An Ignatian Mission to see all things NEW in Christ
Dear Friends,

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What a wonderful example of the importance of faith. Ignatius had no inklings of sainthood as he struggled through a serious leg injury, endured hardships and unknowns in his travels as a pilgrim, and weathered the constant setbacks and challenges of forming a religious order. Nor did Francis Xavier foresee his canonization as he faced the dangers and vulnerabilities of being the first Christian missionary to Japan. Both men surely wondered at times if it was all worth it.

And yet today their names are counted among the saints—with many schools and churches named after them. We too often wonder if our hard work and struggles will yield true fruit in the future. Like Saints Loyola and Xavier, we must keep to the mission at hand and have faith in God that through His will and providence, our prayers and efforts will indeed take hold. To that end, Jesuits USA East is embarking on a two-year apostolic planning process that will help us reaffirm our mission and position ourselves to meet the ever-changing needs of those we serve. Please pray for us as we engage Jesuits and fellow colleagues to discern how best to live out our vocations, all for the greater glory of God. And may 2022 be a year of peace and success in your endeavors as well.

Sincerely in Christ,

Very Rev. Joseph M. O’Keefe, SJ

FROM OUR PROVINCIAL

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Provincial, USA East Province
Cristo Rey New York High School welcomed its new principal, Rose Batista. Batista is a graduate of Villanova University and has master’s degrees from St. John’s University and the University of Notre Dame.

Former USA Northeast Provincial, Fr. John Cecero, SJ, returned to Fordham University as the new vice president for Mission Integration and Ministry last August. Fr. Cecero succeeds Fr. Michael McCarthy, SJ, who had held the post since 2016.

Fr. Robert Hussey, SJ, officially started his role as pastor of St. Thomas More in Decatur, Ga., this past summer, succeeding Fr. Mark Horak, SJ. Fr. Hussey is the former provincial of the Maryland Province.

Following a search of top candidates from Catholic and Jesuit schools across the region, Theresa Napoli has been named the next Academic Dean of Fairfield College Preparatory School. In her new position, Napoli will be working with Principal Timothy Dee to address key areas of strategic growth in Prep’s academic program.

Fr. Timothy O’Brien, SJ, has been named the new director of mission initiatives at his alma mater, Holy Cross. Fr. O’Brien graduated from Holy Cross in 2006. In his new role, he will work closely with Holy Cross President Vincent Rougeau, as well as faculty, staff and alumni.

Brooklyn Jesuit Prep named Mr. Russell Quiñones the school’s next principal. Mr. Quiñones graduated magna cum laude from Villanova University and proceeded to graduate studies in education at both the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University. He most recently worked as the Director of Graduate Support for the REACH Program at Regis High School in New York City.

Fr. Bob Reiser, SJ, began his new role in May 2021 as executive director of the Jesuit Schools Network. Fr. Reiser succeeds Fr. Bill Muller, SJ, who recently was named Vice President of Mission Advancement at Brophy College Preparatory School in Phoenix. Fr. Reiser was most recently the president of McQuaid Jesuit and before that was the president of Saint Peter’s Prep.

Terrence Sawyer, JD, has been selected as Loyola University Maryland’s 25th president and the first layperson to serve as president. He was formerly Loyola’s senior vice president and began his new role on Jan. 1, 2022.

Last September during the Mass of the Holy Spirit, Fr. A.J. Rizzo, SJ, was officially installed as the 10th president of Scranton Prep. Prior to this, Fr. Rizzo served at Regis High School in New York City as director of Mission and Identity. As a regent, he taught English, theology and Latin at Scranton Prep. He is also an alumnus of the University of Scranton.
While some quickly return to finish an advanced degree, most newly ordained Jesuits spend their first year gaining pastoral experience serving at a parish. Although this may seem typical, what sets these new Fathers apart from recently ordained diocesan priests is that they are not strictly bound to the area of a diocese. Jesuits are missioned throughout an entire province, if not across the country or around the globe. This often means serving at a parish not only committed to helping those in need, but essential to its community.

