

SIPEI Vision Statement

“What New Kind of Life is this Upon Which I am Entering?” Ignatius of Loyola at Manresa

From November 2 – 8, 2014, 80 participants from the six Jesuit regions of the world came together in Manresa, convened by the Secretary of Education of the Society of Jesus. They were joined by over 4,000 participants via social networks and live streaming, representing all corners of our vast Jesuit network of schools.

They met with the following objectives in mind:

- I. To facilitate dialogue between those dedicated to the educational apostolate and those dedicated to Ignatian Spirituality within the tradition of the Society of Jesus.**
- II. To encourage dialogue among some of the most significant contemporary educational trends, Ignatian pedagogy and spirituality.**
- III. To contribute to the pedagogical renewal of Jesuit Education within the framework of the construction of a global network of Jesuit secondary and pre-secondary educational institutions.**

Throughout the world, education is at a crossroads as a result of the extraordinary societal changes stemming from globalization, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, technological developments, changes in families and new quests for peace and equality.

During five days of deep conversation around the meaning of forming a person of conscience, competence, compassion and commitment as the general framework for our education, we feel the power of our challenges and the need to continue the path of renewal that gets us closer to our dream of being persons for others and with others. We are aware of the immensity of our task and the many tensions that this implies for our schools and for us as educators. We feel humbled by a work that seems greater than our capacities and filled with insurmountable obstacles because of their complexities and our limitations. However, inspired by our spiritual experience, deepened during these days in a place that speaks about Ignatius' own struggles to trust God as his ultimate strength and inspiration we hear again the words of the Gospel: DO NOT FEAR. Trusting in God we renew our commitment to provide an educational experience that can transform our students, ourselves and our school communities as places where the dream of the Gospel can be seen and experienced.

Thus we are convinced that a deep change is required in our schools. Genuine discernment, at the core of our spirituality, will guide us through it. We have also experienced the immense possibilities that thinking, working and dreaming together as a global network open for us. We want to take seriously the GC 35, D.2 N.20, call to *“serving Christ’s mission today means paying special attention to its global context. This context requires us to act as a universal body with a universal mission, realizing at the same time the radical diversity of our situations. It is as a worldwide community – and, simultaneously, as a network of local communities – that we seek to serve others across the world.”*

In 1993, Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach summarized our goal as educators to be the formation of “men and women of competence, conscience, and compassionate commitment.” We believe this formation must be understood within the framework of the creativity, flexibility, and network-wide action that define our times. We are convinced that human growth and spiritual growth are inseparably intertwined. The following summaries were produced at SIPEI:

- I. **The Person of Conscience** - The formation of the conscience to distinguish and discern between good and bad, right and wrong is necessary for the welfare of the individual and society. This formation of conscience is influenced and affected by the totality of a person’s surrounding. Jesuit Education aims to form free persons of conscience who utilize their personal consciences to make a difference in the world.
- II. **The Person of Competence** – The person of competence is capable of creating, understanding and using knowledge and skills to live in his/her own context and transform it; is able to be part of the changing and diverse world creating a life project for others and with others; and is able to develop the intellectual, academic, emotional and social skills required for professional and human achievement. We are committed to renewing our pedagogical practices, curriculum and school environments according to the new pedagogical developments that allow our schools to be closer to our Ignatian vision and to our eclectic tradition of combining the best practices to serve our mission.
- III. **The Person of Compassion** – Compassion does not imply simply feeling sorry for someone or a group of people. Anyone can feel sympathetic, but do nothing. Compassion is a prerequisite to positive action; it recognizes human dignity, a person’s worth that stems simply and profoundly from being loved by God. Compassion, leading to solidarity, should compel us to address the structures of any institution so that we and our students can become agents of change, in order to go on dreaming God’s dream.
- IV. **The Person of Commitment** - A person of commitment is one of courageous action. Through our openness to the guidance of the Spirit and companionship with Jesus, he or she will be able to discern the urgent needs of our time, so that our ways of serving will be as rich and deep as our ways of loving. We realize that an Ecological commitment to the reconciliation and healing of the earth, hand in hand with the commitment for social justice are urgent needs as they affect all persons everywhere on the earth.

SIEPI members were fully aware that the major challenges to educational transformation in our century demand a systemic point of view; they also require that we act in all areas of our school environment: our methodology, the organization of our schools and classrooms, and the academic curriculum.

The deliberations of SIPEI members concluded that our schools should commit to:

- I. Profound transformation and change in order to answer the challenges of the 21st century in the spirit of “ever searching for the *magis*” (GC 34)
- II. Connecting the objectives of the formation of the Ignatian individual (a person of conscience, competence, and compassionate commitment) with the changing and challenging characteristics of our century: globalization, diversity, inclusiveness, personal autonomy, and networking.
- III. Continuing to examine, expand and understand, in new, vibrant ways, the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the new pedagogy we consider to be necessary for our schools.
- IV. Refusing to allow fear to hinder or detour important, necessary change.
- V. Promoting and fostering experiences and activities of growth in spirituality for students, educators and families as part of the foundation of our schools.
- VI. Strengthening our commitment to justice, through specific gestures and actions in order to enter into solidarity with the less fortunate in our local, regional and global communities
- VII. Taking firm steps toward collaborating as a worldwide network of Jesuit schools, in keeping with the commitments of the ICJSE in Boston.

With these commitments in mind, we recommend the following actions, which will help us drive pedagogical renovation as a global network:

- I. Commit, as schools, to the local and global network in order to encourage a process of diagnosis and reflection that will bring on profound, global changes to our learning and teaching environments.
- II. Incorporate a social action program, focusing on solidarity with others, into the pedagogical programs and the foundations of our schools.
- III. Support, embrace and become members of the *Educate Magis* community as a global platform for connecting, collaborating and transforming our worldwide network of schools.
- IV. Continue the initiatives of the SIPEI through the continued creation of new regional and worldwide events, in the vein of the ICJSE (International Colloquium on Jesuit Secondary Education, Boston 2012), which assume the commitments of both events.

“Love is shown more in deeds than in words”

Manresa, November 7, 2014