

EXCHANGES ÉCHANGES INTERCAMBIOS SCAMBI

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Michael Czerny, S.J.
Editor

INTRODUCTION

If someone starts telling you about a Jesuit highschool or university, a Jesuit parish or retreat house, a picture immediately comes to mind and, even before you hear the specifics, there's a lot about it you both already know.

By contrast, when talking about the social apostolate, you start by using one term or another, depending on what part of the world you're in: *social action or justice, social or social-pastoral ministry, social work or service, development and advocacy, worker mission or "jésuites en monde populaire," work with minorities, the excluded or marginalised, the Fourth World* and so forth. The image that will come to mind is likely to be totally different for each person. Before settling on a common idea, you have to first spell out what kind of work it is, where, since when, among which people, in what kind of set-up, with which colleagues, at what point or level of society, with what angle or approach and, finally, to what purpose and with what hope.

Unlike the four examples at the top of the page, the social sector has neither traditional forms for organising its work, nor its own distinctive means for carrying it out. Rather, a nearly endless variety of tools and institutions are adopted and adapted, and all these forms – for example, social research and publications, advocacy and human development, and direct social action with and for the poor – differ according to time and place and circumstances, and also tend to change rapidly.

Is this richness or scatteredness? Is it confusion or responsiveness? Is it prophetic ministry on the frontier of the Church and at the crossroads of ideologies, or is it a waste of time compared with the pastoral, spiritual, educational or theological work which – in the minds of many – “normal” Jesuits “usually” do?

Such facts of life are some of what lies behind the “Social Apostolate Initiative” which began in 1995 after GC 34 and is projected to run until 2005.¹ At the quarter mark came the international Naples Congress (June 1997)² and, at the halfway point, Father General wrote his Letter on the Social Apostolate (January 2000).³ A draft of the *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus*⁴ has been circulating for nearly three years and as certain parts are being implemented, tested and improved step-by-step, a more definitive version is taking shape.

So, if you ask me about the Jesuit social apostolate, I cannot tell you what it is in a few precise words. What I can do is show you many examples which all aim towards *building a fuller expression of justice and charity into the structures of human life in common*.⁵

This is what the present issue of *Promotio Iustitiae* does, too. It offers some interesting examples of different issues, levels, viewpoints and concerns typical of the Jesuit social apostolate.

¹ *Promotio Iustitiae* 64 (June 1996) and 67 (May 1997).

² *Promotio Iustitiae* 68 (September 1997).

³ *Promotio Iustitiae* 73 (March 2000), 19-24.

⁴ *Promotio Iustitiae* 69 (1998).

⁵ NC 298.

In the same spirit I want to introduce *HEADLINES*, a new publication launched in October 2000. Distributed mostly via e-mail, *HL* is a bulletin of news from and for the Jesuit social apostolate. Its stated purpose is “to exchange news, stimulate contacts, share spirituality and promote networking.” Like *PJ*, it is for Jesuits and colleagues involved in the social apostolate and for anyone else who is interested. (If you don’t already receive *HL*, please see the back cover.)

A most moving feature of the young Society of Jesus was that Ignatius and his companions wrote each other voluminous letters which then criss-crossed the globe. How important these letters were for binding the members together in union, charity and love! “This bond is strengthened” – and here we make a leap to today – “by their getting information and news from one another and having much intercommunication.”⁶ So be it, in this scattered but increasingly organic social apostolate of ours!

Michael Czerny, S.J.
Editor

⁶ *Constitutions* [821].

To the SOCIETY of JESUS about HIV/AIDS

Coolock House
South Africa
16 July 2000

Dear brothers in Christ:

In July 2000, more than 12,000 delegates from around the world met in Durban, South Africa, to consider again the global impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in all its dimensions. Amongst them were a number of Jesuits and a lay-collaborator from the African Assistency. Among the horrific statistics we were confronted with the fact that currently there are 19.5 million adults and children in our respective countries who are HIV-positive. By the year 2010, in those same countries, there will be more than 32 million AIDS orphans.

The HIV/AIDS Situation in Selected Countries of the African Assistency*

	Adults & Children HIV-positive (year 2000)	Percent of Adults (aged 15-49) who are HIV-positive (year 2000)	Projected Number of Orphans from all Causes (year 2010)
Ivory Coast	760,000	10.8	1,414,000
D.R.Congo	1,100,000	5.1	3,476,000
Ethiopia	3,000,000	10.6	6,863,000
Ghana	340,000	3.6	609,000
Kenya	2,100,000	13.9	1,357,000
Malawi	800,000	16.0	1,005,000
Nigeria	2,700,000	5.1	7,579,000
South Africa	4,200,000	19.9	3,581,000
Uganda	820,000	8.3	2,088,000
Tanzania	1,300,000	8.1	2,149,000
Zambia	870,000	19.9	1,173,000
Zimbabwe	1,500,000	25.1	1,264,000
TOTAL	19,490,000		32,558,000

Although the problem is particularly acute in Africa at the present moment, this pandemic will deeply affect the entire developing world, particularly Asia, Central America and the Caribbean. It therefore poses a challenge to the whole Society of Jesus.

However, the problem of HIV/AIDS and the responsibility for addressing it is not confined to the developing world. While it is a crime against justice that the developing world be denied access to the life-sustaining drugs which the First World enjoys, the relative safety which their affluence affords to those in industrialised countries should not lead to complacency or to underestimating the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS issue as a problem affecting the entire

* Sources: UNAIDS *Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic*, June 2000; and S. Hunter & J. Williamson, *Children on the Brink: Updated Estimates and Recommendations for Intervention*, July 2000.

world and the entire Society of Jesus. Moreover, it is the poor who seem most affected by the virus, and it is our preferential option for the poor and our commitment to justice which compel us to respond to the challenge which the disease poses.

Recognising that the hopes and joys, the pains and sufferings of those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS are also the hopes and joys, the pains and sufferings of Christ in our world today, we feel impelled to address ourselves to you, our brothers in the Society:

We urge all **communities and individuals** to be open to work within this apostolate and among those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Special care and support for those living openly with the virus is commended, as only then can we break the silence surrounding this disease. It is our hope that individuals will be open to working for orphans; working with youth who are the promise of the future; and with home-based-care organisations.

Individuals facing this task rightly look to their Provinces for support, support which they may not receive unless their Provincials declare this work a **Province priority**:

- This would seem to imply that each Province or Region have a focal person for the promotion of this apostolate. The work of this delegate would necessarily involve interactions with the pastoral, educational, social and formation sectors.
- Provinces should identify those already working in this field and offer support to them, helping them to integrate their works into the work of the Society.
- It would be well for each Province to produce guidelines and norms for those communities with Jesuits or lay collaborators who are infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Work in the field of HIV/AIDS should be an essential and indispensable part of our formation programmes from the novitiate onwards and is a suitable apostolate for regency.
- The work of the Province in this particular apostolate would also include working with the local Church and all other relevant organisations.

The **Assistancy** should

- support and facilitate the work of the Assistancy coordinator;
- ensure the integration of HIV/AIDS into all programmes of study in the Assistancy houses of formation;
- stress the ongoing pastoral formation in this area of all Jesuits, young and old;
- develop proactive perspectives in the theology of hope, grief and suffering, morality, and especially gender;
- forge and maintain strong links between this field and all other Jesuit apostolates at the Assistancy level, including the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS);
- establish and promote networks of co-operation and information-sharing within the Assistancy; and
- draw up a broad framework of action, within particular sectors, for the Assistancy.

The tragedy of AIDS is such that it demands a high priority. **Father General** might respond to this by establishing a secretariat that would facilitate, enable and promote the apostolate of HIV/AIDS in the areas of service, prevention, care, orphans and theological development. This secretariat could be along the lines of that founded by Father Arrupe to address the needs of refugees world-wide – in this case, a Jesuit AIDS service. We also ask that the entire AIDS issue and this proposal be brought to the Provincials' meeting at Loyola in September 2000.

In conclusion, to all of our brothers we say that, although the problem is great, our hope is still greater. We are filled with hope because of the courage and living faith we witness in the lives of so many living with HIV/AIDS and because of the loving care shown by families, communities and those working in the AIDS area. Our hope is greater because of the generous dedication of the growing number of young Jesuits in our Assistency. But above all, our hope is greater because Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again.

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The SOCIAL APOSTOLATE: YOUNG JESUITS MEET*

Bernard Hubien, S.J.

“The lifelong commitment to follow Jesus, the daily friendship with the poor, can change a life, go on changing lives and generating community, sometimes visibly and often imperceptibly helping to make the world at once more human and more divine.”¹

This conviction turned out to be shared by all of the twenty-five “young” European Jesuits who met in Brussels at the end of August 1999 – a discovery that stood out in strong relief after the four days they spent together. A common awareness inspires them wherever their labours take them. To put this in context, we must go back a bit.

