KIRCHER Network
Jesuit Higher Education in Europe and the Near East

The Canisius Formation

Course on Identity and Mission of Jesuit Higher Education Institutions

"An invitation to a networking formation experience in Jesuit Higher Education"

KIRCHER Network
Jesuit Higher Education in Europe and the Near East

Preliminary program

THIRD EDITION

20-22 OCTOBER 2026

LOYOLA (SPAIN)

Website

Tuesday, October 20

07:15 Eucharist (for those interested)

07:30 - 08:30 BREAKFAST

08:30 Prayer

08:45 Welcome / Orientation

09:00 Trust-building activity

09:30 Time for writing one's own autobiography

10:15 - 11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:15 **Session 1. Ignatius until his arrival in Rome. Reflecting on own vocation/purpose.** José García de Castro SJ

12:00 Personal reading

13:15 Discussion with the speaker

13:45 LUNCH

15:00 **Session 2: Ignatius as General in Rome. Developing our own vocation/purpose in institutions.** Tiziano Ferraroni, SJ

15:45 Time for personal reading and reflection

16:15 Free time

16:30 COFFEE BREAK

17:00 - 17:30 Conversation with the speaker

17:45 Visti to St. Ignatius birthplace (Lidia Fioravanti)

18:30 - 18:45 Examen of the day at the Conversion Chapel

19:00 - 19:15 Visit to the Basilica

19:30 DINNER

20:30 Social

Wednesday, October 21

07:15 Eucharist (for those interested)

07:30 - 08:30 BREAKFAST

08:45 Prayer

09:00 **Session 3.1: The mission of the Society of Jesus and the contribution of higher education to it.** Pep Mària SJ and Gonzalo Villagrán SJ

09:45 Time for personal reading and reflection

10:15 - 11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 Group discussion: Reflecting on my experience at my institution

11:45 Discussion with the speaker

12:00 Free time

12:45 **Session 3.2: The Ledesma-Kolvenbach Paradigm.** Elisa Pérez Avellán

13:30 Discussion with the speaker

13:45 LUNCH

15:00 Departure from CEL by bus

16:00 - 17:15 Visit to Deusto University

17:45 Visit to the Guggenheim Museum or Bilbao and free time

18:45 Walking to the Deusto University

19:30 Dinner at Deusto University

21:00 Return to Loyola Spiritual Center by bus

Thursday, October 22

07:30 - 08:30 BREAKFAST

08:30 Prayer

08:45 Session 4: Jesuit Higher Education Networking: The Kircher Network and the International Association of Jesuit Universities
Lidia Fioravanti interviews Philip Geister, SJ; Susana Di Trolio; and Fernando Ponce León, SJ

09:30 Dialogue with the panel

09:50 Free time

10:15 - 11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 Session 5: Teaching, Research and Management in a University: Ignatian keys. Pep Mària SJ and Gonzalo Villagrán SJ

