. According to the Pope, this tension drives you to act, to change, to do, to imitate God the creator, redeemer, sanctifier; it drives you to be human.¹⁷

54. Sixth, although the concept of the “global citizen” is still under construction, our education should be a creative actor in this. Our presence in so many places and cultures around the world allows us to create and offer educational proposals for an intercultural view of the world, in which all human beings and their peoples possess a “global citizenship”, where rights and duties are connected. This is beyond culture itself, nationalism or political or cultural fanaticism, which prevent the recognition of our radical brotherhood.

¹⁷ Pope Francis, to former Jesuit Students, at http://es.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/11/11/%C2%AB%C2%BFtoday%C3%ADa_tienen_el_virus_jesu%C3%ADtico%C2%BB_el_papa/1186082 (in Spanish).

55. How can our schools welcome global citizens and offer them an education, one that respects the local particularities of cultures while making our potential and universal commitment evident? We should be able to put together educational programs that help us to think and act locally and globally, without dichotomies between the two dimensions, moving towards interculturality while understanding the cultural, social and religious diversity of our world as something enriching,¹⁸ without losing our Christian and Ignatian identity.

VI. Collaboration and working as a network, paths to taking on universal challenges.

56. The challenges mentioned may be dizzying or even scary. Some are immense, especially when we see that our resources and capacities are so limited. Aware of this, General Congregation 35¹⁹ and especially General Congregation 36²⁰ asked for greater discernment, and a more adequate use of our strength by working together as a network, making better use of our position as an international apostolic body.

57. I have referred to discernment elsewhere. I only want to indicate that our educational institutions also have, as a result of their Jesuit or Ignatian identity, the challenge of using it as a way of moving forwards and making decisions. I'd now like to focus more on collaboration and working as a network.

58. Collaboration with others is the only way, and it is a profoundly evangelical way whereby the Society of Jesus can carry out its mission today.²¹ The magnitude and the interconnection of the problems affecting humanity are such that, today, we can only effectively work to solve them if the Church and the Society can work with others. With an attitude of collaboration, we can find people and organizations dedicated to serving others, seeking reconciliation of human kind and the defense of creation. With some, we will share our Christian faith, with others, we will share faith in God, and we will discover that others still are men and women of good will.

59. The collaboration between Jesuits and laypeople is a positive reality in our institutions. We have made plenty of progress in this area. Still, we need to continue to move forward, and for this we need all our creativity. The path taken so far shows us achievements as well as weaknesses to be addressed. How can we put together genuine teams with apostolic intent that can develop all their potential? How can we connect with our alumni so they feel like companions in the mission, not just nostalgia for the institution of their youth?

60. Collaboration spontaneously leads to cooperation through networks, and these are a creative way of organizing our apostolic work.²² Operating as a network allows for collaboration between the apostolic task of the Society and other institutions, opening up new horizons for service that go beyond what is traditional in a certain region or province,

18. *To respond to this rapidly-shrinking world, we have focused on educating for responsible citizens in the city of the world.*" Kolvenbach, P., Georgetown University, June 7, 1989.

19. General Congregation 35, d. 3,43.

20. "Discernment, collaboration and networking offer three important perspectives on our contemporary way of proceeding. As the Society of Jesus is an "international and multicultural body" in a complex, "fragmented and divided world," attention to these perspectives helps to streamline governance and make it more flexible and apostolically effective". General Congregation 36, d. 2,3

21. Cf. General Congregation 36 d.1, 35-38 22 Cf. General Congregation 36, d.1, 35 23 General Congregation 36, d. 2, 8

22. Cf. General Congregation 36, d.1, 35

and mobilizing greater resources and possibilities in favor of the mission.

61. To work as a network, we need to rekindle and consolidate our culture of generosity as a basis for an opening that can allow us to share a vision, cooperate with others and accept effective leadership that maintains the balance between local initiative and global authority.²³

62. With different levels of development and success, our schools have taken on the need to create networks on a provincial, regional and global level. Some provincial and regional networks have helped enormously in our renewal process; today, it would be impossible to move forward without them. Although some provinces and regions have had difficulties, working as a network is now part of how we do things, as indicated at General Congregation

63. This means that our schools need to organize into local and regional networks, in addition to being open without reservation to the global network we need to consolidate. We should not be afraid to share programs, experiences, materials and even resources to put together our international network.

