

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

## THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND THE APOSTOLATE WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

### Setting the Framework for the Reflection

**T**his issue of *Promotio Iustitiae* makes a modest effort to understand a number of Jesuits working with indigenous communities across the world. All those who have generously contributed were presented with a set of questions on the issue framed against the background of the discussion that took place in General Congregation 35 on that subject. We went to all the authors the following text.

In the Document on the 'Issues of Ordinary Governance', GC 35 has the following to say:

*Indigenous Peoples: GC35 received numerous postulates on this topic and the commission that studied them emphasised in the plenary the fact that indigenous peoples, dispersed throughout the world, are today about 370 million people with a rich cultural heritage and an important legacy of contribution to civilisation. Due to diverse political and socioeconomic processes, indigenous peoples are among the most marginalised and exploited in the world. The process of globalisation – partly responsible for environmental degradation and the pillage of natural resources – affects them in particular, as well as climate change that continues to seriously harm them*

*Because of this situation which endangers the very survival of these peoples, the Society ought to increase its commitment to them. The General Congregation suggests the formation of “work groups” of Jesuits in the indigenous Apostolate in each Conference of Provincials where this apostolic challenge exists.*

In the light of this text, I would like you to respond to the following questions bearing your local context in mind:

- (1) What are the factors rendering indigenous people the “most exploited and marginalised in the world” today? Make references to the process of globalisation, ecological degradation and the financial and economic crisis.
- (2) What is happening to their culture?
- (3) Which new socio-political and economic initiatives are strengthening them? What is your evaluation of these?
- (4) Is the Society “increasing its commitment? What would you say about the “work groups” that need to be formed in every Conference?

To facilitate the reading we have ordered the various contributions region-wise.