Mission and Identity Committee Meeting
Board of Trustees
Loyola University New Orleans

Thursday, March 13, 2017

3:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Octavia I & II / Danna Center

Agenda

☐ Call to Order (Rachel Kent)

☐ Opening Prayer (Carol Waguespack)

☐ Introductions (All)

☐ Approval of Minutes (December 8, 2016 meeting)

☐ Discussion: The Distinction Between Ignatian Work and Jesuit Work (GC 35 Decree on Collaboration at the Heart of Mission) (All)

☐ Brief Discussion and Presentation: Fr. Ronald Mercier’s Letter of Invitation to Apostolic Discernment and Next Steps in the Process for Higher Ed Apostolates (John Sebastian)

☐ Presentation and Feedback Discussion: Strategic Restructuring of Mission and Ministry at Loyola (John Sebastian and All)

☐ Closing Prayer (Fr. Tim McMahon, S.J.)

☐ Executive Session
Office of Mission and Ministry Overview: Dr. John Sebastian

Fall Program Updates

On January 22-23, Loyola hosted a meeting of the presidents, vice presidents for academic affairs, and chief academic officers of the six colleges and universities belonging to the United States Central and Southern Province (UCS) of the Society of Jesus. The meeting followed on the conclusion of the Society's 36th General Congregation and was led by UCS Provincial Superior Fr. Ronald Mercier, S.J. Discussions centered around the mission of the Society as defined by the General Congregation and the Province’s call to each institution to begin a process of apostolic discernment directed towards identifying what will make us “Jesuit” 10-15 years from now and what resources we will need from the Province to support our mission, assuming that the actual number of available Jesuits will continue to decline. Each institution, including Loyola, will submit a preliminary response to those questions to the Provincial this summer.
Retreats and CLCs: Laura Alexander

Fall Program Updates:

Retreats
The Emmaus Retreat (February 4) was a contemplative retreat experience for students. Participants spent the morning experiencing forms of contemplative prayer, including Taize Prayer and imaginative meditation. The afternoon included over three hours of individual, silent prayer with opportunities for spiritual direction. The day was a great success. The students entered deeply into prayer, and greatly appreciated the silence. Many requested more silent time be incorporated into future retreats.

CLC’s
Students watched "Elf" and then broke into discussion groups. Reflection questions focused on the search for love and acceptance, and childlike joy. There was a great turnout of participants from all groups, and most stayed for the discussion afterwards. Students requested we do a similar event in the spring semester.

Faculty and Staff Formation: Dr. Alex Mikulich

Fall Program Updates:

FaithActs Youth Theology Institute – The Administrative Coordinator position has been filled by Materinnan Zehyoue who began in January. The curriculum for the Institute is being developed with faculty from LIM and Environmental Sciences. Student leaders and mentors have been selected and training began in February. We are also working on a long-term strategy for sustainability of the Institute.
Fall Program Updates

**Martyrs Mass for Racial Justice** (November 13) - Mass celebrated honoring Christian martyrs, especially Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador in 1989, as well as those killed in violent police encounters. Procession around Peace Quad as martyrology is chanted. Salvadoran food from La Macarena restaurant served after Mass. Event fulfilled its goal of deepening awareness of the place of martyrdom in Christianity, the heritage of martyrdom in the Society of Jesus, and the tragedy and challenge of racially motivated police violence.

**Advent Wreath Drop** (November 27) - Gathering of students and others to socialize around Advent refreshments, music, and party favors in a festive atmosphere, culminating in an Advent wreath dropped along a zip-line from the top of West Road Garage to the Bobet entrance facing the Peace Quad. 9pm Mass follows in Ignatius Chapel.

**Mass and Pancakes** (December 11) – Event coordinated with Residential Life to gather the student community to celebrate and give thanks for the preceding semester. 9pm Mass in Audubon Room followed by "breakfast" in the Orleans Room.

**Christmas Eve Mass** (December 24) - Service to celebrate Christmas. Ignatius Chapel Community (regular congregants at Sunday 10:30am Masses in Ignatius Chapel) gather for Mass at 7pm, followed by pot-luck supper. Program fulfilled goal of celebrating Mass for Christmas.

**Black History Mass** (February 12) - Event to deepen awareness of and to celebrate Black history. Mass that includes music and prayers from the Black cultural tradition, and food inspired by it after Mass. Challenges arose in combining disparate "communities" and "cultures." Some students enjoyed the Mass, while others were hurt and/or deeply challenged by some elements of the Mass, including the homily and a Prayer of the Faithful offered from one congregant.
Fall Program Updates:

**University Ministry** – Hour of Power Praise and Worship, in collaboration with Victory Fellowship Ministries and Minister Chandler Veasey, a monthly non-denominational praise and worship service with music, prayer and fellowship on campus was held. Chandler Veasey is a trained musician and young adult minister.

**Interfaith Outreach** - Collaboration with Baptist Collegiate Ministries on Freret Street and ministers Corey Olivier and Danny Currie to share their student ministry offerings to non-Catholic students at Loyola. BCM provides food, fellowship and games on the residential quad while sharing resources of their ministry.

**Service and Justice** - LUCAP Leaders and students from Loyola Students for Life leaders attended the 2017 Women's March in Washington D.C. LUCAP students also assisted with New Orleans East Tornado Relief Efforts, collecting supplies and cleaning up the affected area.