64. Only if we think and act in a joint, coordinated way, welcoming and incorporating the wealth of our local diversity, will we be able to use the network to take on global challenges that affect our local conditions. We have over 2000 schools, and a notable educational presence in over 60 countries. We have enormous capacity to awaken hope in our world, contributing to the formation of men and women who are just, true global citizens, capable of generating dialogue and reconciliation among peoples and with creation.

65. Over the past few days, at this Congress, you have all experienced the diversity, the wealth and the immense potential that comes from working together. The Society truly expects everyone's commitment, especially from the educational delegates in each Province and from the different regional networks, to move forward in building and consolidating a global network of schools with a common agenda working towards reconciliation and justice, built by the Lord, to achieve peace. This means that all networks should include the point of view of the international network in their strategic and structural plans, and that they should all feel responsible for it. Working for local and regional networks will also mean working in and for the global network.

66. As educational delegates in your provinces, you are co-responsible for the proper operation of the networks, on every level. Two specific initiatives, of the many that we could explore together, are their contribution to the development of the global Educate Magis platform, and work in favor of a global citizenship that cares for the planet and embodies solidarity. These objectives can give full meaning to the theme of this Congress: "united in a global network: a fire that kindles other fires."

67. Still, I should state that the network we're called to form is not just to connect us to other schools. We need to be aware that schools are apostolic platforms in dialogue and collaboration with the Society's other apostolic institutions: universities, social projects, spirituality centers, parishes and other apostolic presences. That way, we will all grow and

be able to provide greater and better apostolic service.

68. I will finish by saying that the 36th General Congregation also asked us to practice apostolic planning, in order to effectively respond to the challenges we face. This is nothing more than the instrument that allows an institution to implement decisions made through discernment in an organized fashion. Planning offers us a strategic way of organizing time, actions and responsibilities for putting into effect decisions. This means that we work as a single body, with a single purpose, as part of a team with many different tasks and roles.

69. In our case, just planning for an educational institution is not enough. For it to be apostolic, it should make present the Good News in each institution, to every human being involved in it and benefiting from its service. Planning must also be “apostolic” because it is driven by the Ignatian magis, avoiding doing things in a mediocre manner and looking for the best and greatest service. We will not allow the tension between spiritual discernment through the examen and apostolic planning to disappear. We also will not let it turn into an administrative tool, an end in itself, that hides the purpose and meaning of what we’re called to do.

Conclusion: a global, intercultural network with the mission of reconciliation.

70. To conclude, I would like to remember what Pedro Ribadeneira wrote to King Philip II of Spain in the name of Saint Ignatius in 1556: all good in Christendom and throughout the world depends on the proper education of youth.²⁴ I believe that these words are still valid for the Society of Jesus and the Church.

71. Not in vain, Pope Francis has called for a Synod on youth and vocational discernment, looking to contribute to building a rejuvenated Church capable of giving hope to young people. This Synod will be a good opportunity to feel that we’re part of the Church, to listen to our students, to better understand their world, to welcome their dreams and concerns, to learn from them. It will also be a chance to show them that they are part of the Church, and the Church needs them.

72. Our schools are a magnificent platform for listening to and serving today’s youth, helping them dream of a new world that is more reconciled, more peaceful and in harmony with creation, one they have to build themselves.

73. By renewing our trust in God, we want to move forward as a global network with a universal mission. The challenges before us are many, but the apostolic possibilities can be greater. We need to detect them. God continues to work to create and save. The *missio Dei* continues. This faith encourages us to take on the path of apostolic audaciousness that makes the impossible possible.

Thank you very much!
Arturo Sosa, S.I.

(Original: Spanish)

Discernment paragraph

Fr. General's address, "**Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings Reconciled with their Fellows, with Creation and with God,**" constitutes the highpoint of the *JESEDU-Rio2017* Congress. Fr. General's intervention offers a **programmatic horizon** for Jesuit schools and delegates, a call to **be inspired by our tradition** and to respond to the **new global context**. Fr. General expresses the Society's gratitude for the work done in the schools, reaffirms the apostolic importance of the educational apostolate and calls for **more apostolic audacity** that can help schools to respond creatively to the challenges of our mission of reconciliation and justice in the context of our world today: demographic changes, growing inequity, polarization and conflict on the rise, ecological crisis, a digital culture and the weakening of politics.

