



Canisius Course on Identity and Mission of Jesuit Higher Education Institutions

Glossary of Terms

- **Apostolate.** In the context of the Society of Jesus, the term *apostolate* refers to the various ministries or works carried out by the Society as part of its mission. It is often used synonymously with **ministry**. These apostolates encompass various activities, including education, pastoral work, social justice efforts, and spirituality.
- **Constitutions.** The *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, authored primarily by St. Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century, detail the Society's mission, structure, and principles of Jesuit life, emphasizing the pursuit of God's greater glory. The Constitutions are not merely rules but are infused with Ignatian spirituality, guiding Jesuits in their discernment, community life, and apostolic work.
- **Contemplative in action.** For Saint Ignatius, actions are a form of conversation through which one perceives and contemplates the presence of God. He believed one could remain contemplative even while actively engaged, often expressing this idea with the phrase, 'God must be found in all things.'
- **Cura Personalis.** Latin for "care of the individual" is an Ignatian approach to guiding people closer to God through one-to-one spiritual accompaniment.

In the context of Jesuit education, *Cura Personalis* extends to holistic education, where teachers and mentors are encouraged to attend to students' personal, moral and academic growth (i.e. "care for the whole person"). It reflects the broader Jesuit commitment to seeing each individual as a unique creation of God, deserving of care, attention, and guidance to reach their fullest potential.

In the Jesuit tradition, *cura personalis* may appear to conflict with *cura apostolica*, which focuses on the institution's mission. However, contemporary scholars such as José Mesa, SJ, argue that these two forms of care are not in opposition but are mutually reinforcing. Institutional success enhances the capacity to care for individuals, and caring for individuals strengthens the institution's mission. Achieving a balance between *cura personalis* and *cura apostolica* is essential for the sustainability and relevance of Jesuit institutions.

- **Discernment** is the spiritual practice of noticing the movements within your heart and soul, identifying the thoughts, desires, and emotions that motivate them, and using these insights to decide where God is leading you. It involves prayerful reflection and consultation, paying attention to the impulses of the spirit. The goal is to discern what is truly beneficial and in harmony with one's vocation and relationship with God, often through examining one's feelings, experiences, and the fruits of potential choices. Discernment only occurs when a decision must be made between two seemingly good options. When one option is immoral, there is no discernment to be made — we must always choose what is moral.
- **Discernment in common.** It can be compared to discernment for groups, enabling group members to identify and choose the path of the greatest service of God in a given context. It

allows a discussion beyond debate by fostering mutual listening and creativity, leading to new perspectives. It is also energising because it relies on and strengthens the inner freedom of group members throughout the process. Discernment in common has increasingly entered into the Church's life through the development of **synodality** under the leadership of Pope Francis. The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus reaffirmed its importance as a constitutive dimension of Jesuit identity.

- **Examen.** Ignatian spirituality does not focus on seeking God in mystical prayer but on seeking him present at the center of life and action aided by the right intention. To grow in this spiritual life, one must accustom one's spiritual senses to God's "way of proceeding." In addition to longer prayers, St. Ignatius proposes a simple and short prayer (15 minutes) that allows one to become aware of God's way of life and right intention: The Ignatian Examen. It is a method of peaceful daily prayer taught by St. Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises to notice God's presence in one's daily life and respond generously to it. He regarded it as one of an individual's most important daily practices, requiring just a few minutes of reflection.

According to Dennis Hamm, SJ., the Examen comprises five steps:

1. **Become aware of God's presence:** Begin by inviting God into your prayer and reflecting on His presence in your life.
2. **Review the day with gratitude:** Recall the events of your day, acknowledging moments of grace and expressing gratitude.
3. **Pay attention to your emotions.** Reflect on your feelings and responses to the events of the day. This will help you better understand your inner life.
4. **Choose one feature of the day and pray from it:** Select a particular moment that stands out and engage with it in prayer, whether it elicits positive or negative feelings.
5. **Look toward tomorrow:** Contemplate how to carry the insights gained into the next day.

The Examen is not merely a rote exercise; it fosters a deeper relationship with God by integrating daily experiences into spiritual reflection and encouraging awareness of God's actions in our lives.