Fr. Michael Lamanna, SJ, was ordained on June 12, 2021, and has been serving his first year as a priest at Sacred Heart Parish in Richmond, Va. Directly across the street from the church is Sacred Heart Center, an important outreach for the many Latino families nearby.

Fr. Lamanna admits that what first drew him to Sacred Heart was his desire to serve in a community where he could further his fluency in Spanish, but he soon discovered how much he enjoyed not just serving the religious and sacramental needs of the community, but also the day-to-day needs that those less fortunate rely on. “I love being part of a collaborative that explicitly serves both the spiritual/divine elements of a person as well as the material/human elements. In addition to Masses and confessions, I recently performed an emergency baptism for a toddler with a grave medical diagnosis. I also gave a fervorino (quick words of inspiration) at the Richmond Tool Bank during the build session of some new picnic tables for the Center, made hospital visits to the sick and dying, and did some...
watering in our community garden. It feels great to be able to promote the Center right at Mass—for example, by reminding folks during parish announcements that the Center is an easily-accessible vaccination site.

Fr. Lamanna likens the good works that Sacred Heart Center provides to the four Universal Apostolic Preferences—helping people find God, walking with the excluded, journeying with youth, and caring for the environment. “Pope Francis often repeats the phrase, ‘Everything is connected.’ I see that here at Sacred Heart. How we treat our communities, our young people, our neighborhoods—it is indeed all connected.”

Fr. Zach Presutti, SJ, who was ordained with Fr. Lamanna last June, is serving his pastoral year at the Church of St. Francis Xavier in Manhattan. And while most SFX parishioners would hardly consider those on the margins, Fr. Presutti is continuing an outreach that has long been near and dear to him—prison ministry. He is the founder of Thrive for Life, a ministry in New York City that focuses on so much more than spiritual healing for prisoners. It focuses on the whole person—on education, housing, and employment for prisoners upon release. As Fr. Presutti points out, “It’s not enough to just go behind the prison walls and share how much God loves them. It takes a commitment to actually see them through their challenges, many of which are most difficult upon release. Accompaniment is not a quick blessing on the run. It’s a relationship.”

A key outreach of Thrive for Life is Ignacio House, a place of support for education, housing, and employment for prisoners upon release. As Fr. Presutti notes, “It’s not enough to just go behind the prison walls and share how much God loves them. It takes a commitment to actually see them through their challenges, many of which are most difficult upon release. Accompaniment is not a quick blessing on the run. It’s a relationship.”

So how does a Jesuit parish “experience” rather than just learn about prison ministry? As often as he can, even during the Christmas season on Rikers Island, Fr. Presutti brings parishioners; he brings students; he brings other Jesuits in formation; he brings those on the outside, inside. “Something different happens. Thrive for Life offers that for St. Francis Xavier—those on the margins, be considered ‘those on the margins,’ be considered ‘those on the margins,’ be considered ‘those on the margins.’ I see that here at Sacred Heart. How we treat our communities, our young people, our neighborhoods—it is indeed all connected.”

When you come here, with Christ, in the presence of these inmates, encountering their extreme hardship, difficulty situations, you leave understanding the depth of the resurrection.”

That’s what Jesuits do—going where the need is greatest. This can also mean halfway around the world. This was certainly the case for Fr. Jason Downer, SJ, who was ordained at the height of the pandemic in August 2020. And while most of us were sheltered away and restricted from traveling afar, Fr. Downer found himself on a plane to the island of Saipan, just north of Guam in the southwestern Pacific. He had been asked to serve San Antonio and St. Jude parishes, lead youth ministry, and help reestablish a Jesuit community and apostolic works. The island was recovering from two super typhoons that had devastated the economy, and the pandemic had only decimated what was left of it. “It was an experience of flexibility,” says Fr. Downer. “The great Ignatian goal of being open to the needs of the people around you with a willingness to serve.”

Fr. Downer saw firsthand how environmental issues directly affect a place like Saipan. “You can really see the effects of climate change in this area of the world. The frequency of these hundred-year storms is devastating. They are issues you normally don’t see in most American cities, but they are very real here. I was glad to become a part of their lives and assist where I could.”