Fr. General calls the schools to respond to this ***real change of an era*** especially addressing **six key challenges**: (1) **educational research and innovation**, (2) **educating for justice**, (3) **care for our common home**, (4) **a culture of protection of minors and vulnerable individuals**, (5) **religious education**, and (6) **educating for global citizenship**.

The complexity and immensity of these challenges require new levels of collaboration and networking as "***our way of proceeding***," using **Educate Magis as our global platform**. The General clearly states: "The Society truly expects everyone's commitment, especially from the educational delegates in each Province and from the different regional networks, to move forward in building and consolidating a global network of schools with a common agenda working towards reconciliation and justice, built by the Lord, to achieve peace... By renewing our trust in God, we want to move forward as a global network with a universal mission." **Now it is up to the schools and delegates to respond.**

Questions for the discernment:

- (1) Fr General mentioned six major challenges confronting our schools today. Given my context—the needs of our schools, as well as their strengths—which one or two are we being invited to prioritize or focus our efforts on?
- (2) What initial concrete steps can we take to contribute in making the Global Network of Jesuit Schools an apostolic reality?



Conversation



Context

After the speech by Fr. General, participants were given a break during which they could reflect on his words. Then, the education delegates gathered in the main auditorium once again to start a conversation.

Fr. José Mesa, SJ, the moderator for the conversation, started proposing two blocks of questions. The first had to do with the subject of the presentation, and allowed participants to share their reflections or clarify certain points. The second block was open to any other questions.

Fr. General received and answered questions in both English and Spanish.



Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ and the Education Delegates Conversation International for Jesuit Education Delegates JESEDU-Rio2017

October 20th, 2017
Original in Spanish

Introductory note

As part of the International Congress for Education Delegates of the Society of Jesus, JESEDU-Rio2017, on the last day Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ gave his speech “Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings in Harmony with their Fellows, with Creation and with God” to the education delegates. After the speech, the session was opened up to comments and questions. The contents of that session are included in this text. The original conversation was held in Spanish and English. The version we are now making public was originally edited and approved by Fr. General in Spanish.

Question 1.

Fr. General, thank you very much for your speech, particularly the fourth chapter (Interculturality: global communication among many cultures), with its attractive, challenging contents. There is a feeling of “inertia” or of “gravity” in terms of what is local, and the concerns that stem from it. How can we speak to those who are most fearful about taking on borders because of local concerns?

Fr. General:

I do not think that there is a single formula for that kind of dialogue. Nevertheless, it is an important step we need to take. Things can not suddenly change unless we first promote dialogue among the individuals involved. As you all know, what really changes people is personal contact, and this requires that we promote new ways of being together, or of meeting with different individuals, in a context where the most personal sort of exchange can take place. The first step is to create the sort of relationship on a human scale that makes it possible for us to “find” one another, to open ourselves up to reflection. It isn’t just about exchanging information, it is about contacting one another, sharing our personal visions.

Question 2.

In Society of Jesus documents, the call to take on the shared mission through networks is very clear. Your speech seems to focus on the global school network. In my opinion, the apostolic sectors create obstacles when it comes time for us to “move.” Does not this idea of working in sector-based networks generate problems when we are called to form a more global network? Should we just consider our sector-based networks a basis for global work?

Fr. General:

I would not want you to understand my proposal as a call to “sectorialize” our networks. I have not used the expression “apostolic sectors” in 20 years, because I believe that in the history of the Society the initial identification of sectors helped us to connect, but it has since become a way of “preserving” a group. Now, the idea is to create a complex system for mutual collaboration. Sometimes we aren’t aware of the complexity of our collaboration “amongst ourselves.” Often, we associate the word “collaboration” with “others,” but we have an enormous collaborative challenge within the society, not only among institutions, but also among our different forms of apostolic work. That is our horizon.

Our global educational network can help us to take that step, because we refer to a “network of networks.” As a result, local and regional networks need to exist in order for the global network to exist. What we are working on now is the creation of an effective global network, an educational network of schools. How can we create a more global vision of our schools without losing our perspective of unity with other educational and apostolic realities? We can’t focus just on educational work at schools. We can find a great wealth in our work if we do not establish barriers between what is educational, social or pastoral, but when we work together.