Fall Program Updates:

NBA players will join local basketball coaches and life skills trainers on a panel to share with the Peace Basketball League what it takes (basketball and life skills) to create and follow a path to success. They will also play basketball with the participating young people.
Fall Program Updates:

**Ignacio Volunteers Jamaica Winter Experience** (December 28, 2016-January 6, 2017) - Students and Staff were exposed to the history, politics, socioeconomics, and social structures of Jamaica while living & serving in the city of Kingston. The volunteer work sites were: The Home for the Destitute and Dying, a home for the elderly run by Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity; Missionaries of the Poor Bethlehem Home, an orphanage for physically and mentally challenged children and young adults; Missionaries of the Poor The Lord's Place, a home for adults with HIV/AIDS, old age, and mental and/or physical challenges.

**Ignacio Volunteers Jamaica and South Africa Retreat** (January 27-29, 2017) - All Ignacio Volunteers are required to attend a group retreat the semester before their immersion. During the retreat, participants community build, come up with group values and goals, begin to learn about the history and culture of Jamaica and South Africa, and prepare for a semester of fundraising.

**Ignacio Volunteers NOLA Urban Immersion Retreat** (February 3-5, 2017) - Students spent time bonding and getting to know each other. They also began to learn about race, racism, class, and privilege in the United States in preparation to learn about the same issues of injustice in the City of New Orleans during their upcoming Immersion in April.
Faith and Sacramental Formation:
Fr. Gregg Grovenburg, SJ

**Fall Program Updates:**

*Confirmation Preparation* – Six young adults received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Archbishop Aymond on December 9, 2016 at Holy Name of Jesus Church. There are currently 2 individuals in the spring semester 2017 Confirmation group.

*Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* - The RCIA Period of Inquiry is drawing to a close with 100% retention of those who started RCIA in September. Recent RCIA classes/meetings have included the Social Encyclicals of the Church and have stressed "living our faith in action" which has coincided with recent elections. The RCIA process continues and covers teachings and topics of the Church following the Liturgical calendar. RCIA incorporates the teachings/doctrines/dogmas of the Catholic Church along with instilling a sense of community in the community of the Church. Pre-RCIA surveys, interview, personal observations, and concluding survey provide the assessment for RCIA.

College of Law Ministry: Carol Magendie

**Fall Program Updates:**

The student organizations led by Law Mission and Ministry got together to purchase, collect, and deliver toys for the Toys for Tots program. We delivered an SUV overflowing with toys to the military base on the Westbank. Students also made 110 sandwiches for the homeless and delivered them to Lantern Light. The annual Evening with the Archbishop was a success and a student was awarded the St. Thomas More Award for Outstanding Service to Others.
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to order and opening prayer
   At 4:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order. Connor Burke led prayer.

II. Roll Call

III. Christina DiMaggio conducted a visual roll call. The following persons were present:
     Rachel Kent, Chairperson; Terri Bednarz, R.S.M., Chair Department of Religious Studies; Kurt
     Bindewald, Ex-Officio; Connor Burke, Graduate Student Representative; Alice Clark, Faculty Senate
     Representative; Christina DiMaggio, Recording Secretary; Lyle Henderson, Staff Senate
     Representative; Francis Huete, S.J.; Emily Polvado, Undergraduate Student Representative; John
     Sebastian, Executive Secretary; Ileana Suquet; Joelle Underwood, Faculty Senate Representative;
     Ed Vacek, S.J.; Carol Waguespack; Kevin Wildes, S.J., University President

     The following were on conference call: Gail Jock, Rhonda Sharkaway, Michael Torres, S.J.

     The following were absent: Michael Braden, S.J.; Peggy Condron; Tim McMahon, S.J.; Jeremy
     Zipple, S.J.

IV. Approval of Minutes
    The minutes of October 6, 2016 were approved.

V. Presentation and Discussion of Religious Studies Department Initiatives
   Sr. Terri Bednarz and Fr. Ed Vacek presented updates on new initiatives in the Department of
   Religious Studies. The Department has revised their mission and vision to be more in line with the
   College of Arts and Sciences vision and the university’s strategic plan. Common Core requirements
   have also been streamlined to offer more in depth coursework rather than survey type
   coursework. Religious Studies would like to offer a certificate program, possibly online along with
   additional online coursework to further grow the department but expressed that they will not be
   able to do this under current budgetary restraints, lack of resources, and the threat of continued
   budget cuts looming. Discussion ensued regarding the general financial state of the university and
   how that is affecting what classes can be offered, what little can be done to improve and grow
   programs and morale of faculty, staff, and students. Further discussion distinguished between
   strategic cuts identified in 2015 through the Financial Equilibrium project and additional across-
   the-board cuts to be enacted in 2016-2017 that complicate individual departments’ ability to plan
   strategically. The faculty present stated their desire for a clear vision from university leadership
   that will enable them to develop strategic responses to the university’s financial situation.

VI. Adjournment and closing prayer.
   Mario Torres, S.J. closed with prayer. Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Christina DiMaggio, Recording Secretary
COLLABORATION
AT THE HEART OF MISSION

Encouraging the dynamism initiated by GC34

1. When Jesus wanted to teach his disciples about the power of the word of God, which every Jesuit ministry proclaims, he began: “Listen! Imagine a sower going out to sow”.

2. He explained how some seed falls upon rocky ground, some among weeds, and other upon fertile soil where it yields a rich harvest. In his allocution to the members of GC 35, Pope Benedict XVI stressed the importance of the mission in which we are all engaged: “make the face of the Lord known to so many for whom it remains hidden or unrecognisable”. He told us that the Church needs the Society, counts on it to “reach the geographical and spiritual places where others do not reach or find it difficult to reach”.