During the Naples Congress in June 1997 on the Social Apostolate in the Society of Jesus, a number of young Jesuits recently committed to this field of activity met for the first time. Comparing notes on the isolation in which they sometimes pursued this commitment, they agreed that it would be in their common interest to get together with Jesuits of the same generation who were either already engaged in some kind of social apostolate or preparing for

* *Evangile et Justice*, 50/51 (December 1999).

¹ *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus, Promotio Iustitiae* 69 (1998), 5.

such an assignment. An invitation was sent all over Europe and brought together a group of twenty-five.

For the meeting's agenda, there were no themes to discuss, no learned papers by specialists. The participants simply shared the concrete details of their day to day life. In small group discussions, they opened up to each other, relating the events and encounters that brought them to the social apostolate. As a further step, they attempted to discern what keeps them going and what holds them back in their commitment.

We shall highlight here a few of the points raised in their discussions, especially the factors that exerted the strongest influence on their work. One may observe that very often what helps and what hinders are closely interrelated.

We begin with what is perceived as hindering a commitment to social apostolate. The first hindrance is that the work is not integrated with theological and spiritual reflection – whether for want of time or, sometimes, for want of resources.

After all, it is difficult to maintain that faith and justice are inseparable if one neglects to reflect on the foundation of our commitment.

Another deterrent shows up in what we understand by “success” or “results.” Often in the social apostolate, all we have are some ambiguous indications that help us measure the results of our work. No spectacular accomplishments, no visible traces. Only the effects of a presence, of a relationship.

A final deterrent to highlight is the sheer mass of work to be done by the small number of people involved in this mission. The demands of the social apostolate do not always fit well with a strict process of planning and distribution of tasks. There are urgent emergencies, unforeseen demands, calls that will not wait. They must be attended to. Meanwhile, the work keeps piling up and piling up....

And yet our contacts, our shared experience and our affection for those for whom and with whom the job is done, are a source of energy and keep us going. The sense of working as a team and in a network generates a dynamic that enables us to plunge ever deeper into the waters of the social apostolate. We should also acknowledge the support of superiors, collaboration with our lay colleagues and community life. All these factors lend strength and vigour to the mission we have received. These are the things that enable the young Jesuits assembled in Brussels to find their joy in the social apostolate today, and strengthen their conviction about the evangelical effectiveness of their commitment.

The only purpose of this meeting was to get together, to get to know one another. In fact, this is how every network comes into being. These twenty-five young Jesuits have come to realise that, in the field of social apostolate in Europe, this network is alive and flourishing.

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In the November 1999 issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, the Editor John Padberg, S.J., invited U.S. Jesuits to write a personal response to the question: *What challenges you as a Jesuit at the end of this millennium and the beginning of the next?* Here is a most interesting letter in reply.

CHALLENGES to a JESUIT in 2000*

Walter J. Ong, S.J.

What challenges me as a Jesuit is what, I believe, challenges the Church and all believers in Jesus Christ.

Since the discovery of organic and cosmic evolution, the Church as such has never related Christian revelation to what we now know of the real world that God created. From massive and basically incontestable research, we know that the universe we live in is now more or less twelve to fourteen billion years old. Over the past several decades, this has been news to all human beings, including both scientists and others, believers and non-believers, the well educated and the less educated, from all laity through all clergy and all theologians. Concomitantly, today the size of the universe, though surveyed only approximately, is beyond anything that could have been reasonably imagined until very recently. Despite the massive study and research that has brought humankind this relatively new knowledge, many human beings inside or outside communities of Christian believers have hardly assimilated this knowledge theologically or otherwise. The Church cannot continue indefinitely to act and speak as though this knowledge did not exist. This is the world that God created.

Recognising the problem facing us is not answering it, or even addressing it. How can we situate ourselves and Christian belief in what we now for the first time know of God's creation?

No matter how vast the universe is, we can situate ourselves in it *spatially* in the sense that we know that we are *here*, even though it might take a little doing to find out what *here* comes to in terms of the vastness of the universe.

The question of time is more complicated. What is remarkable is that, although time is evanescent – “times flies” – we can situate ourselves in the universe in *time* rather well. Not in terms of the beginning of the universe, because we cannot date the beginning of the universe with any precision if we can only say, “more or less twelve to fourteen billion years” ago. But in terms of well-known events in historical time datable from our present position in time as known in secular history, we can situate ourselves and the rest of the world around us in real time rather well.

We know that, however old the universe is, in faith Christians relate to it in terms of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ and his life and death, which the Bible is careful to anchor in our secular time – not with total accuracy, to be sure, yet with the kind of accuracy with which we commonly work when dealing with matters in antiquity. But the anchoring faces ahead. We

* *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 32:1 (January 2000).

are not supposed to get *back* to the Incarnation or to anything else. Christian fulfilment, the second coming of Christ, lies *ahead*. This means that we had better incorporate the insights of evolutionary studies into our Christian understanding of God's creation. Evolution faces the universe in the present and the *future*. Non-evolutionary understandings of creation have the future closed. A non-evolutionary secular history is simply false. A non-evolutionary understanding of the world in which God's revelation was given and now exists is theologically fatal.

The urgency of situating ourselves in God's real creation, rather than in an imagined creation we are more comfortable with, is intensified today not only because our knowledge of the real universe is so vast and circumstantial, but also because the place of humankind in the universe has been so radically changing over the years.

On January 22, 1985, I gave the Wollson College Lecture at Oxford University. Its title, "Writing Is a Technology That Restructures Thought," means what it says. Writing has changed forever the relationship of human beings to creation. Later, print has changed this relationship even more. Electronics still more. With the computer, human beings are interacting with the *evolving universe* in ways not possible earlier. With online contacts, we are *operating* not on a projected calendar but at the known point in time where the universe really is.

The issue is urgent and complex – too complex to be handled as a full answer to your question. But this makes the question even more pressing.

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The twenty-eight Jesuit Colleges and Universities in the United States held a Conference on “Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education,” at Santa Clara University (California), 5-8 October 2000, to mark the 25th anniversary of Decree 4 of the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, and to reflect on its impact upon the Society’s university apostolate in the United States. The 420 participants, among them many top administrators, endorsed Father General’s address as the basis upon which to plan education for justice on every campus. The address is also available at

<http://www.sjweb.info/sjs/pj/2001/kolvSantaClara.htm>

The SERVICE of FAITH and the PROMOTION of JUSTICE in AMERICAN JESUIT HIGHER EDUCATION

Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.

Introduction

This conference on the commitment to justice in American Jesuit higher education comes at an important moment in the rich history of the twenty-eight colleges and universities represented here this evening. We also join Santa Clara University in celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding.

Just as significant as this moment in history, is our location. Santa Clara Valley, named after the mission at the heart of this campus, is known world-wide as “Silicon Valley,” the home of the microchip. Surely when Father Nobili, the founder of this University, saw the dilapidated church and compound of the former Franciscan mission, he could never have imagined this valley as the centre of a global technological revolution.

This juxtaposition of mission and microchip is emblematic of all the Jesuit schools. Originally founded to serve the educational and religious needs of poor immigrant populations, they have become highly sophisticated institutions of learning in the midst of global wealth, power and culture. The turn of the millennium finds them in all their diversity: they are larger, better equipped, more complex and professional than ever before, and also more concerned about their Catholic, Jesuit identity.

In the history of American Jesuit higher education, there is much to be grateful for, first to God and the Church, and surely to the many faculty, students, administrators and benefactors who have made it what it is today. But this conference brings you together from across the United States with guests from Jesuit universities elsewhere, not to congratulate one another, but for a strategic purpose. On behalf of the complex, professional and pluralistic institutions you represent, you are here to face a question as difficult as it is central: How can the Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States express faith-filled concern for justice in what they are as Christian academies of higher learning, in what their faculty do, and in what their students become?

As a contribution to your response, I would like to (I.) reflect with you on what faith and justice has meant for Jesuits since 1975 and then (II.) consider some concrete circumstances

of today, (III.) to suggest what justice rooted in faith could mean in American Jesuit higher education and (IV.) conclude with an agenda for the first decade of the years 2000.

I. The Jesuit commitment to faith and justice, new in 1975

I begin by recalling another anniversary, which this conference commemorates. Twenty-five years ago, ten years after the closing of the Second Vatican Council, Jesuit delegates from around the world gathered at the 32nd General Congregation, to consider how the Society of Jesus was responding to the deep transformation of all Church life that was called for and launched by Vatican II.