11:45 Testimonies

12:45 Time for personal reading and reflection

13:45 LUNCH

15:00 Small group discussion

16:00 Plenary

16:30 COFFEE BREAK

17:00 Evaluation of the program

17:30 Ignatian Examen of the day

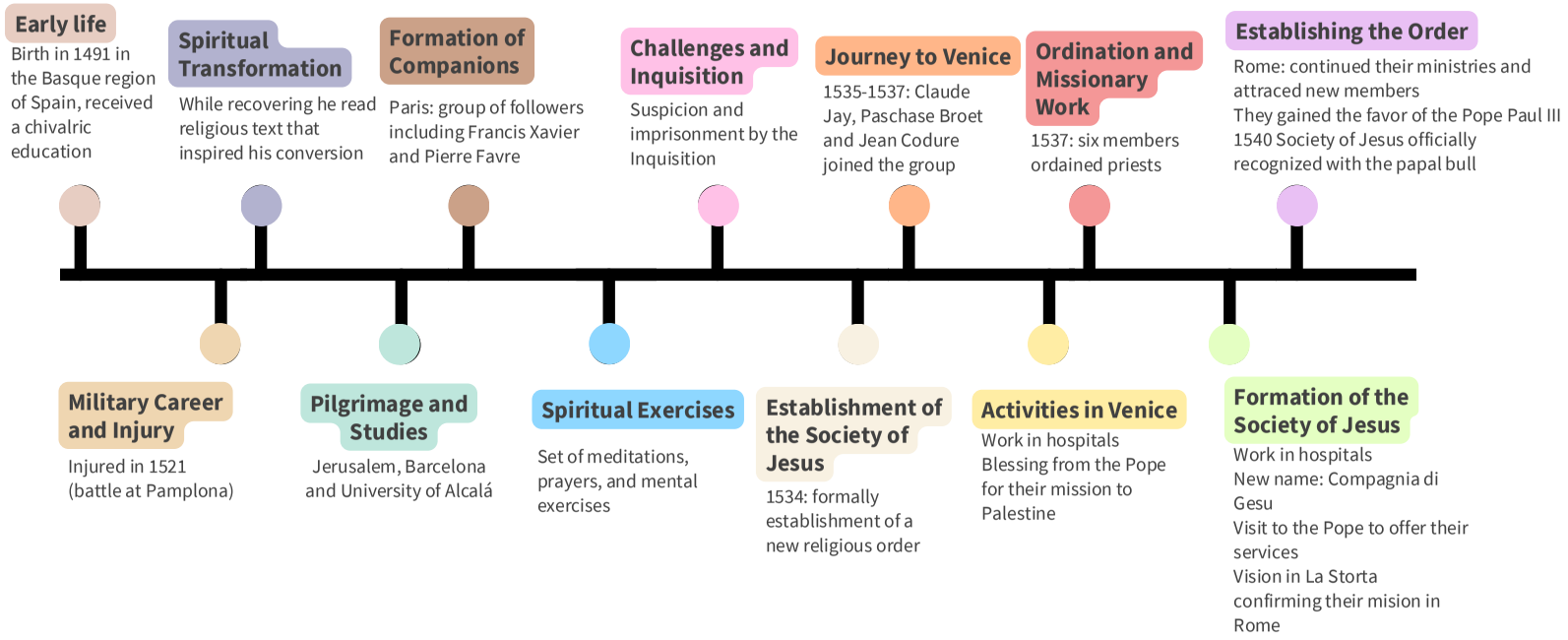
17:55 Walking to the Conversion Chapel

18:15 Eucharist at the Conversion Chapel

19:30 DINNER

20:30 Social

Summary of Chapter 1. Foundations before the Founding Of The First Jesuits by John W. O'Malley (Harvard University Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 1993)



Spiritual Excercies

PURPOSE

- Discern God's will and commit to spiritual life.
- Adaptable to different backgrounds.

INNER MOVEMENTS

CONSOLATION
Positive emotions

DESOLATION
Negative emotions

RULES FOR DISCERNMENT

- Recognize and evaluate emotions.
- Address divine vs. demonic influences.

SPIRITUAL ELECTION

Three methods

- Inspiration from God
- Emotional discernment
- Resoning (pros/con)

“In Saints or Devils Incarnate? Studies in Jesuit History” Chapter 7, O’Malley, John W.

Key ideas: St Ignatius of Loyola

Not a traditional theologian

His writings were not systematic theological treatises but practical guides—especially the Spiritual Exercises—aimed at shaping Christian life and ministry.

Approach to Formation & Leadership

Entered studies late; motivated by “helping souls”
Prioritised practical ministry and discernment
Formed companions in Paris → Society of Jesus

Core Convictions

Central purpose: helping souls
Good acts directly in human life (discernment as key to leadership)

Continuity & Change

Soldier → hermit → pilgrim → student → superior general
From personal prayer to institutional governance

Jesuit Contribution to Mission

First systematic use of "mission" as being sent for service anywhere.
Apostolic over monastic model: flexible, mobile, universal.
New asceticism: practical spirituality for ministers in the world.
Establishment of schools and universities as apostolic frontiers. A founder of a mission-oriented educational institution.



Ignatius originality: forging a new synthesis of spirituality, governance and mission.
A **practical theology**, **pastoral** and **dynamic**, oriented toward discernment , service and the transformarion of individuals and institutions

Key insights for today’s leaders

Ignatius as practical leader

- His focus was not on theological debate but mission effectiveness.
- He modelled a style of leadership that privileges discernment, collaboration, and adaptability.
- His life and writings provide tools for today's leaders to integrate the intellectual, interior, and relational dimensions of their mission.

Pastoral and Relational Theology

- Theology for Ignatius meant guiding people in prayer, decision-making, and mission.
- His letters show how he formed communities and networks for service.

Discernment as a Leadership Tool

- Ignatius trusted that God works directly in human experience.
- Discernment remains the core method for Jesuit governance.

Global Mission Orientation

- By freeing Jesuits from monastic prayer obligations, Ignatius gave them mobility.
- His global mission and correspondence illustrate networking and collaboration—core to Jesuit higher education today. This enabled schools, missions, and networks to flourish worldwide—anticipating today's Jesuit higher education ecosystem.

