

5. Educational Apostolate

a. General remarks about the educational apostolate

277. §1. The educational apostolate in all its ramifications, recommended in a special way by the Church in our day, is to be valued as of great importance among the ministries of the Society for promoting today's mission in the service of faith from which justice arises. For this work, when carried out in the light of our mission, contributes greatly to "the total and integral liberation of the human person, leading to participation in the life of God himself."⁸⁹

§2. Our members can exercise this apostolate in various ways either in our own institutions or by collaborating with other institutions. The Society should have its own educational institutions where resources and circumstances permit this and where there is well-grounded hope for the greater service of God and the Church.⁹⁰

§3. Those who work in schools of whatever kind or level or who are engaged in nonformal or popular education can exercise a deep and lasting influence on individuals and on society.⁹¹

§4. All educational initiatives of the Society must look to the plurality of cultures, religions, and ideologies as well as to local socioeconomic needs.

278 Keeping intact our preferential option for the poor, we must not neglect students expected to make greater progress and to exercise greater influence on society in the service of the neighbor, no matter to what social class they belong.⁹²

279 §1. We must in a special way help prepare all our students effectively to devote themselves to building a more just world and to understand how to labor with and for others.⁹³

§2. When dealing with Christian students, we should take particular care that along with letters and sciences they acquire that knowledge and character which are worthy of Christians, and that animated by a mature faith and personally devoted to Jesus Christ, learn to can find and serve him in others.⁹⁴ For this, it will help to establish groups of Christian Life Communities in our schools.

§3. Regarding all other students of other religions, we must take care throughout the whole course of studies and especially in the teaching of ethics courses to form men and women who are endowed with a sound moral judgment and solid virtues.⁹⁵

§4. In our educational work we must sensitize our students to the value of interreligious collaboration and instill in them a basic understanding of and respect for the faith vision of those belonging to diverse local religious communities.⁹⁶

280 In this new communications-media culture, it is of great importance to educate our students to a critical understanding of the news transmitted by the media, so that they can learn to be selective in personally assimilating such news. Therefore, our educators should be among the best-trained people in media.⁹⁷

281 Young people who travel abroad for their education, as is common nowadays, should be attentively helped.⁹⁸

282 For its part, the Society should help those many children of the Church who are being educated in non-Catholic schools, collaborating insofar as we are able, in directing Catholic centers for students, serving as chaplains, and also teaching in these schools.⁹⁹

283 We should continue to relate to and advise our former students, so that imbued with gospel values they may take their place in society and help one another in their respective tasks to work for its good.¹⁰⁰

284 To foster a close collaboration with the laity in the work of education, we should hand over to them, as far as is possible, the roles they are prepared to assume, whether these are in teaching, in academic and financial administration, or even on the board of directors.¹⁰¹

b. Educational institutions of the Society

285 §1. Documents on our educational apostolate, elaborated by the Central Secretariat for Education and approved by Father General,¹⁰² allowing for different local and cultural differences and adapted to the nature of different institutions, should inspire school mission statements, policies, teaching programs, and the entire academic milieu of the educational institutions of the Society.

§2. In order to ensure the proper character of our schools and a fruitful Jesuit-lay cooperation, it is altogether necessary to carefully select administrators and teachers, both Jesuits and others, and to form them adequately in Ignatian spirituality and pedagogy, especially those who will assume positions of major responsibility.¹⁰³

286 In many places, primary schools can be one of the most effective services we offer to people, especially the poor, because they can provide a solid academic and religious foundation during the formative early years.¹⁰⁴

287 §1. So-called nonformal education, by which both youths and adults are educated outside the traditional school system in both rural and urban areas of developing countries, is a very apt means to promote justice; hence, it is fully in accord with the mission of the Society and has greatly enriched it.¹⁰⁵

§2. Cooperation is to be fostered between centers for nonformal education conducted by Ours and schools, universities, and social centers of the Society, since such cooperation is beneficial to all.¹⁰⁶

288 §1. Secondary schools should improve continually both as educational institutions and as centers of culture and faith for lay collaborators, for families of students and former students, and through them for the whole community of a region. Our members should also foster close cooperation with parents of students, who bear the primary responsibility for education.¹⁰⁷

§2. Where need or great utility suggests it, other schools, such as technical and agricultural schools, may well be opened.¹⁰⁸

