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Father General

Visit to Spain. From the 8th to the 11th of September Father General will be in Spain, for a short visit of Bilbao, San Sebastian and Loyola. The main reason for the trip will be the 125th anniversary of the University of Deusto. The day of his arrival Father Nicolás will visit the Provincial Curia and *Alboan*, the NGO for cooperation and development of the Loyola Province's Jesuits, linked to the Xavier Network, which unites all similar organizations of the European Jesuits. September 9 will be devoted entirely to the University of Deusto: first in Bilbao with the Eucharistic celebration and the *lectio inauguralis* for the opening of the academic year; and then in the other campuses of the University in San Sebastian, where he will meet also with the collaborators of the Loyola's Province of works. The University of Deusto in its 125 years of life has educated nearly one hundred thousand students who had and presently have an important role in human development of national and international society. Afterwards, Father General will be in Loyola at the Spirituality Center where he will meet the Jesuits of the Province. On September 11 he will return to Rome.

From the Curia

Members of the **Secretariat for Interreligious Relations and Ecumenism** met in Rome from the 1st to the 3rd of September. These have been days of intense work together with Father General. Each participant presented a report on his field of competence: Fr. Milan Žust on the Christian communities of the East and Fr. Thomas Rausch on those of the West; Fr. Xavier Albó on American indigenous religions and Fr. Mpay Kemboly on African traditional religions; Fr. Noël Sheth on the relations with Hinduism, while Fr. Aloysius Pieris, physically absent, presented his report on the relations with Buddhism via video-conference; Fr. Jean-Pierre Sonnet on the relations with Judaism and Fr. Christian Troll on the relations with Islam. There was also a report given by Mons. Usma Gómez, of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, on "Pentecost, Pentecostals and Pentecostalization" and Fr. Thomas Rausch presented a report on the ecumenical and interreligious relations in China. Each report was followed by a debate in which the theoretical and practical obstacles in the relations with each religious group have been examined; there was also talks on inculturation, on collaboration with dioceses and with other religious congregations. At the end of the encounter some suggestions and proposals for the future were submitted to Father General.

Appointments

Pope Benedict XVI has appointed:

- **Father Gabino Uribarri Bilbao**, dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University of Comillas (Spain), member of the Scientific Council of AVEPRO, the Agency of the Holy See for the evaluation and promotion of quality in the university and ecclesiastical faculties.

Father General, with the approval of the Vatican Secretariat of State, has appointed:

- **Father Antonio Spadaro** Director of the magazine *La Civiltà Cattolica*. Father Spadaro, who will take the place of Father Gianpaolo Salvini, was born in 1966, entered the Society of Jesus in 1986 and was ordained a priest in 1996.

Father General has appointed:

- **Father Xavier Jeyaraj**, of Calcutta Province (India), currently Coordinator for Social Apostolate of the South Asia Conference, assistant to the *Secretary for Social Justice and Ecology*. Father Jeyaraj will move to the General Curia in Rome in January 2012 and will take care of the planning of the commitment of the Secretariat, especially the building of Ignatian networks of *advocacy* (GIAN).

From the Provinces

ANGOLA: The first Jesuit priest

July 24 was a day of big party in Luanda, the capital of Angola. Fr. Pedro Pereira Tomás, the first Angolan Jesuit after the restoration of the Society in 1814, was ordained a priest with a large presence of population. The fact literally mobilized the media, not only the catholic radio but also one of the two channels of the national television. Talking about the ordination, Fr. Mankubu Kasongo says: "The celebration took place in an atmosphere of intense concentration and of great joy at the same time. The entrance, the procession of Fr. Pedro with the Bible and the *nkembo* (the singing of the *Gloria*) were carried out with joy, with songs, ovations and movements to the rhythm of dance. And then, at the offertory the different communities of the parish brought gifts of modern (soap, food, etc.) and traditional products (small mortars, musical instruments, etc.). The prayer of the Litanies of the Saints was sung in great meditation." The following days the feast continued on the occasion of the first mass in Uige, his hometown.