People have been looking to the spiritual guidance, education, and social justice work of the Society of Jesus for nearly 500 years. St. Ignatius sent forth his companions Jesuits to serve wherever they were needed most, and the same holds true today. A pastoral year following ordination often means more than celebrating Mass and leading RCIA groups. For newly ordained Jesuits, it is in their DNA to serve the less fortunate, and they actively seek out that call. Regarding his many years of serving and ministering to inmates, Fr. Presutti chuckles, “I’ve been in prison my whole Jesuit life.” He quickly adds, however, that he wouldn’t change that for anything. “When we can become a community even behind the bars, the gates, and the chains of these prisons, I think this is what it means to be the body of Christ—a wounded body of Christ—but a body of Christ that can hope for and find the resurrection together.”

Pope Francis often repeats the phrase, ‘Everything is connected.’ I see that here at Sacred Heart. How we treat our communities, our young people, our neighborhoods—it is indeed all connected.”

— Fr. Michael Lamanna, SJ
Eco-Spirituality in the Province: How Jesuit Works are Living out the Call to Care for Creation

In the fall of 2021 world leaders gathered in Glasgow, Scotland, for COP26. This annual meeting orchestrated by the United Nations has provided a forum for countries to discuss what can be done to combat climate change.

During one panel on how climate change is affecting indigenous youth around the world, moderators played video questions submitted by students. The first question was from a Yap Catholic High School senior named Nadley. She discussed how severe changes in weather have been affecting the island of Yap, damaging both their crops and houses. Nadley asked, “What can we do to protect our finite island resources for future generations?”

Yap Catholic High School (YCHS) is a Jesuit school located in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) in the Pacific. While the FSM is spread out over 1,802 miles, the 607 islands that comprise it are fairly small. But YCHS is not the only Jesuit high school in Micronesia facing challenges from climate change.

In 2015, Super Typhoon Maysak hit the island of Chuuk and disrupted the source of water for Xavier High School, the other Jesuit high school in Micronesia. “Our banana trees, breadfruits, and other local crops were damaged; we had to buy water from Guam and local stores,” said Xavier’s principal, Martin Carl. The school faced a similar challenge in March 2020 amid Covid-19 and a drought on the island. “Xavier catches drinking water from rain. We do not have water from the city or government. So, when there is a drought, we have to ration water,” continued Principal Carl.

While Chuuk does not have a large population (it is comparable to a large town in the United States), the students and faculty of Xavier Micronesia are doing what they can to contribute to the fight against climate change.

“Last year we started this program, we call it Laudato si Fridays,” said Principal Carl. The program gets its name from the encyclical on the environment published by Pope Francis in 2015. “Students and staff participate in Laudato si prayers, reflections, planting trees, composting, gardening, and picking up trash on and off campus.” The school also invites experts on the environment to come and discuss climate change and its effects.

In addition to the Pope’s encyclical, Principal Carl points to an instance in the New Testament that underscores...
why Catholics have a responsibility to be stewards of the environment. “When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, he said, ‘You shall love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbors as you love yourself.’ So, there is no way we can claim that we love God but continue to live a life that disregards the environment which affects other human beings.”

The idea that caring for the environment is part of being a faithful Catholic is being explored even more in-depth at a different Jesuit school in New York City and the chair of its science teacher at Regis High School in New York City, and the chair of the school’s theology department.

Maura Toomb Estevez is a theology teacher at Regis High School in New York City and the chair of the school’s theology department. She teaches a senior elective called Environmental Theology, which focuses less on the science of why the climate is changing but rather on the responsibility Catholics have in combating it. “A student asked me ‘Why do you call this course environmental theology and not environmental justice?’ Because the call to care for the environment grows from our faith,” explains Toomb Estevez. The course covers the theological roots of caring for creation as well as relevant Catholic documents like Laudato si. It also incorporates the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Jesuits, especially the fourth Apostolic Preference, Caring for our Common Home. “Jesuit schools were always interested in sustainability, but I think the Universal Apostolic Preferences have really catalyzed action around this in a more meaningful way,” said Toomb Estevez.