After much prayer and deliberation, the Congregation slowly realised that the entire Society of Jesus in all its many works was being invited by the Spirit of God to set out on a new direction. The overriding purpose of the Society of Jesus, namely “the service of faith,” must also include “the promotion of justice.” This new direction was not confined to those already working with the poor and marginalized in what was called “the social apostolate.” Rather, this commitment was to be “a concern of our whole life and a dimension of all our apostolic endeavours.”¹ So central to the mission of the entire Society was this union of faith and justice that it was to become the “integrating factor” of all the Society’s works,² and in this light “great attention” was to be paid in evaluating every work, including educational institutions.³

I myself attended GC 32, representing the Province of the Near East where, for centuries, the apostolic activity of the Jesuits has concentrated on education in a famous university and some outstanding high schools. Of course some Jesuits worked in very poor villages, refugee camps or prisons, and some fought for the rights of workers, immigrants and foreigners; but this was not always considered authentic, mainstream Jesuit work. In Beirut we were well aware that our medical school, staffed by very holy Jesuits, was producing, at least at that time, some of the most corrupt citizens in the city, but this was taken for granted. The social mood of the explosive Near East did not favour a struggle against sinful, unjust structures. The liberation of Palestine was the most important social issue. The Christian churches had committed themselves to many works of charity, but involvement in the promotion of justice would have tainted them by association with leftist movements and political turmoil.

The situation I describe in the Near East was not exceptional in the world-wide Society at that time. I was not the only delegate who was ignorant of matters pertaining to justice and injustice. The 1971 Synod of Bishops had prophetically declared, “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation,”⁴ but few of us knew what this meant in our concrete circumstances.

Earlier, in 1966, Father Arrupe had pointed out to the Latin American Provincials how the socio-economic situation throughout the continent contradicted the Gospel, and “from this

¹ GC32, D.4, n.47.

² GC32, D.2, n.9.

³ See GC32, D.2, n.9 and D.4, n.76.

⁴ 1971 Synod of Bishops, “Justice in the World.”

situation rises the moral obligation of the Society to rethink all its ministries and every form of its apostolates to see if they really offer a response to the urgent priorities which justice and social equity call for.”⁵ Many of us failed to see the relevance of his message to our situation. But please note that Father Arrupe did not ask for the suppression of the apostolate of education in favour of social activity. On the contrary, he affirmed that “even an apostolate like education – at all levels – which is so sincerely wanted by the Society and whose importance is clear to the entire world, in its concrete forms today must be the object of reflection in the light of the demands of the social problem.”⁶

Perhaps the incomprehension or reluctance of some of us delegates, was one reason why GC 32 finally took a radical stand. With a passion both inspiring and disconcerting, the General Congregation coined the formula, “the service of faith and the promotion of justice,” and used it adroitly to push every Jesuit work and every individual Jesuit to make a choice, providing little leeway for the fainthearted. Many inside and outside the Society were outraged by the “promotion of justice.” As Father Arrupe rightly perceived, his Jesuits were collectively entering upon a more severe way of the cross, which would surely entail misunderstandings and even opposition on the part of civil and ecclesiastical authorities, many good friends, and some of our own members. Today, twenty-five years later, this option has become integral to our Jesuit identity, to the awareness of our mission, and to our public image in both Church and society.⁷

The summary expression “the service of faith and the promotion of justice” has all the characteristics of a world-conquering slogan using a minimum of words to inspire a maximum of dynamic vision, but at the risk of ambiguity. Let us examine, first the service of faith, then the promotion of justice.

A. The service of faith

From our origins in 1540 the Society has been officially and solemnly charged with “the defence and the propagation of the faith.” In 1975, the Congregation reaffirmed that, for us Jesuits, the defence and propagation of the faith is a matter of to be or not to be, even if the words themselves can change. Faithful to the Vatican Council, the Congregation wanted our preaching and teaching not to proselytise, not to impose our religion on others, but rather to propose Jesus and his message of God's Kingdom in a spirit of love to everyone.

Just as the Vatican had abandoned the name “*Propaganda Fidei*,” GC 32 passed from propagation to service of faith. In Decree 4, the Congregation did use the expression “the proclamation of faith,” which I prefer.⁸ In the context of centuries of Jesuit spirituality, however, “the service of faith” cannot mean anything other than to bring the counter-cultural gift of Christ to our world.⁹ But why “the service of faith”? The Congregation itself answers this question by using the Greek expression “*diakonia fidei*.”¹⁰ It refers to Christ the suffering Servant carrying out his *diakonia* in total service of his Father by laying down his life for the

⁵ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., “On the Social Apostolate in Latin America,” December 1966, *Acta Romana* 14, 791.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Cf. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., “On the Social Apostolate,” January 2000, *Promotio Iustitiae* 73 (May 2000), n.3.

⁸ “Since evangelisation is proclamation of that faith which is made operative in love of others (see Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 4:15), the promotion of justice is indispensable to it” (GC32, D.4, n.28).

⁹ Cf. GC34, D.26, n.5.

¹⁰ For example, GC32, D.11, n.13.

salvation of all. Thus, for a Jesuit, “not just any response to the needs of the men and women of today will do. The initiative must come from the Lord labouring in events and people here and now. God invites us to follow Christ in his labours, on his terms and in his way.”¹¹

I do not think we delegates at the 32nd Congregation were aware of the theological and ethical dimensions of Christ’s mission of service. Greater attention to the “*diakonia fidei*” may have prevented some of the misunderstandings provoked by the phrase “the promotion of justice.”

B. The promotion of justice

This expression is difficult to translate in many languages. We delegates were familiar with sales promotions in a department store or the promotion of friends or enemies to a higher rank or position; we were not familiar with the promotion of justice. To be fair, let us remember that a general congregation is not a scientific academy equipped to distinguish and to define, to clarify and to classify. In the face of radically new apostolic needs, it chose to inspire, to teach and even to prophesy. In its desire to be more incisive in the promotion of justice, the Congregation avoided traditional words like charity, mercy, or love, unfashionable words in 1975. Neither philanthropy nor even development would do. The Congregation instead used the word “promotion” with its connotation of a well-planned strategy to make the world just.

Since Saint Ignatius wanted love to be expressed not only in words but also in deeds, the Congregation committed the Society to the promotion of justice as a concrete, radical but proportionate response to an unjustly suffering world. Fostering the virtue of justice in people was not enough. Only a substantive justice can bring about the kinds of structural and attitudinal changes that are needed to uproot those sinful oppressive injustices that are a scandal against humanity and God.

This sort of justice requires an action-oriented commitment to the poor with a courageous personal option. In some ears the relatively mild expression, “promotion of justice,” echoed revolutionary, subversive and even violent language. For example, the American State Department recently accused some Colombian Jesuits of being Marxist-inspired founders of a guerrilla organisation. When challenged the U.S. government apologised for this mistake, which shows that some message did get through.

Just as in “*diakonia fidei*” the term faith is not specified, so in the “promotion of justice,” the term justice also remains ambiguous. The 32nd Congregation would not have voted for Decree 4 if, on the one hand, socio-economic justice had been excluded or if, on the other hand, the justice of the Gospel had not been included. A stand in favour of social justice that was almost ideological, and simultaneously a strong option for “that justice of the Gospel which embodies God’s love and saving mercy”¹² were both indispensable. Refusing to clarify the relationship between the two, GC 32 maintained its radicality by simply juxtaposing “*diakonia fidei*” and “promotion of justice.”

In other decrees of the same Congregation, when the two dimensions of the one mission of the Society were placed together, some delegates sought to achieve a more integrated expression by proposing amendments such as the service of faith through or in the promotion

¹¹ GC34, D.26, n.8.

¹² GC33, D.1, n.32.

of justice. Such expressions might better render the 1971 Synod's identification of "action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world [as] a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel."¹³ But one can understand the Congregation's fear that too neat or integrated an approach might weaken the prophetic appeal and water down the radical change in our mission.

In retrospect, this simple juxtaposition sometimes led to an "incomplete, slanted and unbalanced reading" of Decree 4,¹⁴ unilaterally emphasising "one aspect of this mission to the detriment of the other,"¹⁵ treating faith and justice as alternative or even rival tracks of ministry. "Dogmatism or ideology sometimes led us to treat each other more as adversaries than as companions. The promotion of justice has sometimes been separated from its wellspring of faith."¹⁶

On the one side, the faith dimension was too often presumed and left implicit, as if our identity as Jesuits were enough. Some rushed headlong towards the promotion of justice without much analysis or reflection and with only occasional reference to the justice of the Gospel. They seemed to consign the service of faith to a dying past.

Those on the other side clung to a certain style of faith and Church. They gave the impression that God's grace had to do only with the next life, and that divine reconciliation entailed no practical obligation to set things right here on earth.

In this frank assessment I have used, not so much my own words but rather those of subsequent Congregations, so as to share with you the whole Society's remorse for whatever distortions or excesses occurred, and to demonstrate how, over the last twenty-five years, the Lord has patiently been teaching us to serve the faith that does justice in a more integral way.

C. The ministry of education

In the midst of radical statements and unilateral interpretations associated with Decree 4, many raised doubts about our maintaining large educational institutions. They insinuated, if they did not insist, that direct social work among the poor and involvement with their movements should take priority. Today, however, the value of the educational apostolate is generally recognised, being the sector occupying the greatest Jesuit manpower and resources, but only on condition that it transform its goals, contents, and methods.