2. As men sent by the Vicar of Christ, we are led more and more to offer our gifts and to share with others the Good News of the Kingdom. Following the inspiration of the Second Vatican Council, the Society of Jesus has been transformed by a profound movement of the Spirit. Recognising this, GC 34 approved the decree, “Cooperation with the Laity in Mission”, that both affirmed and encouraged apostolic collaboration, calling on Jesuits to cooperate with others in their projects and in ours. GC 35, reviewing our own life and service to the Church, and noting how the seeds which have been scattered through the inspiration of GC34 are yielding a harvest “thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold”; renews our commitment to apostolic collaboration and to a profound sharing of labour for the life of the Church and the transformation of the world.

3. We are humbled and grateful that so many—inspired as we have been by the vocation of Ignatius and the tradition of the Society—have chosen both to work with us and to share our sense of mission and our passion to reach out to the men and women of our broken but lovable world. We are enriched by members of our own faith, but also by people from other religious traditions, those women and men of good will from all nations and cultures, with whom we labour in seeking a more just world. Rich is the harvest. In many countries, important Jesuit works depend largely on the generous, loyal, and skilled collaboration of women and men of diverse religious and humanistic convictions. As the Holy Father affirmed our ministry and mission, saying to us, “The Church needs you”, we must in turn look to our collaborators in mission and say, with gratitude and affection, that the call we have received is a call shared by us together.

1 ‘Collaboration in mission’ is described in different ways in various languages across the Society: Ignatian apostolic partners, partnership in mission, companions, collaborators, co-workers, colleagues. The common aspiration is apostolic companionship based on discernment and oriented towards service. In this document, we have simply used the word ‘collaboration’.

2 Mark 4:3.

3 BENEDICT XVI, Allocation to the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (21 February 2008), §4 (Allocution).

4 Allocation, §2.

5 GC 34, D. 13, n.7.

6 Mark 4:8.
Challenges & Responses since GC34

4. Since GC 34 we have learned much. In some regions the development of collaboration has been limited because the participation of lay people in the local Church is minimal. In other regions, where Christians are in the minority, the challenge rests on bringing an awareness of the Ignatian charism to those whose spiritual experiences are often far different. Furthermore, in places oppressed by mass culture, the distractions of exaggerated individualism and consumerism have encouraged resistance to the powerful call of community and service found in our mission. Furthermore, our own uncertainty, born of the changing face of our ministries in a time of growing collaboration, has led to some hesitation and even resistance to a full engagement with the call of GC 34.

5. At the same time, the powerful spirit acknowledged and encouraged by GC 34 has not been idle, and for every challenge greater creativity and zeal have been the response. Numerous programmes of Ignatian formation have grown up around the world, adapted to various religious and cultural contexts. The foundational grace of the Spiritual Exercises is more widely available and provides a common language and experience, in which collaboration in mission is rooted and inspired. Increasing numbers of Jesuit works are directed by committed lay people, by other religious, and by diocesan clergy. The members of the Society — priests and brothers, those formed and those in formation — have a greater awareness of shared responsibility with others for the mission and ministry of the Society. Further, the Society has been enriched by our encounter with diverse communities of dialogue and cooperation. Lay and religious, women and men, indigenous persons and those of different religious and spiritual experiences: all these have changed us and nurtured in us a greater sense of the God “in whom we live and move and have our being”. The grace of these years is reflected in both more extensive and deeper apostolic collaboration, which places all—Jesuits and others—with the Son.

6. The seeds of mission sown by our collaboration have actually yielded a rich harvest, for the Ignatian charism serves not just the Society but the whole Church. We are aware of the contribution of this Ignatian charism in forming an apostolic laity, a development called for by the Vatican Council and identified by GC 34 as “a grace of our day and a hope for the future”.

Orientations for Furthering Collaboration

7. While GC 34 recognized the Spirit’s movement and opened for us fresh avenues to implement our mission through more profound collaboration with the laity, the current Congregation recognizes the more diverse community of those with whom we have been called to share this common mission. The seeds sown by grace are growing in many ways and in many lands, and we wish to support this growth, while also indicating some other ways by which that growth might be fostered.

8. In this Decree we wish especially to reflect upon the way in which collaboration in mission calls us to a new and often challenging renewal of our ministries. This renewal demands that we address the following questions:

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8 Vatican II, Apostolicam Actuositatem, 29; GC 34, D. 13, n.1.
8.1 What constitutes a Jesuit work, and how might it be sustained with other than Jesuits in leadership?
8.2 What are the necessary elements of formation needed by Jesuits and others to ensure growth in the spirit and practice of our mission?
8.3 What bonds might appropriately unite us as collaborators in mission who seek to serve together, with deepening affection, the mission given to the Society?

**What Constitutes and Sustains a Jesuit Work?**

9. The heart of an Ignatian work is the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius. Indeed, any work may be said to be *Ignatian* when it manifests the Ignatian charism: i.e., when it intentionally *seeks God in all things*; when it practices Ignatian discernment; when it engages the world through a careful analysis of context, in dialogue with experience, evaluated through reflection, for the sake of action, and with openness, always, to evaluation. Such a work does not rely necessarily upon the Society of Jesus for its Ignatian identity, though it may affiliate with the Society in partnership through networks and other structures.

