

**SECONDARY, PRIMARY AND  
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION**

1. In the past twenty years, in response to General Congregations 32 and 33, significant apostolic renewal has been initiated and carried forward by the large number of Jesuits and lay people working in the apostolate of secondary education. In increasing numbers, our educational institutions are accessible to students from economically disadvantaged groups. The quality of the education has improved in line with the principles enunciated in recent educational documents of the Society.<sup>1</sup> Jesuit-lay cooperation has developed significantly, with each party contributing in a distinctive way towards the total formation of the students. Our schools have become platforms, reaching out into the community, not only to the extended school community of parents, former students, and friends, but also to the poor and the socially disadvantaged in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, we have willingly shared our educational heritage with others when asked to do so.

2. GC 34 gratefully acknowledges these developments and urges that they be continued. Allowing for diverse situations throughout the world, the ideas and practices drawn from the documents mentioned above must inspire school mission statements, policies, programmes and the entire school milieu. The Jesuit identity of our schools and Jesuit-lay cooperation can be ensured only by careful selection of administrators and teachers, both Jesuits and others and — especially for those who will assume positions of major responsibility — adequate formation in the Ignatian charism and pedagogy. In some regions well-designed formation programmes are already being offered to Jesuit and lay teachers and administrators; the Society's Secretary for Education should encourage such programmes elsewhere; they can yield great dividends for the ends that we desire.<sup>2</sup>

3. In response to different situations and for a variety of apostolic reasons, Jesuits in many areas are engaged in the apostolate of primary and pre-primary education. We confirm that such schools "are very important and not contrary to our Institute"<sup>3</sup> and also declare that, because they can provide a solid academic and religious foundation during the formative early years, they can be one of the most effective services we offer to people, especially the poor.

4. The educational apostolate of the Society has been greatly enriched by the contributions made by centres of non-formal education, established in both rural and urban areas of developing countries. These centres provide education outside the traditional school system for both youth and adults among the poor. With the help of a participative pedagogy, they organize programmes to eradicate illiteracy and supply training in technical and social skills as well as offering a religious and ethical formation geared to the analysis and transformation of the society in which the students live. They educate their students as "men and women for others" who can assume leadership roles in their own communities and organizations. The number of persons whom we serve through these centres is very large; as a means towards the promotion of justice, this ministry of non-formal education is fully in accord with our Jesuit mission. Especially in the light of the Decree "Servants of Christ's Mission," GC 34 encourages Jesuits, religious and lay persons to continue their dedicated work in this important but difficult apostolate and recommends cooperation between Jesuit centres for non-formal education and our Jesuit schools, universities and social centres.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1987) and *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (1993).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pedro Arrupe, "Our Secondary Schools Today and Tomorrow," 13 September 1980, n. 21, AR 18 (1980), pp. 268-270.

<sup>3</sup> GC 31, D 28, n.16.