Another focus of the class is the tradeoffs presented by the different solutions to climate change. “For example, should we use a specific type of coolant if it’s better for the environment, but it harms people?” says Toomb Estevez. “How do we weigh what’s more important if we are called to be in relationship with others, God, and the environment?”

When asked what she hopes students take away from the class, Toomb Estevez wants them to “understand that to be a faithful Catholic means to care for the environment.” While these students may have different notions of what they need to do to care for the environment, Toomb Estevez says, “I hope that they do some kind of advocacy.”

Like Regis, Fordham Prep is also committed to caring for the environment and has been assessing what else they can do. Most recently they announced that they hope to be as close to zero waste as possible by 2024. This means an elimination of non-biodegradable waste from the school. While this may not sound like a major change, the reduced waste adds up.

“We’ve eliminated the sale of plastic water bottles; we actually estimated that we use on average 70,000 water bottles a year,” explains Brian Carney, the Vice President for Mission Integration and Planning at Fordham Prep. “Our goal is to install a fountain drink system in our cafeteria so that we can eliminate all the vending machines and have students use reusable bottles and compostable cups.”

But becoming zero waste is more than just the administration making changes. Students are playing a big role as well. While there are options for students to compost things in the lunchroom, they do not always sort things correctly. “We started a program called EcoRam where we have volunteers that essentially monitor the compost during lunch periods and the kids pick one period a cycle, and they’re on duty and directing the other students as to what goes into which receptacle,” said Carney. “We have about 50 students who are a part of that now. And I think in some ways that has energized the rest of the students. They see their classmates invested in this and I think it makes kids more concerned.”

For the past five years, Fordham Prep administrators have been having conversations about what else they can do to be environmentally sustainable. During the 2019-2020 school year, they created an environmental sustainability task force to write a set of strategic recommendations for sustainability. “It is very much driven by our Catholic tradition,” said Carney. “Especially with Laudato si in 2015, that really started several people in the school pushing us to look at these issues.”

While decreasing waste is a component of fighting climate change, it is just a start. In addition to teaching students what not to do, Fordham Prep is teaching students what they can do. “I think for the kids they want to do hands-on things, so we’re working to get them more involved in our greenhouse, actually growing and producing food,” said Carney. Fordham Prep is already looking at what they can do after becoming zero waste. Carney says they hope to produce enough food from the greenhouse to donate to local food pantries in the Bronx.

While one greenhouse in the Bronx is not going to singlehandedly stop climate change, Principal Carl suggests that these kinds of actions are a start. “Sometimes we want to change the world, we want to make big contributions to stop climate change because world leaders talk about it, but the issue is people, they need to change, and it has to start at home.”

Luke Gomprecht ’24, member of Fordham Prep’s Ecology Club, at a club bake sale to raise funds to support clean water programs in Africa.

Tim Marx ‘23, a member of the EcoRam program, helps to instruct students at Fordham Prep in the proper segregation of waste in the cafeteria.
Jesuits from throughout the province joined together on the altar in support of Bill, Zach, Michael, and Danny during their rite of ordination.

On June 12, 2021, four Jesuits from the USA East Province were ordained to the priesthood by Bishop James Massa of the Diocese of Brooklyn. They were among 25 Jesuits in the United States, Canada, and Haiti to be ordained last summer. The Ordination Mass for our East Coast Jesuits returned to the Fordham University Church, as the waning pandemic thankfully allowed more in-person gatherings. Friends, family, and fellow Jesuits gathered to celebrate these four men completing their formation journey to the priesthood. From left to right in the photo above are Fr. Joseph O’Keefe, SJ, Provincial of Jesuits USA East; Fr. William Woody, SJ; Fr. Zachariah Presutti, SJ; Bishop James Massa; Fr. Michael Lamanna, SJ; and Fr. Daniel Gustafson, SJ.