10. An *Ignatian* work can be said to be *Jesuit* when it has a clear and definitive relationship with the Society of Jesus and when its mission accords with that of the Society by a commitment to a faith that does justice through interreligious dialogue and a creative engagement with culture. In such a context, the mission of the work, whether administered by a Jesuit or by another who shares this commitment, will be “ultimately accountable to the General of the Society through appropriate lines of authority”.

11. The leadership of a Jesuit work depends upon commitment for mission and can be exercised by Jesuits or by others. Such leaders must have a commitment to the mission of the Society as realized in the particular work, though they may be of religious or spiritual traditions different from our own. Clarity about the mission of each apostolic work and the respective roles of all parties prevents misunderstandings, promotes greater accountability, and builds teamwork. All those in leadership should understand and affirm these varied responsibilities in order to be better able to participate in the discernment and decision-making processes regarding matters of mission.

12. In developing a relationship between the Society and a Jesuit work, it is vital that Major Superiors engage and support those entrusted with leadership, whether Jesuit or other. Regular dialogue, conducted in a spirit of trust and with respect for appropriate subsidiarity, serves to promote discernment, accountability, and a clearer sense of collaboration for mission. Further, the Provincial or others should provide such leaders important information and directives from the wider Society of Jesus, thus encouraging a broader vision of mission and a better understanding of apostolic priorities and criteria.

13. The local Jesuit superior and local Jesuits do much to foster the connection between a Jesuit ministry and the Society. All Jesuits, but especially those assigned to a work, can help to foster a spirit of discernment and collaboration by their example and their willingness to share their lives with others. Likewise, our communities, as apostolic centres and not as mere residences, are called to explore how their hospitality may promote collaboration.

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14. Recommendations:
   a) We encourage Father General to revise the Guidelines for the Relationship Between the Superior and the Director of the Work to provide effective support for all those in positions of responsibility, whether Jesuit or others, and assist all parties in the understanding of their various roles and responsibilities. This document should recognize the multiplicity of contexts and give parameters that foster unity while allowing appropriate diversity.

   b) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to develop provincial or regional guidelines for endorsing and sponsoring Jesuit works.

   c) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to develop tools to evaluate the effectiveness of Jesuit ministries in accomplishing their mission.

   d) We encourage local Jesuit communities to explore ways of offering hospitality and support for the development of collaboration in mission.

What are the Elements of Formation for Collaborative Mission?

15. Collaboration in mission has resulted in abundant blessings for the apostolates and the Society of Jesus. Being with apostolic collaborators in mission encourages us to live more fully and authentically our Jesuit religious vocation. Ultimately, we bring to these relationships our own identity as men of the vows and of the Constitutions, men whose experience of the Spiritual Exercises has bound us to one another and to a particular “pathway to God”. In collaboration with others, in respectful dialogue and shared reflection, in labour alongside those similarly engaged who walk a different pathway, we come to know our own journey better and to follow it with new zeal and understanding.

16. From the earliest stages of Jesuit formation and throughout our lives as Jesuits, training in collaboration must be experiential, not only informing our understanding of ministry but molding our identity as men for others who are also men with others. The vital role of collaboration for our way of proceeding as Jesuit ministers has implications for the content and methodology of formation as well as for the role of formatores.

17. Likewise, the importance of collaboration in mission means that all Jesuits, as men on mission, must also be men of collaboration. On-going formation in this area should be encouraged and supported within provinces and throughout Jesuit conferences. When undertaken together with collaborators, programs of professional development and spiritual enrichment can help us deepen our sense of common vision and our unity in mission.

18. The formation of Jesuits for collaboration, however, must be accompanied by a parallel formation of those with whom we minister, so that they might deepen their understanding of the mission they share with us. Diverse programs that respect and draw upon the wisdom and experience of the participants allow for a personal appropriation of the mission of the Society. Respecting various levels of connection and understanding, these programs invite each person—whether employee or volunteer, newly arrived or veteran,
Christian believer or member of another faith community, or person without a religious affiliation—into a deeper awareness of his or her place in the Ignatian and Jesuit mission.

19. Such formation should provide professional skills, develop a special understanding of Ignatian spirituality regarding mission, and include opportunities for growth in the interior life. Part VII of the Constitutions, the Complementary Norms, and the Autobiography of St. Ignatius provide important insights, although the Spiritual Exercises is always primary.

20. A final dimension of formation for mission involves programs of preparation and support for collaborators in leadership positions. All those in leadership positions have a special relationship with the Society of Jesus. Since their challenging work is important for the mission of the Society, they need ongoing support and care from the Society and one another. Furthermore, they should receive suitable formation in the distinctive dimensions of our way of proceeding, especially the integration of apostolic discernment in decision making.

21. Recommendations:
   a) We encourage Conferences and Assistancies to examine the program of Jesuit formation to ensure that all men in formation have appropriate experience of collaborative ministry.
   b) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to assist in the continuing development of opportunities and structures for the on-going formation of Jesuits in collaborative ministry.
   c) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to assist in the continuing development of opportunities and structures for the formation of others who collaborate in the mission of the Society.
   d) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to ensure the development of opportunities and structures for the appropriate formation of those in leadership positions in Jesuit ministries.

What Connections Might Make our Work More Fruitful?