§3. In establishing coeducation in our secondary schools for the greater good of souls, ecclesiastical and civil norms existing in various places are to be observed.¹⁰⁹

289 §1. Universities and institutions of higher learning play an increasingly important role in the formation of the whole human community, for in them our culture is shaped by debates about ethics, future directions for economics and politics, and the very meaning of human existence.¹¹⁰ Accordingly, we must see to it that the Society is present in such institutions, whether directed by itself or by others, insofar as we are able to do so.¹¹¹ It is crucial for the Church, therefore, that dedicated Jesuits continue to engage in university work.¹¹²

§2. We must continue to work strenuously, with imagination and faith and often under very difficult circumstances, to maintain and even to strengthen the specific character of each of our institutions of higher education both as Jesuit and as university, and bring it about that both of these aspects always remain fully operative.¹¹³

§3. Universities of the Society, participating in its mission, must discover in their own proper institutional forms and authentic purposes a specific and appropriate arena, consonant with their nature, for fostering the faith that does justice.¹¹⁴

§4. The complexity of a Jesuit university today can require new structures of government and control in order to preserve its identity and at the same time allow it to relate effectively to the academic world and the society of which it is a part, including the Society of Jesus and the Church. Periodic evaluation and accountability are necessary to judge whether or not its dynamics are being developed in line with the mission of the Society. Jesuits who work in these universities should actively involve themselves in directing them toward the objectives desired for them by the Society.¹¹⁵

§5. A Jesuit university must be outstanding in its human, social, spiritual, and moral formation, as well as in its pastoral attention to its students and to the different groups of people who work in it or are related to it.¹¹⁶

§6. Among the faculties of our institutions of higher learning, theology and philosophy should especially exercise their proper role, to the extent that they contribute to the greater service of God according to local circumstances.¹¹⁷ Interdisciplinary work should also be promoted, which implies a spirit of cooperation and dialogue among specialists within the university itself and with those of other universities.¹¹⁸

290 The education of priests, as a work of the highest value, is to be considered one of the chief ministries of the Society. Therefore, seminarians who attend our universities are to be cared for with special attention, and directors and teachers chosen from among our best men are to be assigned to those clerical seminaries whose direction the Society has accepted. But if there is question of accepting diocesan seminaries, a definite agreement should be made with the bishop with the approval of Father General.¹¹⁹

291 Not only youth but adults also are to be educated both in advancements made in their professions and in steps that can be taken to make their conjugal, family, and social life more human and, where appropriate, more Christian and therefore just; they are to be educated also in what will serve to develop a better understanding of their own religious life.¹²⁰

292 Our colleges and universities may have protectors, that is, friends who undertake to protect the work; however, names connoting jurisdiction should be avoided when and where these have no place.¹²¹

6. Intellectual apostolate

293 §1. Research in philosophy and theology, in the other sciences and in every branch of human culture is extremely necessary to fulfill our mission today and to help the Church to understand the contemporary world and speak to it the Word of salvation.¹²²

§2. Ours whom superiors assign to this scholarly work are to give themselves to it entirely and with a strong and self-denying spirit, for in one way or another such work makes demands upon the whole person. They should know that they are making an invaluable contribution to the contemporary mission of the Society. At the same time they should do this in such a way that they do not lose touch with other apostolic activities of the Society and should cooperate with our members who are engaged in more direct social and pastoral ministries.¹²³

294 Among all the ways of being engaged in the intellectual apostolate in the service of the Kingdom of God, theological research and reflection, when undertaken with the seriousness of research and the creativity of imagination that they merit, within the broad spectrum of Catholic theology and in the midst of the varied circumstances in which Jesuits live and work, have a special place because of their unique value to discern, illuminate, and interpret the opportunities and problems of contemporary life and thus to respond to the broadest questions of the human mind and the deepest yearnings of the human heart.¹²⁴

295 In the elaboration and expression of our theological views and in our choice of pastoral options, we must always actively seek to understand the mind of the hierarchical Church, having as our goal the Society's objective to help souls. At the same time, we must try to articulate the *sensus fidelium* and help the magisterium discern in it the movements of the Spirit in accord with the teaching of Vatican II.¹²⁵