Question 3.

In the context of the changes to the leadership/organization of our provinces or to other Jesuit working structures, what are the implications of your mention of a fifth C, “Coherence”? (Editor’s note: see the homily by F. General at the closing of the Congress)

Fr. General:

A brief answer might be as follows. There should be no difference between what we say and what we do. We have great documents and apostolic plans, well written, well founded and using beautiful language, but we can't have a gap between that and what we do, between how we make decisions each day and the processes we use to reach different types of agreements.

We need to overcome the gap between what we do and what we say on all levels, on the provincial and the institutional level. On other occasions, I have spoken of the "institutional conversion." We tend to use the word "conversion" to refer to "personal conversion." In Ignatian language, we have the concept of "community conversion," but now we have to commit ourselves to "institutional conversion." Institutions are extremely useful to our apostolic work, we need them, and, furthermore, it isn't easy to build good institutions. But if these institutions aren't capable of changing, they become a sort of "anchor" that holds back our processes of change. That is what I am referring to with the fifth C. Coherence, so that there is no distance between our words and our actions. This should be brought about not only by individuals and communities, but also by our institutions.

Question 4.

Fr. General, with regards to the challenge you propose encouraging us to make education part of our intellectual apostolate: that requires that we professionalize the service and the work of our teachers as much as possible. We need to specialize, just as many Jesuit brothers currently do, for example, with doctorates in education. It isn't easy for schools to take on the continued training of their teachers. We should invest in this—through our Jesuit universities, for example. Could you expand on this issue?

Fr. General:

I agree with your concerns, and we need to look for ways to address them. The growth of platforms and networks helps in this area, but to go a little further, I think that our challenge has more to do with "educational creation." In general, we feel proud of the impact Jesuit education had at its beginnings, and of how it is changing our way of understanding institutions, because it focuses on the person.

Nevertheless, right now, with the world changing so rapidly, we need to ask ourselves if we, as an educational apostolic body tied to the Society of Jesus, are really making new proposals. Or are we just reacting? I mean, with our idea of going a step ahead or several steps ahead. Are we currently capable of moving ahead? Are we dedicating our people, our time, our economic resources and our energy to imagine, to create new forms of education? How are the experiences and processes we are currently applying really aimed at taking a step ahead? We need to keep ahead of changes, and not to just react to them. Of course, right now it is hard, harder than ever, to educate while thinking about tomorrow because of all the uncertainties we need to face. But that, precisely, is the challenge we need to take on. How can the Society improve its investment in education in order to go beyond what we currently have and what we currently do?

Question 5.

This question is on better understanding our students. How would you define a global citizen? How can you identify them?

Fr. General:

To me, a global citizen is someone who, first of all, is aware of their local roots, their culture, their history. In other words, someone who has local roots. But on a second level, they are someone who has a critical view of their own culture and who, as a result, doesn't idealize it. They know it is one of many, and they know that their own culture has strengths and weaknesses. On a third level, they are also someone open to other cultures, who gets in touch with them, knowing that they are part of a higher body we call humanity. Finally, on a fourth level, they know how to enrich themselves by interacting with others, and they can enrich others with their culture.

As Christians, through the Gospel we see the advantages tied to this critical vision of our own cultures as a way of generating social transformation, without being ignorant of the richness of our roots. So, global citizens are those who, while recognizing their roots and considering themselves part of humanity, are open to the contributions of other cultures, with the hope of working with others to build a better humanity.

Question 6.

It seems to me that you are encouraging us to use discernment in the decision-making processes at our schools and in our educational networks. How do you want Jesuit educational institutions to participate in the process of identifying apostolic preferences?

Fr. General:

I have written a letter to the Society on this. Discernment is a complicated process. We need to be prepared and to have a certain amount of training in discernment in order for a working team or a community to use discernment in way that is truly collaborative and of a high quality. It isn't just a system or a technique for making decisions. It is an attempt to identify the will of God regarding some non-evident issue. As a result, it ceases to be a decision made by the team, becoming a joint search for what God desires.