“Ignatius’ special *way of proceding*”. Chapter 7, O’Malley, John W.

Traditional Image of Saints (Medival Model)

Pious, austere, and focused on discipline.

Ignatius Break with Tradition

Public Relations & Fundraising

Promoted the Society’s image, wrote letters highlighting both spiritual and worldly matters, and sought benefactors for schools and churches.

Moderation & Care for the Body

Moved away from extreme penances, emphasised health, balance, and reasonable discipline.

Adoption of Humanistic Education

Prioritised classical learning (Greek and Roman texts), forming not only priests but also civic leaders and administrators.

Outcome: A New Model of Sanctity

- Practical holiness rooted in engagement with society
- Education and institutions serving the common good
- A distinctive Jesuit way of proceeding that blended spirituality, humanism, and institutional leadership

“The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education”. Santa Clara University, October 2000. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.

Service of Faith

Rooted in the Jesuit tradition since 1540, **focusing on proposing Jesus' message in a spirit of love rather than proselytizing**. The text emphasizes that this service is inspired by Christ's "diakonia fidei," or his total service to God.

Sometimes, faith and justice were treated as **separate** or even **rival tracks of ministry**

Promotion of Justice

It is more complex and often misunderstood. It requires an **action-oriented commitment** to the poor to foster structural and attitudinal changes for a more just society

How to integrate these two dimensions more effectively?

Ministry of Education: Ideal characteristics of Jesuit Higher Education, **three key dimensions**

WHO THE STUDENT BECOMEs?

Formation and learning
Kolvenbach stresses the need for Jesuit education to **adapt to modern challenges**, emphasizing solidarity and social responsibility as core values. This approach aims to **prepare students not just for professional success, but to become individuals who contribute positively to society**.

WHAT THE FACULTY DOES?

Research and teaching
Central role of faculty guiding students towards becoming whole persons committed to solidarity and social responsibility. Faculty must **engage in rigorous, interdisciplinary research that connects academic knowledge to real-world issues**, particularly those affecting the poor and marginalized

HOW THE UNIVERSITES PROCEED?

How the universities operate and impact society
Their mission extends beyond student formation and the work of the faculty to include how the universities operate and impact society.
Jesuit universities are **called to be active social forces**, using their influence and intelligence **to transform the world in line with Gospel values**, making them distinct from other academic institutions.

“Renewing Our Commitment to a Faith that does Justice”. Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, Rome General Curia, 2005.

Key points

1: Spiritual Roots: grounding the mission to serve the poor in solid spiritual roots. Cirtical sources of these roots are: **Scripture**, **Contemplation of Jesus**, **Chucrch’s Social Teaching** and **Living with the Poor**.

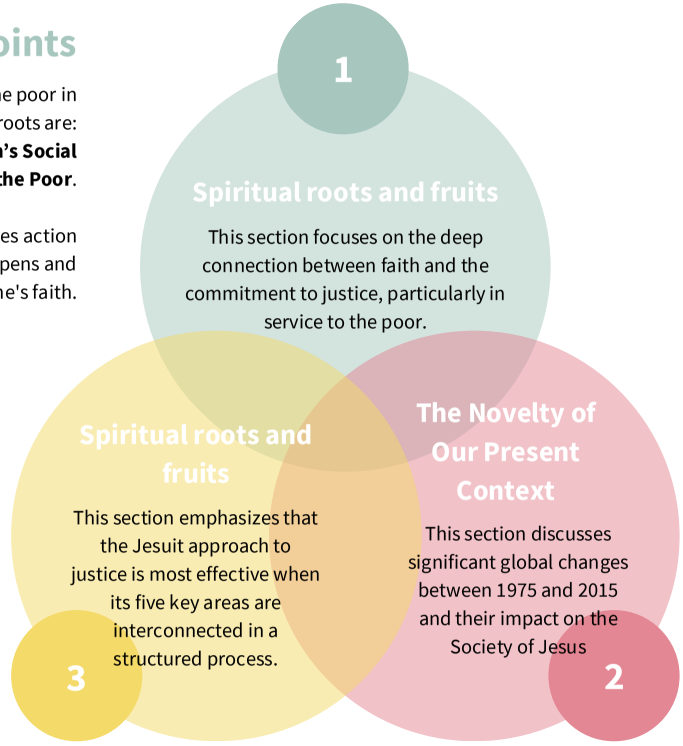
2: Dialogue Between Faith and Justice: faith motivates action for justice, and in turn, working for justice deepens and enriches one's faith.