Even before GC 32, Father Arrupe had already fleshed out the meaning of *diakonia fidei* for educational ministries when he told the 1973 International Congress of Jesuit Alumni of Europe: "Today our prime educational objective must be to form men for others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ – for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbours; men completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for men is a farce."¹⁷ My predecessor's address was not well received by many alumni at the Valencia meeting, but the expression, "men and women for others," really

¹³ 1971 Synod of Bishops, "Justice in the World."

¹⁴ Pedro Arrupe, *Rooted and Grounded in Love*, 67 (*Acta Romana* 18, 500).

¹⁵ GC33, D.1, n.33.

¹⁶ GC34, D.3, n.2.

¹⁷ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., Address to the European Jesuit Alumni Congress, Valencia, August 1973, in *Hombres para los demás*, Barcelona: Diafora, 1983, p. 159.

helped the educational institutions of the Society to ask serious questions that led to their transformation.¹⁸

Father Ignacio Ellacuría, in his 1982 convocation address here at Santa Clara University, eloquently expressed his conviction in favour of the promotion of justice in the educational apostolate: “A Christian university must take into account the Gospel preference for the poor. This does not mean that only the poor study at the university; it does not mean that the university should abdicate its mission of academic excellence – excellence needed in order to solve complex social problems. It does mean that the university should be present intellectually where it is needed: to provide science for those who have no science; to provide skills for the unskilled; to be a voice for those who do not possess the academic qualifications to promote and legitimate their rights.”¹⁹

In these two statements, we discover the same concern to go beyond a disincarnate spiritualism or a secular social activism, so as to renew the educational apostolate in word and in action at the service of the Church in a world of unbelief and of injustice. We should be very grateful for all that has been achieved in this apostolate, both faithful to the characteristics of 400 years of Ignatian education and open to the changing signs of the times. Today, one or two generations after Decree 4, we face a world that has an even greater need for the faith that does justice.

II. A “composition” of our time and place

The twenty-five year history we lived through and have briefly surveyed, brings us to the present. Ignatius of Loyola begins many meditations in his Spiritual Exercises with “a composition of place,” an exercise of the imagination to situate prayerful contemplation in concrete human circumstances. Since this world is the arena of God’s presence and activity, Ignatius believes that we can find God if we approach the world with generous faith and a discerning spirit.

Meeting in Silicon Valley brings to mind, not only the intersection of the mission and the microchip, but also the dynamism and even dominance that are characteristics of the United States at this time. Enormous talent and unprecedented prosperity are concentrated in this country, which spawns 64 new millionaires every day. This is the headquarters of the new economy that reaches around the globe and is transforming the basic fabric of business, work, and communications. Thousands of immigrants arrive from everywhere: entrepreneurs from Europe, high-tech professionals from South Asia who staff the service industries as well as workers from Latin America and Southeast Asia who do the physical labour – thus, a remarkable ethnic, cultural and class diversity.

At the same time the United States struggles with new social divisions aggravated by “the digital divide” between those with access to the world of technology and those left out. This rift, with its causes in class, racial and economic differences, has its root cause in chronic discrepancies in the quality of education. Here in Silicon Valley, for example, some of the world’s premier research universities flourish alongside struggling public schools where Afro-

¹⁸ Cf. *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education*, Washington, D.C.: Jesuit Secondary Education Association, 1987.

¹⁹ Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., “The Task of a Christian University,” Convocation address at the University of Santa Clara, 12 June 1982; “Una universidad para el pueblo,” *Diakonia* 6:23 (1982), 81-88.

American and immigrant students drop out in droves. Nation-wide, one child in every six is condemned to ignorance and poverty.

This valley, this nation and the whole world look very different from the way they looked twenty-five years ago. With the collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War, national and even international politics have been eclipsed by a resurgent capitalism that faces no ideological rival. The European Union slowly pulls the continent's age-old rivals together into a community but also a fortress. The former "Second World" struggles to repair the human and environmental damage left behind by so-called socialist regimes. Industries are re-locating to poorer nations, not to distribute wealth and opportunity, but to exploit the relative advantage of low wages and lax environmental regulations. Many countries become yet poorer, especially where corruption and exploitation prevail over civil society and where violent conflict keeps erupting.

This composition of our time and place embraces six billion people with their faces young and old, some being born and others dying, some white and many brown and yellow and black.²⁰ Each one a unique individual, they all aspire to live life, to use their talents, to support their families and care for their children and elders, to enjoy peace and security, and to make tomorrow better.

Thanks to science and technology, human society is able to solve problems such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, or developing more just conditions of life, but remains stubbornly unable to accomplish this. How can a booming economy, the most prosperous and global ever, still leave over half of humanity in poverty? GC 32 makes its own sober analysis and moral assessment: "We can no longer pretend that the inequalities and injustices of our world must be borne as part of the inevitable order of things. It is now quite apparent that they are the result of what man himself, man in his selfishness, has done.... Despite the opportunities offered by an ever more serviceable technology, we are simply not willing to pay the price of a more just and more humane society."²¹

Injustice is rooted in a spiritual problem, and its solution requires a spiritual conversion of each one's heart and a cultural conversion of our global society so that humankind, with all the powerful means at its disposal, might exercise the will to change the sinful structures afflicting our world. The yearly *Human Development Report* of the United Nations is a haunting challenge to look critically at basic conditions of life in the United States and the 175 other nations that share our one planet.²²

Such is the world in all its complexity, with great global promises and countless tragic betrayals. Such is the world in which Jesuit institutions of higher education are called to serve faith and promote justice.

III. American Jesuit Higher Education for faith and justice

Within the complex time and place we are in, and in the light of the recent General Congregations, I want to spell out several ideal characteristics, as manifest in three

²⁰ See "Contemplation on the Incarnation," Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, nn. 101-109.

²¹ GC32, D.4, nn.27, 20.

²² United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report*, 1990-present (annual).

complementary dimensions of Jesuit higher education: in who our students become, in what our faculty do, and in how our universities proceed. When I speak of ideals, some are easy to meet, others remain persistently challenging, but together they serve to orient our schools and, in the long run, to identify them. At the same time, the U.S. Provincials have recently established an important Higher Education Committee to propose criteria on the staffing, leadership and Jesuit sponsorship of our colleges and universities.²³ May these criteria help to implement the ideal characteristics we now meditate on together.

A. Formation and learning

Today's predominant ideology reduces the human world to a global jungle whose primordial law is the survival of the fittest. Students who subscribe to this view want to be equipped with well-honed professional and technical skills in order to compete in the market and secure one of the relatively scarce fulfilling and lucrative jobs available. This is the success which many students (and parents!) expect.

All American universities, ours included, are under tremendous pressure to opt entirely for success in this sense. But what our students want – and deserve – includes but transcends this “worldly success” based on marketable skills. The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become.

For four hundred and fifty years, Jesuit education has sought to educate “the whole person” intellectually and professionally, psychologically, morally and spiritually. But in the emerging global reality, with its great possibilities and deep contradictions, the whole person is different from the whole person of the Counter-Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, or the 20th Century. Tomorrow's “whole person” cannot be whole without an educated awareness of society and culture with which to contribute socially, generously, in the real world. Tomorrow's whole person must have, in brief, a well-educated solidarity.

We must therefore raise our Jesuit educational standard to “educate the whole person of solidarity for the real world.” Solidarity is learned through “contact” rather than through “concepts,” as the Holy Father said recently at an Italian university conference.²⁴ When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change. Personal involvement with innocent suffering, with the injustice others suffer, is the catalyst for solidarity which then gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection.

Students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and engage it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed. Campus ministry does much to foment such intelligent, responsible and active compassion, compassion that deserves the name solidarity.

²³ In February 2000, the Jesuit Conference established a five-man Committee on Higher Education to prepare recommendations regarding 1) sponsorship by the Society of U.S. Jesuit colleges and universities; 2) assignment of personnel to these institutions; 3) selection of Presidents (particularly non-Jesuit Presidents) for these institutions.

²⁴ John Paul II, Address to Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, 5 May 2000, n.9.

Our universities also boast a splendid variety of in-service programs, outreach programs, insertion programs, off-campus contacts and hands-on courses. These should not be too optional or peripheral, but at the core of every Jesuit university's program of studies.

Our students are involved in every sort of social action – tutoring drop-outs, demonstrating in Seattle, serving in soup kitchens, promoting pro-life, protesting against the School of the Americas – and we are proud of them for it. But the measure of Jesuit universities is not what our students do but who they become and the adult Christian responsibility they will exercise in future towards their neighbour and their world. For now, the activities they engage in, even with much good effect, are for their formation. This does not make the university a training camp for social activists. Rather, the students need close involvement with the poor and the marginal now, in order to learn about reality and become adults of solidarity in the future.