22. As means of communication develop, the Society works more effectively as an international body and seeks synergies in service of its universal mission. Jesuits are often engaged beyond their province boundaries in national and international networks and in collaboration with a variety of persons, including other Jesuits. Some of these international networks such as Jesuit Refugee Service, Fe y Alegría, and the African Jesuit AIDS Network are works of the Society. Others are collaborative projects. In all such works, however, the good accomplished is multiplied by participation of the Society in collaboration with diverse parties united in a common mission.

23. GC 34 invited the Society to develop an “Ignatian Apostolic Network” among persons and associations that share an Ignatian commitment to service in the Church. In those places in which the Society has responded zealously to this call, cooperation is growing in programs for formation as well as in the discernment, planning, and execution of common projects. These networks enable men and women with common concerns to share their experience and make use of their expertise. In this they realize the ever-widening possibilities

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12 GC 34, D. 13, n. 21.
of our networking. Moreover, the Ignatian tradition, when expressed by various voices—women and men, religious and lay, movements and institutions, communities and individuals—becomes more welcoming and more vigorous, capable of enriching the whole Church.

24. The Society desires strong relationships in mission with as many collaborators in the Lord’s vineyard as possible. Those asking to be more closely linked with the mission of the Society13 normally come to this desire through an experience of the Spiritual Exercises.

25. Among the many different forms of collaboration, GC 34 considered a specific ‘closer personal bond’ between individuals and the Society, whereby a lay person could be missioned by a Provincial. This relationship implies mutual commitments by the Society and the individual.14 Sometimes called a ‘juridical bond,’ this manner of collaboration was authorized and recommended by GC 34 for an experimental period of 10 years, subject to evaluation by GC 35.

26. GC 35 affirms that this experiment was meant to be spiritual and mission focused,15 rather than legal or canonical. Over the last 13 years, the experience of this specific form of ‘closer personal bond’ has not been widespread in the Society, nor was there much demand for it. Some individuals became devoted to our common mission in this way, and they have contributed much to it. Occasionally, however, misperceptions arose as to what mutual expectations were, and collaborators without such a relationship wondered whether their manner of collaboration was somehow less valued than those with the ‘closer personal bond’.

27. GC 35 acknowledges with sincere gratitude the contribution that has been made to the Society of Jesus and its mission by these experiences. However, after reviewing them, the Congregation concludes that it is preferable no longer to promote the special kind of spiritual bond which GC34 described in D.13, n.23-25. Those who already have entered into this closer personal bond with the Society should be able to continue in it as long as local provincials discern with them that it is the best way to proceed in mission. But this option for such a specific ‘closer personal bond’ should no longer be open to new candidates. As we continue to accompany those desiring to work in the mission of the Society, we can encourage them to live their vocation in one of the many ways of collaboration with which the Church has been blessed, especially since Vatican II has so clearly spelled out the mission of the laity in the Church. Among these are an increasing number of associations inspired by Ignatian spirituality.

28. We note with gratitude and joy the many autonomous associations with whom we share a spiritual bond, the fruit of which is greater and more effective service to the mission of Christ in the world. Among these, the Christian Life Community has roots that are deep in the charism and history of the Society. We wish to continue to support CLC in its journey towards ever greater apostolic effectiveness and collaboration with the Society. Likewise, other Ignatian groups, including Jesuit alumni/ae associations, various Jesuit volunteer organizations, the Apostleship of Prayer, the Eucharistic Youth Movement, and many others

14 GC 34, D. 13, nn. 23-25.
deserve our continued spiritual accompaniment as well as our support for their apostolic service.

29. Recommendations:

   a) We encourage the Society’s government at all levels to explore means by which more effective networking might take place among all apostolic works associated with the Society of Jesus.

   b) We encourage the Society’s government at all levels to explore with other communities of Ignatian inspiration, both religious and lay, ways to promote and support an “Ignatian Family” or “Ignatian Community” which will have a common vision of service, will promote networks of mutual support, and will foster new and closer forms of collaboration locally, regionally, and internationally.

   c) We encourage Superiors, especially Major Superiors, to seek ways to support and accompany CLC and other Ignatian inspired autonomous associations locally, regionally, and nationally.

Conclusion

30. In his day, St Ignatius gave shelter to the homeless of Rome, cared for prostitutes, and established homes for orphans. He sought collaborators and with them established organizations and networks to continue these and many other forms of service. To respond today to the pressing needs of our complex and fragile world, many hands are surely needed. Collaboration in mission is the way we respond to this situation: it expresses our true identity as members of the Church, the complementarity of our diverse calls to holiness, our mutual responsibility for the mission of Christ, our desire to join people of good will in the service of the human family, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is a grace given to us in this moment, one consistent with our Jesuit way of proceeding.

16 Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Vita Consecrata*, 12.
17 1 Cor 12:12 ff.
January 23, 2017

As I mentioned last year, the Province, at the behest of Fr. General, is in the midst of a process of apostolic discernment. As GC 36 has pointed out, throughout the Society we face the reality of declining numbers of Jesuits; by 2030 the number of Jesuits in the Central and Southern Province could fall from 400 to 200. At the same time, though, we encounter great apostolic vitality in the ministries with which we collaborate. Finally, new challenges constantly arise to which the Society of Jesus throughout the world has to respond. It is time to think creatively about our future.

The aim of this process of apostolic discernment is to help the Province and its apostolates envision a very different future. God has blessed us with many lay colleagues committed to our Jesuit mission; Jesuits work with them in our educational institutions (at all levels), parishes, retreat centers, and social justice ministries. We must discern both how the Society will relate to our existing apostolates and how we will respond to new apostolic needs. That requires careful reflection.