Suffice to say, the vestments a priest wears at his ordination are very special. The alb that Fr. Zach Presutti, SJ, wore on June 12, 2021, was indeed special not only to him, but to an entire social enterprise start-up in Baltimore. Lifting Labels is a small apparel manufacturer that sews clergy vestments, judicial robes, and university gowns, and it is staffed by formerly incarcerated men and women. They are part of the Ignatian-inspired Innovation Works network that seeks to reduce poverty and grow entrepreneurial opportunities in Baltimore City. One of their first vestment orders was from Zach, whose own commitment to prison ministry made him the perfect “fit” for a Lifting Labels alb. He wore it with pride during his ordination Mass.
Jesuits in Formation
in the USA East Province

2021–2022

The Path of Formation

Jesuit novices from the USA East Province enter Saint Andrew Hall in Syracuse, N.Y., for the two-year Novitiate program, culminating in the profession of perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

In First Studies after the novitiate, most Jesuits study philosophy and theology for three years at Loyola University Chicago, Saint Louis University or Fordham University.

In Regency, Jesuits work full time for two or three years at a Jesuit worksite or apostolate, such as an educational institution, or in pastoral ministry.

In Theology, Jesuits continue advanced studies for three years at one of three locations in North America (the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College, the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, located in Berkeley, Calif., or Regis University in Toronto) or at the Gregorian University in Rome.

Recently Ordained includes men who completed theology studies and were ordained as priests.

Jesuit Brothers undergo a slightly different but equally rigorous formation process of studies and apostolic work.

Tertianship is the final step in the formation process, and the period of preparation before making final vows in the Society of Jesus.

www.BeAJesuit.org

REGENCY

J. Luke Brathwaite
Bryan Galgani
Kieran Hallinan
Christopher Holowinka

Douglas Jones
Joseph Lorentz
Jonathan Penacchia
Paul Philipino

John Pignone
M. Elvin Rayappa
Christopher Smith
Christian Urgewese

THEOLOGY

Matthew Carteise
Brendan Collhey
Thomas Eltz
Brendan Gottschall
Justin Grossnick

Sean Maguire
C-V Kao
Davie M. Alcates
Stephen Nicholson
Ricardo Pines
David McKiern

RECENTLY ORDAINED PRIESTS

Daniel Gustafson
Michael Lamanna
Zacharias Pizzuti
William Woody

Marc Rodriguez
Jonathan Stott

BROTHERS

Michael Peters
Gaud Sald
M. Ario Zehbe
Christian Zambuck

Nicholas Galiarza
Jan Kuriyama
Nicholas Liang
Steven M. Conkey
Luke Olsen

Angela Carta
Alic Rutherford

Nicholas Lignore
Zen Kuriyama
Nicholas Colalella
Christian Zombek
Mario Verde
Robert Lorenz
Nicholas Leeper
RJ Jacobs
Matthew Briand
Brian Engelhart
David Said
Michael Pires
Andrew Milewski
Luke Lapean
Trevor Kelly

SECOND-YEAR NOVICES

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Angelo Canta
Christian Verghese
Christopher Holownia
Bryan Galligan
Paul Phillipino

REGENCY

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I had the good fortune recently to journey alongside 40 lay women and men from Jesuit universities who were participating in a seven-day, mostly silent retreat. The Magis Retreat is a component of the Ignatian Colleagues Program (ICP), designed to educate and form administrators and faculty more deeply in the Jesuit & Catholic tradition of higher education. Among the group were individuals from diverse faith traditions, ethnicities, and life paths—the common thread was a deep desire for the Magis, the desire to live more fully into calling and service to the greater good.

The lives of Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier are a study in contrasts united by this same common thread. Well known is Ignatius’ disappointment at being turned away upon his arrival in Jerusalem, his lofty goal to “help souls” there was rebuffed almost immediately. And Xavier was not originally chosen for the mission to evangelize the people of the East Indies. Rather, he emerged as a substitute for a Jesuit who fell ill. Today, we know much about Ignatius’ disappointment. Letters to Ignatius were translated and Xavier’s compassionate organizational genius sculpted the mission required of them. Xavier sailed to the East never to return. Although they would never see one another again, they remain present through 138 letters. Xavier’s words and experiences and Ignatius’ organization—how the Jesuits’ gift for leadership and administration and Xavier’s compassionate and tireless efforts to spread the Gospel in far lands. Both encountered disappointment, opposition, hardship, and illness. Neither could have imagined where God’s invitation, over and over, would lead them.