B. Research and teaching

If the measure and purpose of our universities lies in what the students become, then the faculty are at the heart of our universities. Their mission is tirelessly to seek the truth and to form each student into a whole person of solidarity who will take responsibility for the real world. What do they need in order to fulfil this essential vocation?

The faculty's "research, which must be rationally rigorous, firmly rooted in faith and open to dialogue with all people of good will,"²⁵ not only obeys the canons of each discipline, but ultimately embraces human reality in order to help make the world a more fitting place for six billion of us to inhabit. I want to affirm that university knowledge is valuable for its own sake and at the same time is knowledge that must ask itself, "For whom? For what?"²⁶

Usually we speak of professors in the plural, but what is at stake is more than the sum of so many individual commitments and efforts. It is a sustained interdisciplinary dialogue of research and reflection, a continuous pooling of expertise. The purpose is to assimilate experiences and insights according to their different disciplines in "a vision of knowledge which, well aware of its limitations, is not satisfied with fragments but tries to integrate them into a true and wise synthesis"²⁷ about the real world. Unfortunately many faculty still feel academically, humanly and I would say spiritually unprepared for such an exchange.

In some disciplines such as the life sciences, the social sciences, law, business, or medicine, the connections with "our time and place" may seem more obvious. These professors apply their disciplinary specialities to issues of justice and injustice in their research and teaching about health care, legal aid, public policy, and international relations. But every field or branch of knowledge has values to defend, with repercussions on the ethical level. Every discipline, beyond its necessary specialisation, must engage with human society, human life, and the environment in appropriate ways, cultivating moral concern about how people ought to live together.

All professors, in spite of the cliché of the ivory tower, are in contact with the world. But no point of view is ever neutral or value-free. By preference, by option, our Jesuit point of view is that of the poor. So our professors' commitment to faith and justice entails a most

²⁵ *Ibid.* n.7.

²⁶ Cf. GC34, D.17, n.6.

²⁷ John Paul II, *op.cit.*, n.5.

significant shift in viewpoint and choice of values. Adopting the point of view of those who suffer injustice, our professors seek the truth and share their search and its results with our students. A legitimate question, even if it does not sound academic, is for each professor to ask, “When researching and teaching, where and with whom is my heart?” To expect our professors to make such an explicit option and speak about it is obviously not easy; it entails risks. But I do believe that this is what Jesuit educators have publicly stated, in Church and in society, to be our defining commitment.

To make sure that the real concerns of the poor find their place in research, faculty members need an organic collaboration with those in the Church and in society who work among and for the poor and actively seek justice. They should be involved together in all aspects: presence among the poor, designing the research, gathering the data, thinking through problems, planning and action, doing evaluation and theological reflection. In each Jesuit Province where our universities are found, the faculty’s privileged working relationships should be with projects of the Jesuit social apostolate – on issues such as poverty and exclusion, housing, AIDS, ecology and Third World debt – and with the Jesuit Refugee Service helping refugees and forcibly displaced people.

Just as the students need the poor in order to learn, so the professors need partnerships with the social apostolate in order to research and teach and form. Such partnerships do not turn Jesuit universities into branch plants of social ministries or agencies of social change, as certain rhetoric of the past may have led some to fear, but are a verifiable pledge of the faculty’s option and really help, as the colloquial expression goes, “to keep your feet to the fire!”

If the professors choose viewpoints incompatible with the justice of the Gospel and consider researching, teaching and learning to be separable from moral responsibility for their social repercussions, they are sending a message to their students. They are telling them that they can pursue their careers and self-interest without reference to anyone “other” than themselves.

By contrast, when faculty do take up inter-disciplinary dialogue and socially-engaged research in partnership with social ministries, they are exemplifying and modelling knowledge which is service, and the students learn by imitating them as “masters of life and of moral commitment,”²⁸ as the Holy Father said.

C. Our way of proceeding

If the measure of our universities is who the students become, and if the faculty are the heart of it all, then what is there left to say? It is perhaps the third topic, the character of our universities – how they proceed internally and how they impact on society – which is the most difficult.

We have already dwelt on the importance of formation and learning, of research and teaching. The social action that the students undertake, and the socially-relevant work that the professors do, are vitally important and necessary, but these do not add up to the full character of a Jesuit university; they neither exhaust its faith-justice commitment nor really fulfil its responsibilities to society.

²⁸ John Paul II, Address to the Faculty of Medicine, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, 26 June 1984.

What, then, constitutes this ideal character? and what contributes to the public's perception of it? In the case of a Jesuit university, this character must surely be the mission, which is defined by GC 32 and reaffirmed by GC 34: the *diakonia fidei* and the promotion of justice, as the characteristic Jesuit university way of proceeding and of serving socially.

In the words of GC 34, a Jesuit university must be faithful to both the noun "university" and to the adjective "Jesuit." To be a university requires dedication "to research, teaching and the various forms of service that correspond to its cultural mission." To be Jesuit "requires that the university act in harmony with the demands of the service of faith and promotion of justice found in Decree 4 of GC 32."²⁹

The first way, historically, that our universities began living out their faith-justice commitment was through their admissions policies, affirmative action for minorities, and scholarships for disadvantaged students;³⁰ and these continue to be effective means. An even more telling expression of the Jesuit university's nature is found in policies concerning hiring and tenure. As a university it is necessary to respect the established academic, professional and labour norms, but as Jesuit it is essential to go beyond them and find ways of attracting, hiring and promoting those who actively share the mission.

I believe that we have made considerable and laudable Jesuit efforts to go deeper and further: we have brought our Ignatian spirituality, our reflective capacities, some of our international resources, to bear. Good results are evident, for example, in the Decree "Jesuits and University Life" of the last General Congregation and in this very Conference on "Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education," and good results are hoped for from the Higher Education Committee working on Jesuit criteria.

Paraphrasing Ignacio Ellacuría, it is the nature of every University to be a social force, and it is the calling of a Jesuit university to take conscious responsibility for being such a force for faith and justice. Every Jesuit academy of higher learning is called to live in a social reality (as we saw in the "composition" of our time and place) and to live for that social reality, to shed university intelligence upon it and to use university influence to transform it.³¹ Thus Jesuit universities have stronger and different reasons, than many other academic and research institutions, for addressing the actual world as it unjustly exists and for helping to reshape it in the light of the Gospel.

IV. In conclusion, an agenda

The twenty-fifth anniversary of GC 32 is a motive for great thanksgiving.

We give thanks for our Jesuit university awareness of the world in its entirety and in its ultimate depth, created yet abused, sinful yet redeemed, and we take up our Jesuit university responsibility for human society that is so scandalously unjust, so complex to understand, and so hard to change. With the help of others and especially the poor, we want to play our role as students, as teachers and researchers, and as Jesuit university in society.

²⁹ GC34, D.17, nn.6,7.

³⁰ "For the poor [the universities] serve as major channels for social advancement" (GC34, D.17, n.2).

³¹ "The University is a social reality and a social force, historically marked by what the society is like in which it lives, and destined as a social force to enlighten and transform that reality in which it lives and for which it should live" (Ellacuría, *op.cit.*).

As Jesuit higher education, we embrace new ways of learning and being formed in the pursuit of adult solidarity; new methods of researching and teaching in an academic community of dialogue; and a new university way of practising faith-justice in society.

As we assume our Jesuit university characteristics in the new century, we do so with seriousness and hope. For this very mission has produced martyrs who prove that “an institution of higher learning and research can become an instrument of justice in the name of the Gospel.”³² But implementing Decree 4 is not something a Jesuit university accomplishes once and for all. It is rather an ideal to keep taking up and working at, a cluster of characteristics to keep exploring and implementing, a conversion to keep praying for.

In *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, Pope John Paul II charges Catholic universities with a challenging agenda for teaching, research and service: “The dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level.”³³ These are both high ideals and concrete tasks. I encourage our Jesuit colleges and universities to take them up with critical understanding and deep conviction, with buoyant faith and much hope in the early years of the new century.

The beautiful words of GC 32 show us a long path to follow: “The way to faith and the way to justice are inseparable ways. It is up this undivided road, this steep road, that the pilgrim Church” – the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit College and University – “must travel and toil. Faith and justice are undivided in the Gospel which teaches that ‘faith makes its power felt through love.’³⁴ They cannot therefore be divided in our purpose, our action, our life.”³⁵ For the greater glory of God.

Thank you very much.

6 October 2000

³² Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Address to the Congregation of Provincials (20 September 1990), *Acta Romana* 20 (1990), 452.

³³ John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, August 1990, n. 32.

³⁴ Galatians 5:6.

³⁵ GC32, D.2, n.8.

READING the LETTER on the SOCIAL APOSTOLATE*

Bartolomeo Sorge, S.J.