Key points

Key areas of Faith-Justice Process
1: Accompaniment
2: Service
3: Research/reflection
4: Consciousness-raising
5: Structural transformation

Key phases of the process





Key points

1: New International Realities
- Decolonization and New Nations
- Cold War Dynamics
- Shift in Western Economic Policies
- Chica Economic Rise (1979)
- Fall of the Berlin Wall (1989)
- Environmental degradation

2: New characteristics of the Society
- Global Awareness and Unity
- Demographic Shifts
- Mission Challenges and Collaboration
- Social Sector Dynamics

3: Institutional challenges for the Society
- Apostolic Works: to ensure the institutions' Jesuit identity and alignment with the Society's mission.
- Provinces: strengthening the social sector, planning and evaluating work, sense of unity and co-responsibility.
- Universal Society:
  - Restructuring provinces.
  - Developing networks for interprovincial cooperation.
  - Enhancing collaboration among provinces.
  - Ensuring the Society operates as a unified global body.

Four Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus



Showing the way to God

Show the way to God through the Spiritual Excercises and discernment



Walking with the excluded

Walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated in a mission of reconciliation and justice



Journeying with Youth

Accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future



Caring for our Common Home

Collaborate with Gospel depth, for the protection & renewal of God's Creation

BOSTON COLLEGE - Journey into Adulthood: Understanding Student Formation"

Emerging adulthood

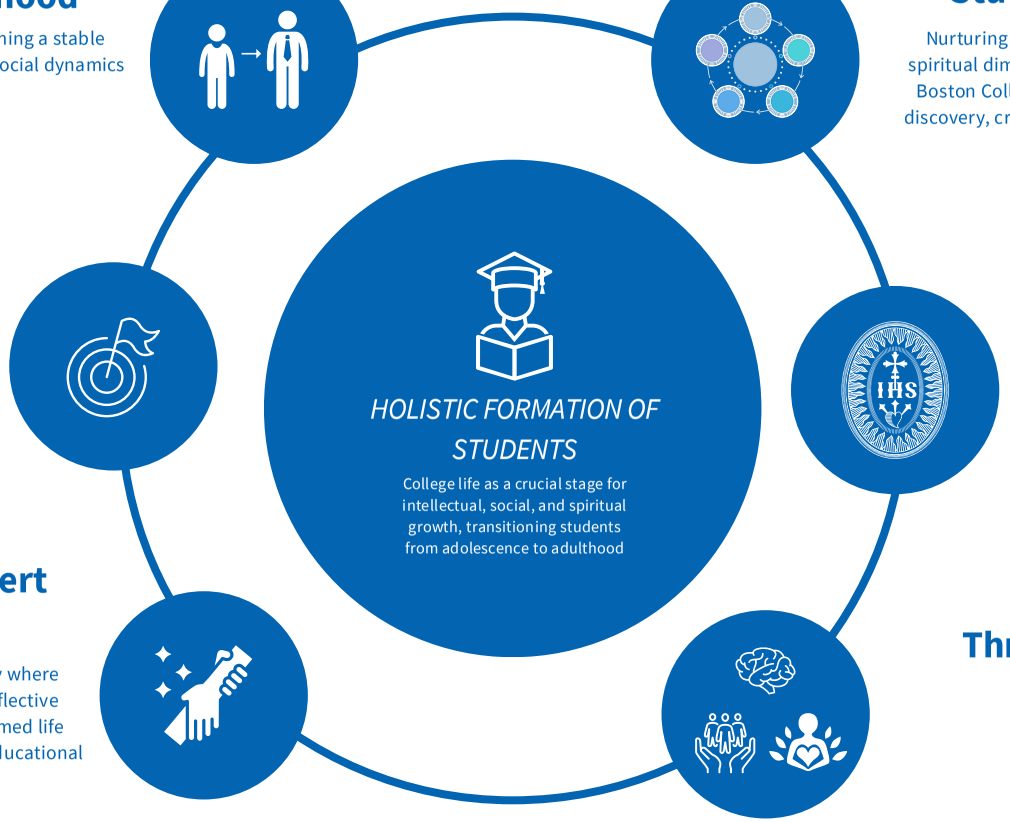
Intellectual transformation, forming a stable identity, and navigating complex social dynamics and relationships.

Student Formation

Nurturing students' intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated approach. Boston College aims to guide students in self-discovery, critical thinking, and decision-making processes.

Challenges in Higher Education

It calls for a more integrated approach, where faculty and administrators collaborate to support students' holistic growth.



Jesuit Educational Tradition

It encourages students' formation through academic study, social engagement, and spiritual reflection, aligning with Ignatian principles.