What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ? Ignatius and Xavier lived these questions throughout their lives. As I witnessed at the Magis Retreat, these questions, at the heart of Ignatian Spirituality, are as deeply compelling today as they were then.

Starting anything is difficult. Starting something that lasts 500 years is extraordinary. Francis Xavier and Ignatius of Loyola, whose 400 anniversaries of canonization we celebrate this year, did just that. Along with Peter Faber, canonized in 2015, they were the principal founders of the Society of Jesus. Bound in mutual affection, Loyola and Xavier were alike and different. Both were filled with ambition, zeal and passion. Both encountered Jesus Christ as friend and savior. Each possessed the capacity to break barriers and trod new ground in ministry. Best of all, they had the desire to share the most intimate experience of God’s grace with one another. “Love consists in a mutual sharing of goods…” (Sp. Ex. # 231)

They differed in the apostolic mission required of them. Xavier sailed to the East never to return. Ignatius settled in Rome never to leave. Although they would never see one another again, they remain present through 138 letters. Xavier’s letters to Ignatius were translated and distributed throughout the nascent Society of Jesus. Xavier’s words and experiences and Ignatius’ organizational genius sculpted the future of the Society. As the disciple John would say to St. Peter at the Sea of Galilee, “It is the Lord,” so too Ignatius and Xavier would recognize the presence of the living God and share the beauty of God, in the fullness of the gospel, and serve the greater good.

A lot can happen in a century. Little could the soldier Ignatius of Loyola have known when he was badly wounded on the battlefield in 1521 that in a mere hundred years he would be canonized in the Catholic Church. But that’s all it was—one century. Last May, we celebrated the 500th anniversary of St. Ignatius’ cannonball moment and conversion to seek the call of Christ in his life. On March 12, 2022, we celebrate the 400th anniversary of his canonization, and that of his close companion and fellow Jesuit, St. Francis Xavier. These two Jesuit pilgrims held very different missions, one a visionary and administrator who organized, launched, and governed a new religious order dedicated to serving the poor, preaching the gospel, and education, and the other a missionary who boldly traveled throughout India, Southeast Asia, and Japan. Because of them, the Society of Jesus became what it is today. Here are a few reflections on this 400th milestone from our Ignatian Year committee.
Life can feel overwhelming at times. We’ve all been pushed to our limits on multiple occasions as we navigate the uncertainties of the pandemic, politics, and our own personal challenges. How do we find God when faced with problems we’ve never seen before and don’t fully comprehend? Yes, we do honestly desire to live good, loving, faithful lives. But what does that mean in today’s world when it often feels that we are forced to take sides and decide between less-than-ideal options? Thomas’ response to Jesus resonates with me most days: “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” (Jn 14:5)

Living and ministering in the middle of Siberia certainly presents unique challenges as I discern how Jesus is leading me through this cultural context. The fact that I’m even here feels like a miracle. Covid and geo-politics complicated my travel and visa process. But the real miracle is why I feel convinced that God wants me here, right now, serving the Russian people.

On a whim, I started studying Russian in 2009. I’ve always enjoyed foreign languages and exploring different cultures, ever since being an exchange student in Mexico when I was 16. And so, for no reason other than thinking Russian...
schools, the majority of students and faculty are not Catholic, but find their faith community in the school. Ignatian spirituality is open, optimistic, and has something to offer all. Most importantly, the Tomsk Catholic School is the only secondary/presecondary Catholic school in Russia (there is a K-4 Franciscan school in Novosibirsk, but our school is grades K-11). This is a worthy mission and one that continues the fascinating history of Jesuits in Russia.

And so, I promised to do everything I could to help advance the mission of the school. The marketing team at Fairfield Prep put together an annual report to show benefactors, Educate Magis, and the Jesuit Schools Network provided helpful resources. I also asked my provincials to discern a future missioning for me there. After many conversations and much prayer, I found myself in Tomsk. I am deeply grateful to the USA East Province for making me available for this mission.