On 10 October 1949, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Father John Baptist Janssens, published his *Instruction on the Social Apostolate*, which was destined to become the Magna Carta of Jesuit commitment to the cause of social justice.¹

On 24 January 2000, marking the 50th anniversary of the *Instruction*, the current Father General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach sent a Letter “On the Social Apostolate” which invites the whole Society of Jesus to reflect on the steps Jesuits have already taken in their social involvement and what new prospects are opening up today.² The Letter recalls that, after General Congregation 34 (1995), the Society undertook an examination of conscience on the Jesuit social apostolate in the context of a ten-year programme, 1995-2005.³

Jesuits are now being asked to do three specific things: 1) to rethink the social dimension of their vocation in the light of the recent General Congregations; 2) to make a serious examination of conscience on the reluctance and resistance which still inhibits the social apostolate of so many Jesuits; and 3) to follow certain common guidelines.

1. To rethink the social dimension of the Jesuit vocation

The profound cultural, social and ecclesial changes of recent decades – observes Father Kolvenbach – could not fail to involve the Society of Jesus, living as it does on the front lines of Christian service in the world. At the same time, glancing back over the progress already made), Father General recalls that, twenty-five years ago, the Society already felt the need to take the unusual measure of convoking GC 32 (1974-1975) in order to rethink Jesuit identity.

The first result of GC 32 is that the social commitment of Jesuits – of which Father Janssens had spoken in 1949 – cannot be considered just one specific sector of the apostolate reserved to a few specialists, but is to be regarded as an intrinsic dimension of all the apostolic works of the Society. Indeed, GC 32 thus redefined Jesuit identity: to be a Jesuit today means “to engage, under the standard of the Cross, in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes.”⁴ Moreover, the Congregation explained, “the mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement. For reconciliation with God demands the reconciliation of people with one another.”⁵

Accordingly, concern for the problems of justice and human development is directly linked to the founding charism of St. Ignatius, as expressed in the *Spiritual Exercises* and the

* “L’impegno sociale dei gesuiti oggi,” *Aggiornamenti Sociali* 51:5 (May 2000), 374-379.

¹ John Baptist Janssens, S.J., “Instruction on the Social Apostolate,” 10 October 1949, *Promotio Iustitiae* 66 (February 1997), 23-34.

² *Promotio Iustitiae* 73 (March 2000), 19-24.

³ To this end, an international Congress of Jesuits engaged in the social apostolate was held at Naples in June 1997. See *Promotio Iustitiae* 68 (September 1997).

⁴ GC32, D.2, n.2.

⁵ GC32, D.4, n.2.

Constitutions. This explains why, from the very beginning, Jesuits have been seen as “men of the frontier, at home in the world,” ready to go wherever there’s hope of the greater glory of God; that is to say, wherever people live and thrive, where they suffer and die; wherever the society of the future is visualised and built; wherever witness to the faith and the unity of the Church are most gravely threatened; “wherever in the Church, even in the most difficult and extreme fields, in the crossroads of ideologies, in the front line of the social conflict, there has been and there is confrontation between the deepest desires of man and the perennial message of the Gospel, there also there have been, and there are, Jesuits.”⁶

In his Letter, Father Kolvenbach reinforces this specific characteristic of the Jesuit vocation. “From its very earliest origins, the preferential option for the poor, assuming various forms according to times and places, has marked the whole history of the Society” (n.2). As a matter of fact, St. Ignatius himself clearly grasped the intrinsic connection that binds the proclamation of the Gospel to the commitment to justice.

This bond is expressed in the fundamental charter of the Order (*Formula Instituti Societatis Iesu*). After explaining that the mission of the Society is to help people to open up to God and live the Gospel integrally, the Founder then goes on to state what means a Jesuit must use to accomplish this mission. Here Ignatius places the “service of the faith” (*Verbi Dei ministerium*) on equal footing with the “service of charity” (*caritatis opera*), that is, the proclamation of the Gospel is on a par with the commitment to justice inspired by charity. St. Ignatius himself offers some examples of this “service of charity” (reconciliation of the estranged, caring for the sick in hospitals, assisting those in prison), but he quickly adds that these are only “examples” – Jesuits will be able to take up other tasks of charity and of justice, and indeed they must, according to the demands of the times, particular circumstances, God’s glory and the common good (*prout ad Dei gloriam et commune bonum expedire visum erit*).⁷

Having appealed to Ignatian origins, Father Kolvenbach’s Letter recalls that the Ignatian charism was decisively pushed towards a new social awareness by Vatican Council II as well as by the serious challenges of our times. And this thrust owes a great deal to Father Pedro Arrupe, who “took up this apostolic orientation passionately and based it solidly upon the thoroughly evangelical relationship between social justice ... and the new commandment of love” (n.2).

This is why the Jesuits who gathered at GC 32, after coming to a clearer awareness that “the way to faith and the way to justice are inseparable” and that “therefore [faith and justice] cannot be divided in our propose, our actions and our life,”⁸ did not hesitate to take the “decisive option” of “engaging, under the standard of the Cross, in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for the faith and that struggle for justice which it includes, [...] choosing participation in this struggle as the focus that identifies in our time what Jesuit are and do.”⁹

⁶ Paul VI, Address to the members of GC32, 3 December 1974, and John Paul II, Address to the members of GC34, 5 January 1995.

⁷ Cf. *The Formula of the Institute*, approved by Pope Julius III in the apostolic bull, *Exposcit debitum* (21 July 1550), n.1.

⁸ GC32, D.2, n.8.

⁹ GC32, D.2, nn.2,3.

Thus, “being Jesuits” today means being dedicated to translating the Gospel in the context of the culture, the problems and the attitudes of the people and the society of our time.¹⁰

2. To overcome reluctances and resistances

Since GC 32, the Society has significantly strengthened its own commitment to faith and to evangelical justice. Today Jesuits see how they can become more present at the new frontiers of evangelisation and human development, opposing every form of violence and injustice. Their aim is to proclaim the Gospel by involvement in concrete initiatives against that hunger which still afflicts a billion human beings; against the international debt which, suffocating the countries of the Third World, produces new forms of colonialism and exploitation; against racism in whatever form, from discrimination by skin colour to burgeoning egoism in measures against immigrants; against organised crime, from anonymous kidnapping to the various branches of the Mafia; against war with its inevitable train of atrocities, slaughter of innocents, refugees, devastation; against the new human poverties in the welfare state, from the marginalisation of the handicapped to attacks on human life. And all this in obedience to the mission received from Pope Paul VI and confirmed by Pope John Paul II, to work actively against both theoretical and practical atheism which are manifest in the reduction of human life at the service of the economy, in hedonism and ethical relativism, in the denial of every absolute moral principle to the point of identifying liberty with libertinism.

On all these fronts of evangelisation and of human development, Jesuits have proved willing to risk their lives. “In recent years, as if to confirm the mission of faith and justice,” writes Father General in his Letter, “God has providentially granted the Society the mysterious gift of martyrdom” (n.4).

Everything said so far, however, does not justify concealing the delays, the fears and the resistance which still hinder the renewal. For this reason, Father Kolvenbach asks everyone to make a serious examination of conscience. Our social apostolate – charges Father General – “manifests some troubling weaknesses: There seem to be ever fewer Jesuits who are available and prepared for the social apostolate, while those already in the field are sometimes discouraged and scattered, somehow lacking in collaboration and organisation” (n.5). This crisis is doubtless due to external factors, in particular to the socio-cultural shifts of our time. Still, if steps are not taken quickly and vigorously, the social apostolate of the Society is in danger of losing its strength and momentum, its direction and effectiveness.

In any case, these obstacles do not at all weaken the validity of the “decisive choice” which has been made. The process is irreversible, as Father Arrupe said in 1978. “In faithfulness to our vocation, we cannot turn back. Nor will the needs of Church and world allow us.”¹¹

It is therefore necessary, on the one hand, to strengthen the commitment to formation and the efforts to eliminate the remnants of the old mentality. On the other hand, fears and difficulties have to be overcome by discerning what new challenges evangelisation and human

¹⁰ The Letter does this by quoting the *Complementary Norms*, the official document which synthesises the guidelines and statutes of the four General Congregations after Vatican Council II: “The contemporary Jesuit mission is the service of faith and the promotion in society of that justice of the Gospel which is the embodiment of God's love and saving mercy” (NC 245 §2).

¹¹ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., Final Address to the Congregation of Procurators (5 October 1978) n.4, in *Acta Romana* 17 (1978), 541.

development concretely present to the social apostolate in the various situations in which Jesuits are active. As Father Kolvenbach writes, “It is a matter of continually re-discovering and re-discerning – *in situ* – the demands and challenges which the recent General Congregations pose to our social action in today’s societies, cultures and religions” (n.6).

According to what guidelines?