- **Ignatian Pedagogy** is a framework for the teaching/learning process rooted in the values and approaches of the Jesuit spiritual and educational traditions. Ignatian pedagogy is a process, rather than a set curriculum, that seeks to accompany students in becoming persons of competence, conscience, and compassionate commitment. The IPP's structure revolves around five key elements: **context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation**. In this model, **experience** involves engaging students in learning that connects with their lives and values. **Reflection** is central, encouraging students to critically analyse their experiences to derive meaning and integrate knowledge with personal growth. **Action** emphasises transforming reflection into real-world application, fostering a commitment to serving others. Finally, **evaluation** ensures continual assessment of both academic progress and moral development. The IPP was initially outlined in *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach*, published by ICAJE in 1993.
- **Ignatian Spiritual Exercises** are a series of guided meditations, prayers, and reflections developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola to help individuals deepen their relationship with God and grow in spiritual discernment. The Spiritual Exercises aim to foster personal transformation, discernment, and a more profound commitment to living out one's faith in the everyday.

- **Magis** is a critical concept in Jesuit spirituality, derived from the Latin word "more" or "greater." For the Jesuits, Magis represents pursuing "the greater good" or doing more for God's glory and the service of others. It is closely connected to the Jesuit motto "**Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam**" (For the Greater Glory of God). It reflects the idea of striving for excellence and generosity in everything one does. Magis is not about doing more in terms of quantity but about seeking more profound meaning and greater quality in one's actions and decisions.
- **Society of Jesus** is organised hierarchically. Here's an overview of its government structure:
 - **General Congregation** is the highest governing body of the Society of Jesus. It is an assembly of Jesuit representatives from all over the world and is responsible for electing the Superior General and addressing major issues affecting the order. It does not meet regularly but only in extraordinary circumstances, such as the death or resignation of a Superior General, and it may be called at other times if circumstances warrant. Its decisions (decrees) help shape the future direction and priorities of the Jesuit order. The last General Congregation (GC36) was held in 2016.
 - **Superior General.** He is at the top of the Society, elected for life, and responsible for overseeing the entire Jesuit order globally. The current Superior General (as of 2023) is Arturo Sosa, SJ.
 - **Provinces.** The Society is divided into provinces. A province is an administrative unit within the Society of Jesus that covers a geographical area that may be the same as a country's borders, only a part of a country, or span several countries. Each province is led by a **Provincial Superior** (Provincial) appointed by the Superior General. The Provincial oversees the Jesuits and the Jesuits within his jurisdiction.
 - **Jesuit Conferences** are groupings of provinces and regions organised to promote and oversee common regional goals and initiatives. In Europe, the Jesuit Conference of European Provincials (JCEP) is located in Brussels. A president, appointed by the Superior General, oversees the conference's work.
- **Jesuit / Ignatian.** Something is said to be 'Ignatian' when grounded in Ignatius's spirituality, ethos, or worldview. Thus, some schools or religious orders describe themselves as 'Ignatian' but not 'Jesuit'. 'Jesuit' refers to that particular 'Ignatian' manifestation found in the Jesuit order (Society of Jesus) or in ministries they own and direct.
- **Spiritual Exercises.** "An organised series of activities, reflections, meditations, and other methods of prayer composed by St. Ignatius to explore the central aspects of Christian faith and especially the life of Jesus. The goal of the Spiritual Exercises is for the participant to attain spiritual freedom, clarity, and the capacity to act in accordance with God's will out of love and service. The Exercises also describe a vision of the human person and flourishing that form the basis for many insights and principles of Ignatian spirituality. While the original formulation of the Spiritual Exercises was intended to be experienced over 30 full days, few persons today undertake a full 30 day retreat. Various adaptations of the Exercises are available, ranging from 10 months of daily reflection to weekend or week-long retreats. For more information about the Spiritual Exercises and how to experience them yourself." (LMU, Ignatian Resources).
- **Secretariats of the General Curia of the Society of Jesus** are specialised offices that assist the Superior General in overseeing the Society's diverse apostolic sectors. Each Secretariat

focuses on specific areas of the Society's work, such as Secondary and Pre-secondary Education, higher education, social justice and ecology, and service of faith. These offices ensure global coordination, promote communication and foster collaboration among Jesuit ministries worldwide. Joseph Christie, S.J., serves as the Secretary for Higher Education and the President of the International Association of Jesuit Universities (IAJU).

References

Jesuit of Canada. Office of Ignatian Spirituality.

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