Challenges abound, but grace is superabundant. One of many difficulties is that I entered on a student visa. In addition to leading our school, I am also studying full time for a master’s in education management from Tomsk State Pedagogical University (of course, in Russian, which is completely overwhelming for me right now).

Daily consolations continue to reveal the path. What seems like the end might be the next step forward. And in our moments of confusion and desolation, Jesus’ response to Thomas provides the only answer we need: “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” If we stay close to Christ in prayer and service, there can be no doubt that we are exactly where God wants us to be.

— Fr. Thomas Simisky, SJ
Discernment, Vocation, and How We Love the World

By Henry Frank

“Vocation” has become a central theme at the Office of Ignatian Spirituality (OIS) this year.

Everyone has a vocation. In fact, everyone likely has many vocations, John Neafsey (pictured), author of A Sacred Voice Is Calling, explained to participants in OIS’s Contemplative Leaders in Action (CLA) program in November. But having a vocation and knowing what that vocation is at a given point in time are not the same.

The classic Jesuit example is St. Ignatius Loyola. Five hundred years ago he was wounded in battle by a cannonball, which radically altered his plans. He had intended to win glory as a soldier. He ended up becoming a priest. He left his home on a religious mission to Jerusalem but never made it there. He spent the rest of his life in Rome administering a nascent religious order. Along the way he practiced the art of discernment, developing his own rules, which allowed him to shift his understanding of his vocation as his circumstances changed.

Asked to define “vocation” in a recent interview with OIS and the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States, Br. Matt Wooters, SJ, posed this question, “What are you good at, what are you passionate about, and how do you want to live your life? How do you want to love the world?”

Answering that requires discernment, and the answer can change or evolve over time—the world in 2022 is not the world we knew in 2019, nor are any of us unchanged.

In October, Margaret Silf (pictured), author of Inner Compass, spoke to CLA participants about Ignatian discernment. She explained, “The art of discernment is about cooperating with what draws us closer to God and to each other and working against what is pulling us the other way.” To practice the art of discernment is to be in tune with yourself, aware of the thoughts, desires, and emotions that animate your decisions. Some feelings are pulling you toward God, and some are pushing you away. Recognizing the difference is key—it is what Jesuits mean by “discernment.”

In his conversation with CLA, Neafsey described the process of discerning a vocation as “listening to our hearts and listening with our hearts to the ways that the needs and the sufferings of people in the world are calling out for intelligent, compassionate attention.” The discernment of a vocation involves recognizing what gifts we have, how we can use them, and where they are needed. In other words, “How am I going to love the world?”

Members of OIS’s Hispanic Ministry have been reading and reflecting on Walking with Ignatius in a grupo de conversación espiritual. The book is an extended interview with Father General Arturo Sosa, SJ, published for the Ignatian Year. Fr. Sosa states: “Ignatius never saw himself as having converted but as being a pilgrim. He never believed that he’d reach his goal. Christian life is a pilgrimage in which you put aside your plans to set out on a journey, allowing yourself to be guided, accompanied, open to surprises.”

In March, we will celebrate the 400th anniversary of Ignatius’ canonization. He spent his life discerning and living out his vocation. May we listen, discern, and have the courage to respond to our own.

Our team at OIS frequently prays this prayer:

Grant me, O Lord, to see everything now with new eyes, to discern and test the spirits that help me read the signs of the times, to relish the things that are yours, and to communicate them to others. Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave Ignatius.

Amen.

[Image of Ignatius at Manresa—painting by Albert Chevallier Tayler]
Deceased Jesuits of the USA East Province ~ July 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die.”

—John 11:25

If you would like to read the obituaries of these and other Jesuits of the USA East Province, use the camera app on your smartphone to scan this QR code and get directed to the Memoriam section of our website.
The 2021 Golf Outing Returned for Another Winning Day

On Tues., Sept. 21, 2021, nearly 100 golfers and supporters attended the 2021 Friends of the Jesuits Golf Outing at the beautiful Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale, N.Y.