3. Guidelines for the social apostolate

Father Kolvenbach indicates only a few, the more important and more universal ones. The first thing to do, he says, is to co-ordinate all resources and everyone’s efforts. Already fifty years ago, Father Janssens insisted on the need for co-ordination for the sake of greater efficacy in the Jesuit social apostolate: “How much the Society will accomplish,” he said, “if only we unite our forces and, in a spirit of oneness, gird ourselves humbly and resolutely for the work before us!”¹²

Yesterday’s hope has become today’s necessity. Nowadays the social problems have indeed become more complex and can only be resolved through an interdisciplinary approach and by converging various initiatives. Accordingly, given the many different operational methods and organisational models which the social apostolate must make use of, Father Kolvenbach encourages the Society to take full advantage of the potential which it enjoys as an “apostolic body.” Essentially, it is matter of joining strengths and initiatives, as well as generating a generous flow of useful and up-to-date information, so as “better to exploit all the possibilities that are given us as a universal and international apostolic body” (n.8).

The second guideline is just as important. It involves Jesuits integrating the different planes or levels in which they are present and active in their local social arena: “For, as we are increasingly aware, the structures of human life in common are of different kinds, not only economic and political, but also cultural and religious; all of them condition human life, all of them can weaken or destroy it, and all of them are capable of being impregnated by the Gospel and of embodying a greater justice and charity” (n.6). For this reason, it is important for research and theoretical analysis to pay close attention to the local scene and the concrete contexts of work. The Society’s Social Research Centres may spend time and effort on scientific studies, and its Schools of Political Formation may prepare new leaders, but none of this makes sense if these institutions have no direct relationship with the Jesuits who are actually working in concrete situations of marginalisation and poverty. Therefore, exhorts Father General, “let us actively look for ways of combining competencies in social analysis and theological reflection, with experience of closeness to the poor and work with those who suffer injustices of every sort” (n.8).

Finally, a third guideline is of fundamental importance today in the social apostolate of the Society: collaboration with people who are not Jesuit. Without their decisive contribution, the social apostolate is no longer possible. It is therefore necessary to make the rich patrimony of Ignatian spirituality available to lay colleagues, obviously while respecting their religious convictions and valuing their particular capabilities and experience. So they “should be assured really good access to the Society’s spiritual heritage and apostolic experience,” writes Father General, “wherefrom they can draw as they integrate their personal background and

¹² John Baptist Janssens, S.J., “Instruction on the Social Apostolate,” n.28.

On the Social Apostolate, 25

gifts. Opportunities for learning, reflection, prayer and on-going formation need to be offered our co-workers with, always, the greatest respect for their religious convictions” (n.8).

These then are the prospects and the general orientations to which Jesuits are called in order to inspire the social apostolate today. In conclusion the Letter affirms that the renewal of the commitment to a life of radical faith which expresses itself in the struggle for justice, constitutes a valuable opportunity (“a great grace”) for the renewal of the Society itself. Father Kolvenbach is convinced of this. And so are we.

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When the Provincial of France, Fr. Jean-Noël Audras, publishes the *Status* in June of each year, he also gives an account of the life of the Province. “The decisions taken, some the fruit of a long maturation process, serve as a sketch of what our way of proceeding will be in the years to come. They are about how we will live: in what building, in what institutions, with what style; and they are about our apostolic orientations.” From the commentary Fr Audras wrote on the *Status* for 2000-2001, here is the section, “Clarifying institutional goals,” on the social apostolate.

COMMENTARY on the PROVINCE *STATUS* 2000-2001*

Jean-Noël Audras, S.J.

The new CERAS (*Centre de Recherche et d'Action Sociales*) was founded about five years ago. After this start-up period, we felt the need to focus its mission and establish clearly that the current CERAS is a new entity, quite distinct from the CERAS that evolved out of *Action populaire* in Vanves. This clarifying process highlighted several basic characteristics: CERAS is a team of five Jesuits whose aim is active social intervention. Their particular interest is the huge social changes that affect the lives of men and women in our country, and which in diverse ways affect the participation of individuals and groups in society, or their “social involvement.” The intervention uses such means as: various formation programs or group evaluations, research teams, and the magazine *Projet*. Among the formation initiatives (courses, seminars, accompanying social movements, etc.) is the *Université politique*, organised every two years, in whose development CERAS plays an active role in partnership with several other groups. It aims to help young people realise the importance of politics, to enjoy politics, to get involved, with the hope that in the future these young people will have an active political life inspired by Gospel values, and that they will know and support one another in this. The CERAS team also favours an interdisciplinary approach to issues: not just sociological but also ethical and theological. Of course the research or intervention in a group will be carried out according to standard social practice, as CERAS members collaborate with people of very varied denominations, but CERAS members and their associates (the CERAS “network”) are clear that the source of their commitment is their faith and their roots in the Church, and that their approach to the person in society includes an ethical and a theological dimension. Finally, each member of CERAS is himself committed to local social activism, and for the most part lives in a working class district – another way of demonstrating that CERAS believes in being attentive to concrete situations, and that its aim is social action.

Evaluating the aims of CERAS is part of a wider reflection on the social apostolate in this Province. We must certainly all be more focussed on this aspect of our apostolic commitment, as Father General has so often called us to be. The social apostolate concerns all of us, and yet it doesn't cover everything. It is both a local and universal aspect of our apostolate. Local, because the characteristic of the social apostolate is to treat the person as member of a group (a group of people with whom they live in a district, or a group of people with whom they suffer the same effects of some change in the workplace, in health policy, the legal system, or in immigration settlement policies, etc.). Thus when we are close to a person in distress whom we seek to help, even if we are working for God who in his justice saves each individual, this

* Province de France, *Bulletin d'information* 332, 30 June 2000.

is not the social apostolate. However, to the extent that we are aware that the person's distress is not simply a personal problem but that it also has a social source, then our commitment is a social apostolate, particularly if we direct our attention towards this social source in approaching the problem. It is to this extent that the social apostolate involves all of us: if we want to work for justice, we cannot stop at a commitment to individuals, we must also face the social aspects of reality (John Paul II affirmed the idea of structural sin). The social apostolate is participation in the mission of the Church, not because the Church has a pre-established model of social relations, but because faith concerns the whole person. Salvation happens through belonging to human communities and experiencing the solidarity that the Gospel calls us to.

The Province is involved in the social apostolate through groups, teams, institutions. Besides the Jesuits in the working class world (*en monde populaire*), there is the CERAS team, those who live in difficult districts and participate in their collective structures, those who work in institutions dedicated to giving young people the chance to go back to school. There are seven educational institutions for young adults;¹ there is *Centre Porte Haute de Mulhouse*, for young students who need social support; then there are those among us who are involved in Church organisations such as *Justice et Paix* and *Secours Catholique*, and those involved, either intimately or at arm's length, but always in association with others, in social activism on behalf of the person. This is especially so that those without rights, in one way or another, are respected and find their place in society, whether migrants, those in precarious circumstances, those who are denied work or housing, prisoners, etc. The youngest is a group called Sarepta who have decided to get together to discuss these questions. Finally, our efforts to get more involved in the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), in France and elsewhere, are obviously also a part of the social apostolate.

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¹ Three began with ICAM (*Institut Catholique d'Arts et Métiers*), as well as ICAM-Toulouse, AFEP Technical School (*Association Forézienne d'Écoles de Production*) at Saint-Étienne, AFEPT (*Association pour la Formation et l'Éducation Permanente à Tivoli*) at Bordeaux, and ASPROCEP (*Association Provençale de Culture et d'Éducation Populaire*), a huge institution in Marseilles run by the *Société de Jésus-Christ*.

BOOK REVIEW:
Neoliberalism: Proposals and Counter-Proposals*

Idelfonso Camacho, S.J.

On November 14, 1996, the Jesuit Provincials of Latin America made public a letter entitled “Neoliberalism in Latin America,” accompanied by a working document in which the principal topics in the letter were developed in greater technical detail.¹ The letter made no claims to be the definitive word on a subject that is so hotly contested nowadays. Its aim, rather, was to invite Jesuits and those associated with the Society of Jesus and Jesuit institutions to continue researching and discussing the question. Specifically, our universities and research centres were asked “to collaborate with many others in theology, social sciences, and the philosophy of man and nature, in a serious study of neoliberalism, with a view to discovering its underlying rationality and the effects which strike at human life and destroy the harmony of creation.”

The Alberto Hurtado University of Santiago de Chile took up this invitation and organised an interdisciplinary seminar with sessions that ran from May 1997 through June 1999. The present issue of *Persona y Sociedad* offers an ample selection of the results of this seminar. The nineteen contributions are presented here under four main headings:

- Philosophical and ideological antecedents
- Economic aspects
- Socio-political aspects
- Ethical and theological evaluations

This structure gives an idea, not only of how faithfully the seminar responded to the Provincials’ invitation to mount an interdisciplinary effort, but also of the thoroughness of the treatment.