I am very optimistic about the process the Society of Jesus is using to define its universal or global preferences. Education is a very important apostolate for the Society, and as a result its contributions and its participation are extremely relevant in this process.

Through the secretariat for secondary and pre-secondary education, the provinces and the provincials, we want to listen to the voices of the whole of the educational apostolate. We don't want to define a single way of carrying out this process, because the contexts we run into are extremely diverse. A province with 40 schools isn't the same as one with 4, and education by Fe y Alegría isn't the same as education by FLACSI. We are awaiting contributions until December 2018 through the channels put forth in my letter on the subject, so that we can then prepare our response.

Question 7.

In the third chapter of your speech (“Education that paves the way for understanding the world we live in”), you mentioned the contribution of “Jesuit Humanism” with regards to the historical context within which the Society created and grew its educational apostolate. In your opinion, to what degree are we loyal to this tradition, to this first calling, or to what was the first intuition of the role of the Society’s schools and universities?

Fr. General:

That is not an easy question. I think that we have moved from a “renaissance humanism” towards an “evangelical humanism.” Now, we are more aware of the fact that our humanism comes from the Gospel. Currently, we have more critical studies and knowledge of the Gospel texts and their content, we have an enriched understanding of our own humanity and of our relationship to God.

I can’t make a concrete list, but I am under the impression that over the past 50 years, the Society and its institutions have made a good effort to precisely formulate the identity of each institution and to share it with our management teams, teachers and the educational communities in general. Currently, we are more explicit in stating where our inspiration in this humanism comes from.

Question 8.

In the sixth challenge mentioned in the fifth chapter of your speech (“Challenges today to education that looks towards the future”), you talk about being a creative actor in the process of creating Global Citizens. Could you expand on this invitation?

Fr. General:

Expanding on what I mentioned in the previous question, I would like to note that the encyclical *Laudato Si* has often been cited in reference to the Pope’s insistence that we aren’t facing “different crises,” like those concerning the environment, social issues, politics, economics or religion. We are facing a crisis in the global system. Many analysts have referred to it; some to give support to this vision, and others to reject it, to claim that it is a lie.

This is a complex argument. Nevertheless, it is clear that regarding this awareness, which comes from the language of the Social Doctrine of the Church, we can’t just assume that this idea of the “global common good” is established or accepted in the world. We need to continue to focus on how we can acquire, expand and consolidate this awareness.

Today, with nationalism once again on the rise and with certain religious identities becoming fundamentalist, this awareness of being a global citizen is even more important. How can we establish our priorities, using particular interests or global interests? We need to help individuals to hold the universal common good as a priority, ahead of the interests of their nation, race, culture or ideological vision.

The invitation is to do so creatively, because human beings are extremely diverse, as are our many starting points. It isn't the same for a persecuted Christian from Lebanon to achieve this awareness as it is for a citizen of Germany to do so, or for an indigenous person fighting for the survival of his people to do so. The challenge is how to promote the need to create the awareness of being global citizens using our network.

Question 9.

With regards to the fifth C, coherence, I would like to ask for a clarification. Is it true that we have many good ideas in our educational apostolate but that perhaps we are lacking action? Is that where there is a lack of coherence?

Fr. General:

Yes, it is true. That is why I mentioned that coherence can allow us to overcome this gap between our ideas, our plans, our declarations and what we do. Perhaps, using theological language it would be a "conversion."

Question 10.

There is a semantic issue in the concepts you are sharing with us. We aren't just "renewing" or "updating" education, we are "reinventing" it, and that scares people. The concept of audacity comes from GC36, which even proposes "the audacity of the impossible." What example do we have of the audacity of the impossible? Where can we see an example of this audacity, to have a point of reference?

Fr. General:

I agree that it scares people. That is why I mentioned that our tradition needs to become "memory" and not a "burden." We need to take the step towards "discomfort" instead of "convenience." It isn't just me making this invitation, it is also the General Congregation. We don't want any more words or pretty documents, we want more focused proposals. GC36 has fewer documents, but not fewer challenges. There is a strong invitation to reconciliation, and this term doesn't come out of nowhere; 90 provincial congregations mentioned this horizon from completely different contexts. The experience of the Society of Jesus is that we live in a "broken" world, and as a result we are invited to be collaborators in reconciliation.