ARGENTINA: The Church of St. Ignatius renewed

On Sunday, the 31st of July, feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the faithful of the founder of the Society of Jesus who were going to attend the evening mass at the parish church of Bolivar y Alsina, in Buenos Aires, had a happy surprise. Accustomed for many years to seeing the oldest church of the city covered with scaffolding and sustained by heavy reinforcement to hold its crumbling façade and recently covered itself by scaffolding, that day the church shone with white splendor, without all the scaffolding that covered for years its elegant Romanesque towers. The present church, dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, located in what is called the Manzana de las Luces, in the historic center of Buenos Aires, is the oldest church of the Argentina's capital, built by Jesuit Brother Juan Krauss who started construction in 1712. It was solemnly inaugurated in 1722 and consecrated in 1734. From the beginning the church was assigned to the Jesuits who took care of it since 1852, excluding the period of the two expulsions they suffered. After that date it passed definitively to the secular clergy. In the same place there was previously another church, dedicated to St. Ignatius, whose construction was completed in 1675.

INDONESIA: Students agents of peace

A group of young Catholics, Muslims and Protestants in Yogyakarta have emerged from a peace-building workshop in July inspired to be agents of peace. They have organized activities to encourage interfaith dialogue and understanding such as visits to religious institutions and celebrations of religious festivals. Fr Adrianus Suyadi SJ, director of *Jesuit Refugee Service Indonesia*, was one of the presenters at the workshop. He spoke to the youth on the role of religions in building peace and the religious values that can be explored to promote peace and inter-religious dialogue. "Both Christianity and Islam embrace similar values providing us with a base for dialogue and the promotion of peace," he said. "Religions can play a role as peacemakers by raising awareness in religious communities about universal values that can be found in different religions and so establish a base for peace building."

MACAU: The "Father of the Poor" is dead

Father Luis Ruiz Suarez, who dedicated his entire life to needy people in Macau and mainland China, died on July 26th at the age of 97. He was the founder of *Caritas Macau*. Paul Pun Chi-meng, secretary general of *Caritas Macau*, remembered Father Ruiz's selfless service, saying that "He was a pragmatic man. He never spread the Gospel with words, but I saw Jesus whenever I saw him." Born in 1913 in Spain, Father Ruiz joined the Jesuits in 1930. His missionary work in China began in 1941. It was interrupted by the Second Sino-Japanese War, and resumed after the war ended in 1945. When the Communists took control of China in 1949, he was imprisoned briefly and expelled from the country. He was told by his Jesuit Provincial to stay in Macau, at the time a Portuguese colony, to work with refugees. Later he founded the *Casa Ricci Social Service* in Macau, which later turned into *Caritas Macau*, which he began to operate in the 1970s and established five centers for the aged and for young men and women with mental disabilities. He began his service for people with leprosy in neighboring Guangdong province (China mainland) in 1984. Ten years later, this service had grown so much that he handed the Caritas operation to Macau diocese. He had helped more than 8,000 patients and their children in about 140 leprosaria in various

Chinese provinces. In 2005, Father Luis, in his 90s, accepted invitation from the Hunan provincial government to set up a caring center for HIV/AIDS patients.

MAGIS : « In the service the meeting with Christ »

During the days preceding the Youth Day in Spain, last August, an international gathering organized by *Magis* (the coordination committee of the initiatives of the young people of Ignatian inspiration) was held in Loyola, hometown of St. Ignatius. It was organized by the Society of Jesus in Spain and Portugal together with other religious congregations (see www.magis2011.org). The motto chosen was: "With Christ in the heart of the world." The gathering was attended by boys and girls from fifty nations of five continents. For three days they participated in working groups, meetings, time for reflection and prayer, facing, in a multiethnic and multicultural context, religious and social issues with a view to build a more just and fraternal world in the spirit of the Gospel. The closing celebration was held in Loyola, Sunday August 7, in front of the basilica of St. Ignatius, with the participation of Fr. Nicolás, Superior General of the Society of Jesus. During the homily, commenting on the Gospel of the day, Father General underlined among other things that "if what worries us is our welfare, our success, we will surely sink. If however, what concern us is the service and the suffering of others, exactly where Christ is, then we can walk quietly on the waves of the sea." The following week, waiting for the World Youth Day, the young people, divided in about hundred groups, engaged in work camps in hundreds of places in Spain, Portugal, France and Morocco.