It seems to me especially interesting to begin with the ideological and philosophical antecedents of neoliberalism. Jorge Larraín’s “Situating neoliberalism in its context” brings out how this current of thought is related to the different liberal schools to which the classical authors gave rise (Benjamin Constant, Alex de Tocqueville, Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill). Other contributions deal with Friedrich Hayek, the authority most frequently cited by the neoliberals of today.

Especially noteworthy in the discussion of antecedents is Raúl Vergara’s essay, “The moral sentiment of sympathy and the search for self-interest in Adam Smith.” The essay explores the thought of Adam Smith, of whom present-day liberals consider themselves the heirs and faithful followers, inquiring whether the master is being interpreted correctly. For there are grounds for suspicion that Smith is oversimplified nowadays for the purpose of supporting the neoliberal thesis of the unconditional importance of the market – to this end Vergara examines certain well-known passages of his masterpiece, *The Wealth of Nations*. He shows how this work cannot be understood as a break with what Smith held in his previous work,

* Published in *Persona y Sociedad* 13:2 (August 1999), pp. 271.

¹ *Promotio Iustitiae* 67 (May 1997), 43-60.

The Theory of Moral Sentiments, written fifteen years before. On the contrary, it is based on the moral presuppositions of the earlier book. After all, such a dichotomy between morality and economics would be intolerable in someone who for years taught economic ethics. In fact the ethical presuppositions of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* lend tone and precision of meaning to the contents of Smith's economic works.

Joseph Ramos' article, "Are we all neoliberals today? A balance-sheet of neoliberal structural reforms in Latin America," is an excellent treatment of the economic aspects of neoliberalism. The author, director of CEPAL's Division of Productive and Managerial Development,² provides a detailed analysis of the seven principal structural reforms promoted by neoliberalism in Latin America, and explains the positions taken by neo-structural authors in each of the following fields: macroeconomic policy, tax reform, commercial deregulation, liberalisation of finance, privatisation, reform of the pension system, and reform of the labour market. Ramos does not systematically reject all these reforms. In each case, he considers the ultimate purpose of the reform and how it is to be executed. At the same time, he undertakes a self-critique of the structuralist model which CEPAL has promoted since the 1950s and which was in serious crisis in the mid-1970s. With praiseworthy balance and serenity, he analyses every aspect of the question, all the while offering suggestions for better implementation of these policies for the sake of more equitable development in Latin America.

The socio-political aspects of neoliberalism usually attract less attention, both from its critics and its defenders. This is because, to some extent, neoliberalism is an interpretation of society uniquely from the standpoint of economics, and more specifically, of the market and its intrinsic logic. However, there is no lack of interest in the question of how this approach leaves politics stripped of its most authentically democratic values and reduces it to the role of merely tending to public business as understood by the laws of the free market. Any alternative model must insist that a reevaluation of politics as democracy and participation is an essential complement to the neoliberal market-driven interpretation of politics.

The chief objective of the seminar, however, was to confront neoliberalism with an ethical and Christian position. All the contributions, in fact, bear the stamp of this concern without using it as an excuse for dodging thoroughgoing technical analyses. Still, the articles of the last section, "Ethical and theological evaluations," deal with this perspective most explicitly. The leadoff article by Beltrán Villegas, "Economic life in the light of the Bible," provides an evocative framework for discussion based on biblical texts, without, however, claiming that they contain a direct response to neoliberal views. In this section we meet authors as various as Michael Novak and Amartya Sen – which shows how authors starting from a shared concern for ethics can arrive at very different conclusions. This cannot be avoided in any serious commitment to analyse neoliberalism. Indeed, this divergence of positions must be fearlessly explored.

This fourth and final section concludes with a lengthy article by Tony Mifsud, "Ethical analysis of Neoliberalism," which aims at an overall appraisal of the question, critical but free of any demonising. In this essay the market is discussed in order to highlight both its possibilities and its limitations.

The volume concludes with two appendices. The first reviews the controversy which the Jesuit Provincials' letter provoked in the pages of *El Mercurio*, the Chilean daily. Jorge

² CEPAL: *Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe*.

Larraín (mentioned above) offers a rebuttal to both the highly-critical articles. The second appendix is a bibliography, almost entirely limited to Latin American publications. Unfortunately it has been impossible in this review to comment on every one of the deserving nineteen contributions to this volume.

The work as a whole brought together specialists from many different fields (not all from the sponsoring University), and is an impressive interdisciplinary effort. Discussion of this complicated and contemporary topic is a highly appropriate project for a university centre. The predominant approach is, of course, critical of neoliberalism. It is not a rash and hasty critique, however, but serious and well grounded. The chief criticism it makes is clearly directed against the absolutizing of the market. Neoliberalism, and not just in Latin America, considers the market not only as the best mechanism for guaranteeing equitable economic results, but also as capable, through its inner logic, of directing the functions of society at every level. The overall critique in this work corresponds with one of the most emphatic claims of the Jesuit Provincials: “Neoliberalism, as it is understood in Latin America, is a radical understanding of capitalism which tends to absolutize the market to the point of turning it into the means, method and purpose of all intelligent and rational human behaviour.”

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LETTERS

To the Editor of *Promotio Iustitiae*:

I like Fr. Henry Volken’s description of “God’s dream of one united human family, living in solidarity and peace as universal brothers and sisters.” I find it a valuable exercise to try to discern the main features of God’s dream. What kind of world would I like to see in 2030, ignoring all obstacles? Having such a dream helps me to evaluate what is happening now and how I can help to make God’s dream a reality.

One area of social justice I don’t see developed in the May 2000 issue of *Promotio Iustitiae* is corporate responsibility. Corporations make decisions crucial to social justice. The Society of Jesus and our apostolic institutions are part-owners of corporations.

The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and their Complementary Norms:

The Society's temporal goods are regarded as the property of our Lord Jesus Christ and as the patrimony of Christ's poor.... All superiors and officials should be particularly vigilant that in their temporal administration, especially when investing the money of the Society, of Provinces, of communities, and of apostolic institutes, social justice is not violated or insufficient attention paid to fostering that same justice.*

I think all of our students, alumni, parishioners, retreatants should know what corporate responsibility is and its implications for social justice. I think all of us should engage in a socio-cultural analysis of the modern corporation, its history, and the impact it has today on workers, the environment, and the poor.

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To the Editor.

The call to cancel Third World debt was of great interest to me.¹ It was the most detailed account I have yet read and suggests that the problem raised is part of a much larger issue. The following are my reflections on the subject.

This debt appeal that you inform me of has been signed by about half the Superiors in the Society. Why so few? Have the others refused? Were they not invited to sign, and if not, why not?

Is it perhaps because this gesture, spectacular though it may be, still falls into the category caricatured by Joan Chittester, O.S.B.: "We vote in chapter after chapter endorsing postures, positions and actions that are wildly prophetic and prophetically wild, and then we retire to our separate little world and wait for someone else to do them."²

More importantly, should this small demand be enough? Let us suppose, in a utopian world, that G8 members totally and effectively cancelled the debt and limited themselves to this one point. How long would it take for the debt to reappear, in all its horror? Ten years, five years, or even less? It's like an irrigation channel that has at least three major leaks, perhaps more. Why bother to fix only one of them? The debt itself should be studied in detail according to the situation and the country.

* NC 216, 217 ; see GC32, D.12, n.39,a.

¹ *Promotio Iustitiae* 71 (July 1999), 85-87.

² Joan Chittester, O.S.B., *The Fire in the Ashes: A Spirituality of Contemporary Religious Life*, Herefordshire: Gracewing, 1995, p.66.

Firstly there are other, longer-term reasons that prevent poor countries from developing normally. Economic colonisation, coming after occupying colonisation and slavery, surely continues to allow rich countries to fix the price of the commodities they buy from the poor countries (mineral wealth, coffee, etc.) as well as the prices of the finished products they sell back to them. Colonisation continues to allow the wealthy to exploit the best land (the “banana war,” for example), while leaving indigenous peoples without even enough land to grow food to feed themselves.

Businesses in rich countries and their governments underhandedly support or even provoke political agitation in poor countries in such a way as to push them to buy arms and engage in civil war. Is the main export of the United States not arms, rather than grain?

Money sent to these countries too often falls into the hands of politicians whose main interest is in lining their own pockets and those of their colleagues. How many aid projects are never completed! How often medicine ends up on the black market instead of reaching the hospitals! The list could go on endlessly.

We should finally ask ourselves if, in giving aid to the Third World, we aren’t more often exporting our own idea of progress (especially that of the United States), without really asking if it responds to the deepest aspirations of the people and to the very real richness of their own cultures.

So should we do nothing? Or on the contrary, should we commit ourselves more deeply and with more understanding? This would certainly require a sufficient knowledge of the problems in all their complexity, without which we won’t see what now needs to be done nor what is really possible to undertake, individually or collectively. It also certainly requires that we clean up our own house first, and then we will be in a better position to demand that others do the same.

So take courage, and I thank you for your attention.

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