Another enormous challenge is the issue of discernment. What we do in terms of innovation needs to be the result of discernment or of joint work to discover the will of God. In fact, GC36 doesn't call us to personal discernment, but to group discernment. This group discernment is challenging to Jesuits, because we are better at personal discernment.

GC36 also recuperated a formula that we had forgotten and that had been mentioned at GC34 with regards to collaboration in Decree 13; it referred to the conviction that the Church of the future would be a lay Church, as was imagined at the Second Vatican Council. If this is the horizon, the Society of Jesus, in the service of the Church, needs to help to create a lay Church. This is a tremendous innovation, because it is a change of

subject in church life. Pope Francis has noted this on multiple occasions with his criticism of clericalism.

In referring to collaboration, GC36 paused and noted that we Jesuits are also collaborators. This is a change, a notable innovation. And that is not all, it then refers to planning. As a result, it notes that there is tension between discernment and planning.

As for the example of audacity, there is the Jesuit Refugee Service. In it, we have seen the bravery and the flexibility to remake the mission, starting with the initial intuition of Fr. Arrupe, SJ. He imagined a provisional service, thinking that the flow of refugees would soon stop. Nevertheless, today, we are facing a different reality and the discernment of the JRS has brought us to think that education is a type of service and aid that the Society can offer refugees.

In Nairobi (Kenya), I remember a young refugee from South Sudan who said to me “Fr. General, I would like to ask that the Society of Jesus not abandon its educational work in the refugee camps, because I won’t be a refugee my entire life and I don’t want to see my youth fly by and never get an education.” That impacted me a great deal, along with the fact that the average stay of individuals in refugee camps is 17 years. If a person doesn’t receive the opportunity to get an education during this time, their conditions afterwards will be much worse. The Society has human and spiritual resources to collaborate in this personal transformation.

Question 11

Regarding your plan of action, on a provincial, regional and global level, if we want to move forwards, do we need to make changes to the structure of presidents of conferences of provincials and to other structures?

Fr. General:

One of the messages of GC36 was that the structure needed to follow the mission. We don’t join a “province” of the Society, we join the Society. Just like any other structure, provinces can be adapted to get better results. The Society has a peculiar structure, because it has a head and a body, but decisions are made on a provincial level, in a decentralized manner. How does this structure operate successfully? How do we remain united in a single body? It is because we have good communication, and because one of our characteristics is that we share resources between provinces.

Question 12.

How can we work using a system of solidarity among provinces so that those that have more can help those that have less?

Fr. General:

One of the issues we are currently working on is solidarity among provinces in economic matters and in other areas. Of course, we need a system that allows us greater internal solidarity to make better and more rational use of the resources we have for the mission.

Question 13

Discernment depends on those who are sitting at the table. Sometimes it is between Jesuits and laypeople; but how can we maintain equitable representation to include everyone? Sometimes, discernment is carried out just by Jesuits, just by men. What can we do about this?

Fr. General:

I agree that there are different levels of participation in a discernment. It depends on the issues, the different groups and the people involved. For example, issues that just affect the Society of Jesus, the religious community, will be different from those we carry out in our apostolic work with our companions in the mission. In any case, we need to learn how to combine these different levels of discernment and how to integrate the different individuals involved in the issues to decide on.

Final words of the moderator (José Mesa, SJ)

Thank you very much to Fr. General for being here today. I would like to finish with an anecdote: two weeks after Father General Arturo Sosa SJ was chosen, I had the opportunity to speak with him to invite him to come to this Congress. His answer was immediate: “I see how important this Congress is, and this is the first meeting I accept as General.” I was surprised by his rapid response, and I insinuated that we could wait a few weeks so he could have time to go over his agenda and get back to us. Nevertheless, he was sure: “there is no need to confirm afterwards, I promise I will participate in the Congress.” So, once again, Fr. General, thank you very much for your time and your participation in this Congress.

