

## Summary

### **“The University as a source of a Reconciled Life”. Fr. General Arturo Sosa, SJ., World Meeting of Universities entrusted to the Society of Jesus, Loyola, 10 July, 2018**

The speech delivered at the World Meeting of Universities entrusted to the Society of Jesus in 2018 discusses the role of Jesuit universities, emphasising their commitment to education as a transformative force rooted in reconciliation, social justice, and promoting a dignified life for all. The university, seen as a source of life, should engage deeply with social and cultural complexities, contributing to humanising history. Sosa states, “The growing commitment of the Society of Jesus within the university’s endeavour takes on its meaning through the desire to effectively contribute to enabling a dignified full life for each and every human being, both in the present and in the future.” (Sosa, p.1, 2018).

**The intellectual apostolate is seeking Wisdom:** Sosa highlights the need for intellectual depth that is not merely academic but also apostolic, aimed at contributing to human liberation and the greater glory of God. According to Sosa, *“For the university institutions run by the Society of Jesus, it is not enough to reach the intellectual depth to develop knowledge and transmit it as an element of overall human education”* (p.4).

Sosa argues that it is necessary to endow intellectual work in universities with meaning beyond itself as a contribution to improving the world. He stresses that the *“intellectual work is apostolate when it is carried out in the open, not locked in a cabinet or within the comfort of its own certainties. When we are able to engage in a dialogue with other disciplines, allowing our position to be enhanced by other perspectives and diverse worldviews, by science and by culture. When it is not enclosed in its supposed truth. When it is experienced as a mission, as having been sent to contribute to the liberation of the world. Therefore, it is carried out as a service that does not seek the recognition or glory of people or institutions, but the greater glory of God”* (p.5).

Sosa stresses that the above description is how the intellectual apostolate involves seeking **Wisdom** as it was defined by Adolfo Nicolás, SJ., as *“a superior, comprehensive, profound and transforming kind of knowledge. It is therefore not only scientific knowledge—knowledge about something—but a kind of knowledge that leads the individual to have an attitude of constant search for the big questions and, moreover, which leads the individual to empathy, to be compassionate towards all human beings, and to be respectful of nature as a gift and, even of the Ignatian principle of seeking and finding God in all things”*<sup>1</sup>.

Accordingly, Sosa calls for universities to be spaces of discernment, creativity, and wisdom, where the search for truth is aligned with a commitment to social transformation and the

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<sup>1</sup> Adolfo Nicolás, SJ. University of Deusto, Lectio Inauguralis, 9 September, 2011.

promotion of a reconciled, just, and peaceful life. Jesuit universities aim to serve as spaces for intellectual and spiritual growth, striving for local, regional, and global social transformation. Sosa advocates for universities to play a role in addressing global challenges such as inequality, violence, and environmental degradation, as well as in promoting wisdom through intellectual depth and apostolic mission.

**Role of Education:** Sosa underscores the importance of education in cultivating a culture of peace, dialogue, and understanding among diverse social groups. He advocates for educating students as global citizens equipped to engage with cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and to contribute meaningfully to the common good. According to Sosa, the ultimate goal of a Jesuit higher education institution is to educate knowledgeable individuals deeply committed to the common good.

**In summary,** Sosa's speech calls for creative loyalty to the Jesuit educational tradition. It emphasises the need for new responses to postmodern challenges, especially those posed by globalisation and the digital revolution, while remaining true to the values that have historically defined Jesuit education. Moreover, Sosa calls for more significant investment in educational initiatives that promote peace, understanding, and collaboration between universities, governments, and civil society.

**Key themes:**

- **Theoretical Framework:** The speech establishes a theoretical foundation linking education with reconciliation, incorporating concepts of peace education, social justice, and the cultivation of critical thinking.
- **Reconciliation and Life:** Jesuit universities are seen as sources of life that contribute to reconciliation, which in turn leads to a fuller life.
- **Global and Social Transformation:** The commitment of Jesuit universities extends to local, regional, and international levels, addressing issues such as migration, violence, poverty, and environmental sustainability.
- **Intellectual Apostolate:** The intellectual work at Jesuit universities is not just about knowledge but is seen as an apostolic mission that seeks wisdom, fosters discernment, and aims to contribute to human liberation.
- **Citizenship and Globalization:** Sosa discusses the integration of reconciliation into the curriculum, advocating for environments that encourage open dialogue and educating students as global citizens who value cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and social justice.
- **Practical Implementation:**
  - The speech includes historical examples of how universities have successfully contributed to reconciliation, along with specific programs, initiatives, and

partnerships between universities and communities aimed at healing societal divisions.

- **Challenges and Limitations:**

- The document acknowledges the challenges universities face in this role, including resistance to change, political pressures, and limited resources.
- It discusses the potential limitations of educational institutions in fully promoting reconciliation without broader societal support.

By Susana Di Trolio, Spain, August, 2024.