As we reflect on the relationship between the Province and our apostolates, we must begin with the words of the 35th General Congregation when it described the hallmarks of a ‘Jesuit work’.

It made a clear distinction between an Ignatian work and a Jesuit work.

9. The heart of an Ignatian work is the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius. Indeed, any work may be said to be Ignatian when it manifests the Ignatian charism: i.e., when it intentionally seeks God in all things; when it practices Ignatian discernment; when it engages the world through a careful analysis of context, in dialogue with experience, evaluated through reflection, for the sake of action, and with openness, always, to evaluation.

10. An Ignatian work can be said to be Jesuit when it has a clear and definitive relationship with the Society of Jesus and when its mission accords with that of the Society by a commitment to a faith that does justice through interreligious dialogue and a creative engagement with culture. In such a context, the mission of the work, whether administered by a Jesuit or by another who shares this commitment, will be “ultimately accountable to the General of the Society through appropriate lines of authority”

11. The leadership of a Jesuit work depends upon commitment for mission and can be exercised by Jesuits or by others. Such leaders must have a commitment to the mission of the Society as realized in the particular work, though they may be of religious or spiritual traditions different from our own. Clarity about the mission of each apostolic work and the respective roles of all parties prevents misunderstandings, promotes greater accountability, and builds teamwork. All those in leadership should understand and affirm these varied responsibilities in order to be better able to participate in the discernment and decision-making processes regarding matters of mission. (Decree 6: Collaboration at the Heart of Mission)

An important element emerged here, namely that a work could be Jesuit without the presence of Jesuits working there. Of greater importance, then, is a real commitment by apostolates to the mission of the Society and a relationship of accountability to the Society for the mission and identity of the work.
In light of that, the Province is asking each of its works or apostolates to consider a question that challenges all of us, namely ‘what will your work do to deepen its own Jesuit identity and to live out the mission of the Society of Jesus, through a relationship of accountability?’ The implications of that question will vary for each work, depending on its nature, location, particular mission, and so on. Responding to that question will involve many constituencies (i.e., Boards, persons in charge of mission, other colleagues). The Boards of our apostolates play a critical role in maintaining and deepening the Jesuit identity by ensuring that the Jesuit mission is carried out with adequate resources, strategic thinking, local relevance, and at the direction of competent and well-formed personnel. Our Boards are invaluable collaborators in this discernment process.

This assumes, of course, that first of all an apostolate has and desires to deepen its Ignatian identity; without that foundation, we cannot begin to talk of a Jesuit work. Beyond that an apostolate has to ask whether it wishes to shape its own mission as part of a shared global mission according to the priorities of the Society of Jesus, and to remain accountable to the Society through its legitimate superiors. Such commitments have practical implications in terms of allocation of resources, programmatic priorities, criteria for hiring, and much more.

The 36th General Congregation has focused on the ministry of reconciliation as the way forward for the Society. This includes three intimately linked dimensions:

- Reconciliation with God, helping people respond to God’s invitation in their lives;
- Reconciliation with others, fostering justice and peace in a way that builds an inclusive community in our apostolates and in our world;
- Reconciliation with creation, responding to the challenges that Pope Francis described so well in his encyclical Laudato si.

These three together must shape the direction of a Jesuit apostolate.

For the Province, too, this represents a new perspective. We need to ask how we will relate to our works, even if we can no longer provide Jesuits to work in a particular place. A parallel question to the first, then, is ‘what would you ask of the Province to help you in developing the Jesuit identity of the work and carrying out the Jesuit mission if it could no longer makes Jesuits available to your apostolate?’ Already many supports are in place through sponsorship reviews, visitations by me or my staff, formation programs, Conference and provincial organizations gathered by apostolate (like the Jesuit Schools Network). We build on a strong foundation since both the Missouri and New Orleans Provinces did excellent work helping to shape the Jesuit charism in our apostolates. We need to think together about developing new resources that respond to the challenges of a new day.

These two questions present the issues in a global manner. Your community will respond in a way appropriate to your own particular context. Thanks to the work of some of our colleagues, however, I would note some areas of special consideration for all our apostolates that I have appended to this letter.

I realize that this will take time and that already you have much on your plate. Still, the Society has mandated all Provinces to undertake some form of discernment, and we want your involvement. I will leave the form of the response to your discretion. We do not expect a long document, but rather a careful reflection on the strengths on which you can build and the future
you desire. We know that the future will be different from what we have all known before, but with your help we can plan for a future that will enable the Society of Jesus and our apostolates to continue to respond to the needs of the People of God in these rapidly changing times. I would appreciate a response by June 30th so that the next step in our process can begin.

Thank you for your help with this process. Your engagement, and that of your school community, will play an important role in shaping the future of the Province.

In the Lord,

Ronald A. Mercier, S.J.
Provincial
An overview of a process for higher ed apostolates:

Participants at each school

The Provincial asks each apostolate to consider the possibility that Jesuits would no longer be assigned there. It is a fitting question, but even as a hypothetical, it has the potential to significantly impact the morale of the school community. We recommend the schools choose individuals who demonstrate great discretion (to keep the rumor mill in check) and a sincere commitment to Jesuit education beyond their particular institution. For these reasons, we would not recommend including alumni or parents in the discernment process unless they fall into one of the categories listed below, nor would we recommend including current students.