For more than a decade, the Friends of the Jesuits Golf Outing has raised funds to support men in formation as well as senior Jesuits. Despite last year’s outing being canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these events have collectively raised more than $5 million.

Fr. James Keenan, SJ, director of donor relations for the USA East Province, was on hand to greet golfers and say the opening prayer at the start of the day.

When the golfers completed the course, they gathered for an outdoor reception where they had the chance to catch up with one another and representatives from the province. The guests were then treated to a live auction and placed bids for the chance to play on some of the best golf courses in the country.

At the close of the evening, Fr. Joseph O’Keefe, SJ, provincial of the USA East Province, thanked donors and talked about what the province is able to do thanks to the support from the outing.

“For my part, on behalf of the USA East Jesuits, please know that you are deeply appreciated and that you are in our prayers.”

After a brief hiatus, this year’s outing was a resounding success. We are grateful to our friends who supported the outing through their participation, sponsorships and donations.

Mark your calendars for these important events!

THE JESUIT DINNER

Saturday, May 7, 2022
Fordham University
Lincoln Center Campus
New York City

Join with Jesuits USA East to celebrate its ministries and honor John C. Meditz with the Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam award.

Contact Timothy Olmstead for details, 212.774.5558 or tolmstead@jesuits.org

The USA East Province of the Society of Jesus invites you to attend one of our two upcoming Florida events. On Sunday, March 20, 2022, there will be a Mass and brunch with USA East Socius, Fr. John Hanwell, SJ, at the Naples Sailing and Yacht Club, Naples, Fla. On Tuesday, March 22, 2022, there will be a breakfast prayer service with Fr. John Hanwell, SJ, and Fr. James Keenan, SJ, at the DoubleTree Hotel, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. Registration is now open.

For more information, contact Ann Marie Houston at 617.607.2814 or ahouston@jesuits.org.

The Naples Yacht Club provides the perfect venue for friends of the Society of Jesus to catch up with the Jesuits and each other.
Why is it important for a new Jesuit province, especially such a large province, to have an apostolic plan?
Fr. Arturo Sosa, the Superior General of the Jesuits, has called all provinces to engage in a thoughtful and prayerful exercise of Apostolic Planning. The process will allow the USA East Jesuits, together with a significant number of our lay colleagues, to come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the social and ecclesial context in which the Jesuit mission takes place. Then, with a clear-eyed view of all our assets, provide guidance to Fr. O’Keefe, our provincial, on how best to deploy those assets for God’s Greater Glory.

What is the key takeaway that Jesuits USA East hopes to learn from this process?
As I pull together the resources and guidance for our Apostolic Planning process, I see different potential outcomes. Firstly, the Jesuits spread across our far-flung province will come to understand and appreciate more deeply just how profoundly we are embedded in communities up and down the East Coast, from Maine to Georgia. Secondly, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will guide us as we discern together our shared apostolic future, and that through the process, we will see ourselves as an apostolic body of vowed men in service to the Church. Thirdly, my prayer is that we will be astounded at God’s creative action within us as we discover the new ways of undertaking our mission going forward. Finally, our Apostolic Planning process will give all of us the opportunity to provide guidance to the provincial and his staff for choosing ministries and the assignment of Jesuits.

How have your experiences as president of Cristo Rey Baltimore and St. Joseph’s Prep prepared you to lead this process?
The leader of the Apostolic Planning process is Father Provincial. And, when all the work is completed, Fr. O’Keefe will approve the final version. My role is to support Fr. O’Keefe in his leadership by designing a process that will work for Jesuits and our lay colleagues. While my years in school leadership are certainly relevant to my mission today, our Apostolic Plan is not primarily about institutions, like our sponsored universities, schools, parishes, or retreat houses. These institutions periodically develop a “strategic plan,” or in the case of a parish, a “pastoral plan.” Fr. O’Keefe is most concerned about where and how the Society of Jesus itself and its members will be present to support those who are actively participating in the Jesuit mission.
Jesuits: Friends in the Lord…

...at the Heart and Frontiers of the Church

To learn more, visit BeAJesuit.org