SLOVAKIA: Sixty years of episcopate for Cardinal Korec

On August 24th Jesuit Cardinal Ján Chryzostom Korec, Bishop emeritus of Nitra, Slovakia, celebrated the 60 anniversary of his ordination to the episcopacy. In a personal letter Pope Benedict XVI expressed his joy and called this anniversary a "memorable day". And he continued remembering "his Episcopal ministry, performed for long years in an exemplary way" and praising the loyalty of the cardinal. Ján Korec was consecrated bishop secretly when he was only 27 during the communist persecution. He was the youngest bishop in the world. He worked in a factory for nine years, carrying out his mission as a priest and a bishop without being detected by anyone. He was the brother of everybody. In 1960 he was arrested and kept in prison for twelve years. The most difficult experience was isolation. He was accused of betraying his country. Among the charges there was his loyalty to the Pope. This was an accusation that he considered an honor. When, very ill, he was released from prison, he continued to work for a living. John Paul II named him a cardinal in 1991. Cardinal Korec, now 84, is appreciated and respected by everybody for his coherence and for the testimony of his life. But he says: "I do not ascribe great merit. The more the years pass, the more I see clearly that what matters most belongs to the grace, that is to God."

SPAIN: The Ignatian Charism for the World of Today

Like this year, an *International Immersion Course on Ignatian Spirituality* will be held at spiritual centre of the *Cave of St. Ignatius* in Manresa (Spain) from April 27th to June 4th 2012. "The Ignatian charism" - we read in the programme - "clearly has a valuable contribution to make to Christian life in our world today. This course provides an opportunity to study the legacy of Ignatius of Loyola in some depth, both as an inspiration for authentic Christian living in contemporary society and Church, and as a means for the spiritual formation of individuals and groups. We begin by looking at the personal experience of Ignatius, the pilgrim, an experience which sheds light on how people come to grow in Christian life. Then, after an 8-day individually guided Ignatian retreat, we will approach the *Spiritual Exercises* from a mystagogical and pedagogical angle. An overview of Ignatius' oeuvre will culminate in a study of the Jesuit *Formula of the Institute* and *Constitutions*. The whole course will conclude with sessions on the theology and spirituality which flow from the life and teachings of Ignatius, and with an analysis of the various projects for Christian living which continue to emerge from Ignatian Spirituality." Lectures will take place alongside personal study and an on-going dialogue aimed to helping participants to integrate their various experiences. For more information: jsugranyes@covamanresa.cat or: www.covamanresa.cat

SYRIA: To exorcise fear, in Damas

At the Jesuit centre, in the heart of the city of Damas, the psychodrama begins every Sunday with a scene in which six people take part, from among the fifty or so who have gathered in the place. Taking centre stage in the room they discuss audibly a particular theme: this is meant to open the debate. On that day they focalize on 'religious fear'. These Syrians belonging to various religious denominations - most of them coming from the middle class - (some supporters and some adversaries of Bachar al-Assad), meet each week, right from the early days of the anti-regime civil uprising, in order to exorcise a feeling they have all in common: fear. "The paradox is that, in Syria, everybody is afraid. Why do the regime strongmen use violence and repression? Because they are afraid of losing power. And the people in the street: do you think they are not afraid? They are very much so but they march down the streets all the same" says the psychoanalyst Rafah Nached, a co-initiator of the project. Syria is a pluri-confessional country: Sunnites are the majority, ahead of the Alawites, the group that is holding power. The Christians are statistically third. "The population is quite aware of the risks of confessional clashes. You, you seem to suppose that the people will take a revengeful attitude, but this is not inevitable. The uprising is peaceful and refuses to get drawn into sectarian violence" retorts a Druze participant, Maysan. She adds: "Personally, what I am afraid of, is a foreign intervention. This would lead to the breaking up of our country, as happened in the former Yugoslavia". Then Zeina, a

Christian, intervenes hesitantly: "I think that the opposition is divided. There are some who are enlightened and aware of what is going on, and the others who are at the same time more religious minded and less educated".