We agreed that the following constituencies at each school should be represented:

- Board members (If there is a Jesuit Identity subcommittee, they could participate, but the discussion should go beyond the same people who always deal with Jesuit identity and mission considerations)
- Key Administrators (perhaps a President’s ‘Cabinet’, especially the Mission and Ministry Director)
- Select staff (To the extent that different strategies are explored, the perspectives of the business manager, CFO, development director and alumni director would be helpful)
- Select faculty (A subgroup of both department chairs and other instructional leaders)
- Campus ministers (Those charged with overseeing retreats, liturgies, prayer services, etc.)

Please feel free to use a process that best suits your school; you know well who can best facilitate this dialogue.

Relation to other processes

All of you have been / are / will be involved in the Mission Effectiveness Examen process that focuses on near-term questions. This does not take the place of those, but can build upon what you already know. The question for this process looks to the long-term relationship between the Province and your school, between now and 2030 when major changes are likely to have occurred. By all means use what you have already done or are doing to help inform the kinds of reflection you will do.

Unlike the Mission Effective Examen Process, all of us are involved in this together, asking how we all will shape this higher education apostolate in the future. The Mission Effectiveness Examen looks at the state of your current reality; this process seeks to look ten-twelve years in the future. What are the steps your school and the Province need to take to maintain and deepen its Catholic and Jesuit mission and identity?

At the same time, the Jesuit communities affiliated with your school will also ask how they can better relate to your ministry, how they can foster the Jesuit charism and mission of the school. GC 36 has asked all of us to do this sort of evaluation and planning.
Breaking down the questions

(1) **What will your work do to deepen its Jesuit identity and live out the mission of the Society of Jesus, through a relationship of accountability?**

This is a good place to integrate the Board/faculty/staff formation already taking place at the school. We suggest the following questions for their reflection: What is the school already doing well regarding its Jesuit identity and participation in the Jesuit mission? What could the school be doing better? What efforts might the school need to eliminate for the sake of greater effectiveness or new creativity? **What steps must you take over the next ten years, building on what you have already done, to ensure your Jesuit identity and live out the Jesuit mission?**

Five domains for the school’s reflection on these questions could be: the school’s religious/spiritual life, its curriculum and instruction, its ongoing formation of Board, faculty/staff and alumni, its mode of governance through which it engages and promotes the Jesuit mission and identity. The hope is that by their expounding on these domains, how the school understands the connection between its own mission and the Jesuit mission would become clear. Reflection on these domains should include various perspectives from the constituencies listed above.

Below are some subtopics that can guide each school’s reflection in these five domains: **These are not intended to be followed exactly, but more as suggestions for areas of potential need for attention. They have been suggested by some of your colleagues.**

1. Religious/spiritual life
   a. How does the school support the religious/spiritual life of its faculty, staff and students, understanding the ecumenical and interreligious nature of the community? What forms of interreligious dialogue occur?
   b. What kinds of programs exist for spiritual reflection? (retreats)
   c. How does the school foster awareness of Ignatian spirituality? (e.g., Examen, Spiritual Exercises, discernment)
   d. Integration of faith and justice
   e. What is the alumni involvement in the religious/spiritual life of the school?
   f. How do you foster vocations?

2. Curriculum and instruction
   a. How does the Jesuit identity and mission influence the curriculum of the school?
   b. How does the curriculum relate to elements of Catholic identity and the Church’s mission? (e.g., faith’s relation to culture, civil society, scientific development, the arts)
   c. What is the Cross-curricular alignment as it relates to aspects of the Jesuit identity and mission today (e.g., globalization, healing social/racial tensions, upholding human dignity, engagement with culture, substantive dialogue with other religious traditions, respect for the created world)
   d. Ignatian approaches to instructional practices and assessment
   e. Instructional review process for all faculty
3. Ongoing formation
   a. Onboarding new faculty and staff
   b. Curriculum review process
   c. Professional review process for faculty/staff
   d. Board of Trustees formation, initial and ongoing

4. Governance
   a. How does the mission of the Society play into decision-making at your school? In the Board? In the Administration?
   b. In what way does it shape policies on issues like recruiting (such as diversity), budget priorities, hiring and promotion?
   c. How well does the relationship between the President and the local Superior function?
   d. How well does networking with other Jesuit apostolates, institutions of higher education function?

5. Networking
   a. How do you engage regional/national/international networks in your apostolic area?
   b. How do you relate to other Jesuit apostolates in your area?

(2) What would you ask of the Province to help you in developing the Jesuit identity of the work and carrying out the Jesuit mission if it could no longer mission Jesuits to your apostolate?

We suggest the schools structure their response according to the same five domains:

1. Religious/spiritual life
   a. Fostering the religious/spiritual life
   b. Resources on Ignatian charism and spirituality, particularly those available via technology
   c. Integration of faith and justice
   d. Alumni involvement in the religious/spiritual life of the school

2. Curriculum and instruction
   a. Integration of Ignatian mission into the curriculum
   b. Faculty development on classroom-actionable topics: Jesuit mission today, the mission of the whole Church, Ignatian approaches to instructional practices and assessment
   c. Aspects of the instructional review process which would highlight Catholic, Jesuit, and Ignatian aspects of curriculum and instruction

3. Ongoing formation
   a. Transition team and possibly an initial plan for the transition
   b. Onboarding new faculty and staff
   c. Various types of formation experiences faculty/staff
d. Organized formation program for lay administrators in Jesuit schools (similar to the developmental assignments from one apostolate to the next when Jesuits are prepared for leadership positions in high schools)

e. Faculty/staff “exchange” program with other Jesuit schools

f. Board of Trustees formation program

g. Communication with the province: visitation schedule and Mission Examen Process