296 The office of writer should be regarded as a ministry that is most profitable to souls and altogether appropriate to the Society; therefore, it is to be diligently encouraged by superiors.¹²⁶ Regulations enacted both by the common law of the Church and our own Institute with regard to the publishing of books should be exactly and fairly put into practice.¹²⁷

297 We must never forget the distinctive importance of the intellectual quality of all our ministries.¹²⁸ Therefore we must all insist on the ongoing development of our capacity to analyze and evaluate our mission, which is indispensable if we wish to integrate the promotion of justice with the proclamation of faith, and if we hope to be effective in our work for peace, in our concern to protect life and the environment, in our defense of the rights of individual men and women and of entire peoples.¹²⁹

⁸⁹ GC 33, d. 1, no. 44: see GC 32, d. 2, no. 11; d. 4, no. 60; GC 31, d. 28, no. 6.

⁹⁰ GC 31, d. 28, no. 5.

⁹¹ GC 33, d.1, no. 44.

⁹² See GC 31, d. 28, no. 10, a.

- ⁹³ GC 32, d. 4, no. 60.
- ⁹⁴ GC 31, d. 28, no. 12, a; GC 32, d. 4, no. 60; see P. IV, c. 7, nos. 1, 2 [392, 395].
- ⁹⁵ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 12f.
- ⁹⁶ GC 34, d. 5, no. 9.8.
- ⁹⁷ See GC 34, d. 15, no. 6.
- ⁹⁸ *CollDecr* d. [418] (GC 30, d. 51, §2); GC 31, d. 28, no. 15, a.
- ⁹⁹ GC 31, d. 28, no. 14.
- ¹⁰⁰ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 15, b.
- ¹⁰¹ GC 31, d. 28, no. 27.
- ¹⁰² See “The Characteristics of Jesuit Education,” Dec. 8, 1986 (*ActRSJ* 19:767ff.); “Ignatian Pedagogy Project,” July 31, 1993 (*ActRSJ* 20:911ff.).
- ¹⁰³ GC 34, d. 18, no. 2.
- ¹⁰⁴ GC 34, d. 18, no. 3; see *CollDecr* d. 132 (GC 31, d. 28, no. 16).
- ¹⁰⁵ See GC 34, d. 18, no. 4.
- ¹⁰⁶ See GC 34, d. 18, no. 4.
- ¹⁰⁷ GC 31, d. 28, no. 18.
- ¹⁰⁸ GC 31, d. 28, no. 19, c.
- ¹⁰⁹ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 23.
- ¹¹⁰ See GC 34, d. 17, no. 2.
- ¹¹¹ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 24, a.
- ¹¹² See GC 34, d. 17, no. 12.
- ¹¹³ See GC 34, d. 17, nos. 5-6.
- ¹¹⁴ See GC 34, d. 17, no. 7; see d. 3, no. 21.
- ¹¹⁵ See GC 34, d. 17, no. 9.
- ¹¹⁶ GC 34, d. 17, no. 11.
- ¹¹⁷ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 24, a, b; *CollDecr* d. [417] (GC 30, d. 51, §1); P. IV, c. 12, no. 1 [446].
- ¹¹⁸ GC 34, d. 17, no. 10.
- ¹¹⁹ GC 31, d. 28, no. 25; see CIC 681, §2.
- ¹²⁰ See GC 31, d. 28, no. 26.
- ¹²¹ See *CollDecr* d. 216 (GC 1, d. 112).
- ¹²² GC 33, d. 1, no. 44; see GC 31, d. 29; GC 32, d. 4, nos. 59-60; GC 34, d. 16, nos. 1-3.
- ¹²³ See GC 31, d. 29, no. 2; GC 33, d. 1, no. 44; GC 34, d. 16, no. 5.
- ¹²⁴ See GC 34, d. 16, nos. 7-9; d. 4, nos. 19-24; d. 6, no. 12; d. 11, no. 27.
- ¹²⁵ GC 34, d. 11, no. 20; see Vat. Council II, Dogmatic constitution *Lumen gentium*, no. 12.
- ¹²⁶ See *CollDecr* d. 230 (GC 5, d. 9); GC 22, d. 20.
- ¹²⁷ See “An Ordination on Writings and other Works Intended for Publication,” *ActRSJ* 19:1016ff.
- ¹²⁸ See GC 34, d. 6, no. 21; *ibid.*, d. 16, no. 1.
- ¹²⁹ See GC 34, d. 16, no. 3.