Rio de Janeiro, October 20, 2017

Discernment paragraph

The Q&A session, after Fr. General’s Keynote Address, gave the delegates an opportunity to clarify and delve deeper into some of the main themes presented during his homily and Keynote Address: **consistency, networking, a pedagogical creativity** that is proactive and not simply reactive, **global citizenship, apostolic preferences**, our current understanding of our **humanist tradition**, the meaning of **audacity** for our educational apostolate and **inclusive discernment**. Fr. General clearly confirms the call to creative fidelity that transforms our educational tradition into an inspiration to **re-imagine and re-invent Jesuit Education. What a beautiful and daunting challenge!**

Questions for the discernment:

- (1) The conversation with Fr. General covered a range of topics. Which particular discussion has either brought you enlightenment or discomfort? Why?
- (2) How can we live in our schools the **creative fidelity** that inspires us to re-imagine and re-invent Jesuit Education?



Action Statement



Context

The *JESEDU-Rio2017 Action Statement* captures the **spirit of the Congress** among the Jesuit Education Delegates. It represents the **synthesis and consensus** of the discussions on the four main themes: (1) **The Experience of God**, (2) **Tradition and Innovation**, (3) **Caring for Our Common Home: Reconciliation with God, Humanity and Creation**, and (4) **Sent in a Global Network**.

It is the final product of the first cycle of Jesuit Education Global Gatherings: ***Discovering our Apostolic Global Potential***. The Action Statement states **13 specific actions** that the delegates have committed to foster and support to strengthen the global network of Jesuit Schools. The Action statement is a way to *walk the talk* of global networking and build the global apostolic potential of our schools at the service of the mission.

This is truly a **common global agenda** that enables our schools “**to act as a universal body with a universal mission**.” This is a statement meant to **be experienced** in action rather than just read.



Action Statement

“To act as a universal body with a universal mission”

GC 35, D. 2 #20

October 19th, 2017
Original in English

From **October 15-20, 2017**, Education Delegates from the six Jesuit regions of the world along with others in Jesuit educational apostolates came together in Rio de Janeiro, convened by the Secretary for Education of the Society of Jesus.

Grateful for our Heavenly Father’s care, the Spirit’s inspiration, Jesus’ companionship, and the guidance of St. Ignatius the delegates continued conversations begun in a Virtual Congress held six months earlier (which followed upon **SIPEI** in Manresa in 2014 and the **International Colloquium on Jesuit Secondary Education** in Boston in 2012). We are

also grateful for Fr. General Arturo Sosa's, SJ address to the congress and see our action statement as a response to his challenging invitation to re-imagining Jesuit Education (Fr. General's address: <https://www.educatemagis.org/documents/allocution-fr-arturo-sosa-sj-jesedu-rio-congress-2017/>)

After further discernment **ICAJE** (the International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education), responding to the request of some delegates, proposes a **prioritization of the actions** to help delegates and schools in the process of their implementations. ICAJE believes in the importance of the 13 actions proposed and encourages delegates and regional networks to **design plans to include them all in a reasonable time framework**. However, the 8 actions in bold should be considered priorities that require prompt response. Still, if these actions are considered too many to begin with, delegates are encouraged to discern with their schools and regional networks where to start and how to incorporate the others progressively. ICAJE calls each delegate and regional network to elaborate a 5-year-apostolic-plan (2018-2022) with the proposed actions "including implementation, monitoring and evaluation" (Gc36, D.2, #5) as the GC has urged.

A. The Experience of God

The spiritual experience of St. Ignatius of Loyola, centered in Christ, is **the cornerstone of Jesuit Education** and our challenge continues to be to invite our students and school communities to discover the inexhaustible richness of it in personal and communal encounter with the Gospel. **We recognize the diversity of the religious and secular contexts** in which our schools operate; however, Jesuit Education cannot happen unless a strong religious and spiritual formation can be offered in our schools. In our historical context this formation requires us to expose our students to our spiritual heritage, to the religious diversity of our contexts and the world to promote respect and appreciation for other religions and secular expressions.

1. The delegates commit to promote the Examen of Consciousness in each of the schools to help students listen to their inner voice and learn the path of interiority.

2. The delegates commit to work with the schools to ensure a module (or some such unit of the curriculum) of interreligious education is implemented. This module should allow students to learn about and from the world's religions and respect the various ways religions express and celebrate the divine.

3. The delegates commit to find ways in which Ignatian Spirituality (ref The Exercises) can be actively adapted to the school setting so that students learn the habit of stillness and the practice of discernment.