The group listens with attention. Suddenly Alaa, the Christian, tells of a recent experience: "Due to my upbringing I had prejudices against Muslims. At home I was always told not to receive them in our house. At the beginning I was in favour of the regime, but after seeing all these people killed I went to demonstrate". He was speaking fast, as if in need of extirpating something from himself. "I joined the rally, in Douma, in the suburbs of Damas, and those people who at home were talked about as 'rabble' kept me in hiding as the security forces were chasing me". "I was afraid of falling into their hands" continues the 20 year old young man. [end of the scene]. Follows one minute of silence, to allow everyone to recollect him/herself. Then each participant is invited to speak, in turn. Father Rami Elias, psychoanalyst, and in charge of the Jesuit residence that receives the group, explains : "There is no question to discuss politics or get involved in it but rather make space for everyone to speak of the fear he experiences, in order to share and canalize it in such a way that it does not become a new source of violence" (*L'Orient-Le-Jour*, Beirut).

UNITED KINGDOM: Jesuits sell St Cuthbert Gospel to British Library

The British Province of the Society of Jesus has decided to sell the Anglo-Saxon manuscript known as the St Cuthbert Gospel to the *British Library*. The £ 9m sale price will be used by the Province to strengthen funding for its schools in London and Glasgow, to help with the foundation of a new school in Africa, and to restore the nineteenth century parish Church of St Peter at Stonyhurst. The pocket-size Latin translation of St John's Gospel is thought to be the oldest intact book produced in Europe. Produced in the late seventh century, it was found in the coffin of St Cuthbert in 1104, having most likely been placed there ten years or so after his death in 687. The manuscript has been in the possession of the British Province since 1769, and for many years was kept at *Stonyhurst College* in Lancashire. Since 1979 it has been on loan to the *British Library*. Explaining the decision to sell the manuscript, Father Kevin Fox said: "It has been our privilege to possess this book for nearly two hundred and fifty years. Now, in order to answer more of the many demands on our resources, the Province trustees have decided to sell." He added that the *British Library* will ensure that the manuscript is available for people from around the world to view, either directly or online: "People will be able to see the Gospel set among the Library's other treasures of the Christian faith and of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic art."

USA: Meeting of African and American Jesuits

In May the Jesuit Conference of the United States sponsored a gathering at *Loyola University Maryland* in Baltimore of African Jesuits currently studying in the U.S. and Canada. Thirty-seven African Jesuits participated in the gathering (there are approximately 60 African Jesuits currently in the U.S. and Canada), representing seven African Provinces and Regions, and 16 different countries. In addition, five people from the U.S. Assistency participated, including Fr. Tom Smolich, president of the Jesuit Conference of the United States. The gathering was a means of solidarity, support and collaboration with the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JESAM) with its president, Jesuit Father Michael Lewis also present at the meeting. The participants exchanged their view about the opportunities to work more closely together, such as in the arenas of potential exchange programs between the U.S. and Africa's apostolic works, in creating partnerships between apostolates, and by identifying Tertianship experiences in Africa for U.S. Jesuits. During the meeting, the African Jesuits shared with their U.S. brothers the challenges the Society of Jesus faces in Africa around educational opportunities; with ethnic and political tensions; in health care, especially for HIV/AIDs and malaria treatments; and also the environmental and ecological concerns facing the continent. The previous gathering was in 2006 at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

New in SJWEB

- Two new *slide shows*: One about the visit of Father General to the two Canadian Provinces (July 22nd -29th); the other about his participation at *Magis 2011* in Spain (August 6th - 7th). Click on: "sjweb Media".

- In the section *Ad Usum Nostrorum* - Documents, there is the message of Fr General to the Jesuit Brothers of Latin America and the Caribbeans on the occasion of the 1st Seminar held at San Paolo in Brasil from 16-29 July 2011.



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