4. Governance

a. Lines of communication between the Society and the school

b. Structures of accountability

c. Relation with local superior

5. Networking

a. How will you engage regional/national/international networks in your apostolic area?

b. How will you relate to other Jesuit apostolates in your area?
An overview of a process for higher ed apostolates:

Participants at each school

The Provincial asks each apostolate to consider the possibility that Jesuits would no longer be assigned there. It is a fitting question, but even as a hypothetical, it has the potential to significantly impact the morale of the school community. We recommend the schools choose individuals who demonstrate great discretion (to keep the rumor mill in check) and a sincere commitment to Jesuit education beyond their particular institution. For these reasons, we would not recommend including alumni or parents in the discernment process unless they fall into one of the categories listed below, nor would we recommend including current students.

We agreed that the following constituencies at each school should be represented:

- Board members (If there is a Jesuit Identity subcommittee, they could participate, but the discussion should go beyond the same people who always deal with Jesuit identity and mission considerations)
- Key Administrators (perhaps a President’s ‘Cabinet’, especially the Mission and Ministry Director)
- Select staff (To the extent that different strategies are explored, the perspectives of the business manager, CFO, development director and alumni director would be helpful)
- Select faculty (A subgroup of both department chairs and other instructional leaders)
- Campus ministers (Those charged with overseeing retreats, liturgies, prayer services, etc.)

Breaking down the questions

(3) What will your work do to deepen its Jesuit identity and live out the mission of the Society of Jesus, through a relationship of accountability?

This is a good place to integrate the Board/faculty/staff formation already taking place at the school. We suggest the following questions for their reflection: What is the school already doing well regarding its Jesuit identity and participation in the Jesuit mission? What could the school be doing better? What efforts might the school need to eliminate for the sake of greater effectiveness or new creativity?

Four domains for the school’s reflection on these questions could be: the school’s religious/spiritual life, its curriculum and instruction, its ongoing formation of Board, faculty/staff and alumni, its mode of governance through which it engages and promotes the Jesuit mission and identity. The hope is that by their expounding on these domains, how the school understands the connection between its own mission and the Jesuit mission would become clear. Reflection on these domains should include various perspectives from the constituencies listed above.
Below are some subtopics that can guide each school’s reflection in these four domains:

1. Religious/spiritual life
   a. How does the school support the religious/spiritual life of its faculty, staff and students, understanding the ecumenical and interreligious nature of the community? What forms of interreligious dialogue occur?
   b. What kinds of programs exist for spiritual reflection? (retreats)
   c. How does the school foster awareness of Ignatian spirituality? (e.g., Examen, Spiritual Exercises, discernment)
   d. Integration of faith and justice
   e. What is the alumni involvement in the religious/spiritual life of the school?

2. Curriculum and instruction
   a. How does the Jesuit identity and mission influence the curriculum of the school?
   b. How does the curriculum relate to elements of Catholic identity and the Church’s mission? (e.g., faith’s relation to culture, civil society, scientific development, the arts)
   c. What is the Cross-curricular alignment as it relates to aspects of the Jesuit identity and mission today (e.g., globalization, healing social/racial tensions, upholding human dignity, engagement with culture, substantive dialogue with other religious traditions, respect for the created world)
   d. Ignatian approaches to instructional practices and assessment
   e. Instructional review process for all faculty

3. Ongoing formation
   a. Onboarding new faculty and staff
   b. Curriculum review process
   c. Professional review process for faculty/staff
   d. Board of Trustees formation, initial and ongoing

4. Governance
   c. How does the mission of the Society play into decision-making at your school? In the Board? In the Administration?
   f. In what way does it shape policies on issues like recruiting (such as diversity), budget priorities, hiring and promotion?
   g. How well does the relationship between the President and the local Superior function?
   h. How well does networking with other Jesuit apostolates, institutions of higher education function?
(4) What would you ask of the Province to help you in developing the Jesuit identity of the work and carrying out the Jesuit mission if it could no longer mission Jesuits to your apostolate?

We suggest the schools structure their response according to the same four domains:

1. Religious/spiritual life
   a. Fostering the religious/spiritual life
   b. Resources on Ignatian charism and spirituality, particularly those available via technology
   c. Integration of faith and justice
   d. Alumni involvement in the religious/spiritual life of the school

2. Curriculum and instruction
   a. Integration of Ignatian mission into the curriculum
   b. Faculty development on classroom-actionable topics: Jesuit mission today, the mission of the whole Church, Ignatian approaches to instructional practices and assessment
   c. Aspects of the instructional review process which would highlight Catholic, Jesuit, and Ignatian aspects of curriculum and instruction

3. Ongoing formation
   a. Transition team and possibly an initial plan for the transition
   b. Onboarding new faculty and staff
   c. Various types of formation experiences faculty/staff
   d. Organized formation program for lay administrators in Jesuit schools (similar to the developmental assignments from one apostolate to the next when Jesuits are prepared for leadership positions in high schools)
   e. Faculty/staff “exchange” program with other Jesuit schools
   f. Board of Trustees formation program
   g. Communication with the province: visitation schedule and Mission Examen Process

4. Governance
   d. Lines of communication between the Society and the school
   e. Structures of accountability
   f. Relation with local superior