B. Tradition and Innovation

We are called to genuine discernment in continuity with our spiritual heritage to respond creatively to the challenges of our world and the new generations attending our schools.

We are aware that our tradition calls us to engage in an ongoing conversation about the better means to serve our mission today that must be reflected in renewal and innovation in our schools and pedagogical models. All this needs to lead our schools to use the *Ignatian imagination* to propose and implement better educational practices that can really embody the human excellence of our education and transform our students, our societies, and us.

4. The delegates commit to engaging a process of Ignatian discernment that will lead to a plan of innovation for each school and a periodic review that corresponds to the local context and our tradition.

5. The delegates commit to reviewing with schools the traditional organizational structures and roles with a particular regard for gender stereotypes and gender inequalities.

6. The delegates commit to working with the schools to enhance the way parents and families are invited into our education and formation.

7. The delegates commit to urge the schools to reflect on the nature of human holistic excellence (the 4 Cs) so that academic success can be understood in its proper context. The delegates also commit to urge the schools to reflect on traditional notions of success and failure in the lives of our students.

C. Caring for Our Common Home: Reconciliation with God, Humanity and Creation

The raison d'être for our schools is the service of the mission. Today this mission entails a service of faith, justice, and care for the environment. We need to make sure that our schools continue to focus on our mission and can educate ourselves and the new generations in our holistic tradition. We recognize that our schools feel a tension or experience a gap between serving the mission and being relevant for students, parents, and the larger society. This tension has always been present in our history and has challenged our creativity. Today's context requires a serious discernment **to make sure that our mission for reconciliation and justice is reflected in our schools.** Given the advent of Artificial Intelligence, the fourth industrial revolution, and its implications for human experience and changes in workplace conditions, it is incumbent on our schools to be rooted in the humanistic education Jesuit schools have always been known for.

8. The delegates commit to promoting an environmental and social policy for each of our schools and to proposing ways regional networks can clearly integrate justice, faith, and care for the environment within the curricula of the schools (e.g., Healing Earth living text: <http://healingearth.ijep.net>) highlighting critical thinking, political awareness, and social engagement – all to be reflected in classroom and school practices.

9. The delegates commit to ensuring that schools have a program in place that allows students from marginalized and poor sectors of society to participate in a quality education and to ensuring that schools serving the marginalized and poor reach beyond their experiences to build bridges with other people and communities.

D. Sent in a Global Network

General Congregation 36 reminds us that **'collaboration naturally leads to cooperation through networks**. New technologies of communication open up forms of organization that facilitate collaboration. They make it possible to mobilize human and material resources in support of mission, and to go beyond national borders and the boundaries of Province and Regions. ' (D.3 #8) To answer this call our schools and local and regional networks are required to commit **to be in global companionship so that our school communities can see themselves as a part of a universal body with a universal mission** (GC35 D2 #20). This is indeed a new mindset and way of proceeding that demands our creativity and commitment to find ways to work together and accomplish a new level of agency for our schools. **This process will make our schools stronger locally and globally and more relevant to the societies we serve.**

10. The delegates commit – during their school visits and reviews - to assessing and developing the level of regional and global networking cooperation that exists.

11. The delegates commit to including in new faculty and staff training programs an understanding that faculty and staff are joining a global network and that they have a role to play in animating it.

12. The delegates further commit to working with the schools' leadership to oblige all faculty and staff be formed in global citizenship so that they can help students understand their future as global citizens.

13. The delegates commit to making Educate Magis an integral tool and resource in the schools to help animate their global dimension.

E. Delegates Request

The delegates ask the Secretary for Education and ICAJE to help them define the role of the Education Delegate regarding the expectations for promoting the Global Network. The delegates undertake to fulfill these commitments and are open to a process of continuous review.

**Original version - English*

Questions:

(1) How can our school(s) truly walk the talk of Global Networking at the service of the Mission?

(2) How are we going to implement in our school(s) the 8 priority actions?

(3) Can or should we implement the 13 actions?

(4) How are we going to monitor and evaluate our response to JESEDU-Rio2017? We need to walk the talk!

Thanks to:

Educate Magis

RJE, Jesuit School Network of Brazil

FLACSI, Latin American Federation of Jesuits Schools.