Mentoring and Expert Conversations

Paper calls for a mentoring community where faculty and staff engage students in reflective conversations to help them make informed life decisions, fostering a more meaningful educational experience.

Three Dimension of Formation

Intellectual
Social
Spiritual

"Research in a University of the Society of Jesus from the Perspective of the Mission"

Julio Martínez SJ.

KEY CONCEPTS: RESEARCH · JESUIT UNIVERSITY · MISSION

How Jesuit Educational Institutions integrate their mission with academic research?

Preambles for Effecive Research

- SEARCH FOR TRUTH
- MOTIVATION AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT
- NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURES

Internal goods of university activity

- TEACHING-LEARNING
  - Comprehensive Development
  - Jesuit approach to education
  - Intellectual Rigour and Creativity
- RESEARCH
  - Advancing Knowledge
  - Impacting Society
  - Publishing and Scrutiny
  - Academic Freedom and Rigour
- COMPLEMENTARY OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH
  - Jesuit universities in Spain must balance their strong teaching reputation with enhanced research efforts to effectively serve faith and justice.

BALANCING RESEARCH, TEACHING AND SERVICE

Importance of **balancing research**, **teaching**, and **service to society while stressing the autonomy, integrity, and honesty inherent to Jesuit universities**. Emphasis is placed on the **practical application of research for societal transformation**, with active involvement from relevant stakeholders.

ETHICAL QUALITY STANDARDS IN RESEARCH

Imperative of upholding **rigorous ethical** and **quality standards** in research endeavours.

SETTING RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Necessity of setting **research priorities** in light of **resource constraints**. The document advocates for a research approach in Jesuit universities that **combines** the noble ideals of the **Ignatian mission** with the **pragmatic** need to respond to society's challenges.

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"Address to the Georgetown University Board of Directors Given at the Pontifical Gregorian University (Rome – 10 May 2007). Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J. Superior General of the Society of Jesus"

Modern Interpretation of Jesuit Education

- Practical knowledge adn skills
- Value-based education for good citizenship and leadership
- The celebration of human intellectual achievement
- A firm grounding in a Christian understanding of the person

↓

Simplified in 4 Latin words:

Utilitas	Justitia	Huamanitas	Fides
Practical Purpose	Justice	Humanistic Tradition	Faith Dimension

Kolvenbach's critical ideas on the core principles of Jesuit education and their modern applications

Historical Context and Foundational Principles

- Jesuit university's mission and identity **deeply rooted in the principles established by St. Ignatius of Loyola**
- **Global mission**: to defend and **propagate** the **faith** and to train **wise** and **qualified leaders** for the Church and society
- Vision articulated by four essential purposes: practical benefits, contributions to governance and law, enhancement of human rationality, and the guidance of individuals toward their ultimate end through religion

Leadership and Patnership

Effective leadership involves continuous evaluation and discernment to ensure the university's mission aligns with Ignatian values. Collaboration between Jesuits and laypersons is crucial, with mutual respect enhancing the educational mission.

Conclusion

- **Identity** of Jesuit higher education institutions **rooted in St.Ignatius of Loyola and Diego Ledesma principles**
- Institutions must **balance practical education, justice, humanistic values, and the spiritual dimension**
- Through effective leadership and collaborative partnerships, continue **forming individuals who are knowledgeable, shilled, and deeply committed to serving humanity and promoting justice**

"The Call to Leadership of a Jesuit University: Context, Charism, Partnership Board Chairs, Presidents, and Provincials, Chicago, April 6 2024. Arturo Sosa, S.J. Superior General of the Society of Jesus"

Fr. General Arturo Sosa's speech

Context and challenges

The world in which we live our mission

Global Issues
International conflicts, climate change, technological advancements, and the collapse of dialogue and democracy.

Higher Education Challenges
Demographic changes, financial viability, and cultural shifts affecting the value perception of Jesuit education in North America.

Jesuit Charism

Integrate the four Universal Apostolic Preferences into Jesuit universities:
Sharing the pathway to God, walking with the excluded, accompanying young people in constructing a hope-filled future, collaborating in care for our common home

Partnership in Mission

Vocation and Identity:
Choosing and reafforming Jesuit identity through formation and discenment and examinations of mission priorities

Collaboration:
Strong relationships between universities and Jesuit provincials, fostering a network

Mission Priorities Exam (MPE)
This process aims to discern the next steps for strenghtening Jesuit identity and mission

Netwrok Strength
Importance of viewing Jesuit universities as parts of a network, leveraging collective strength for greater service

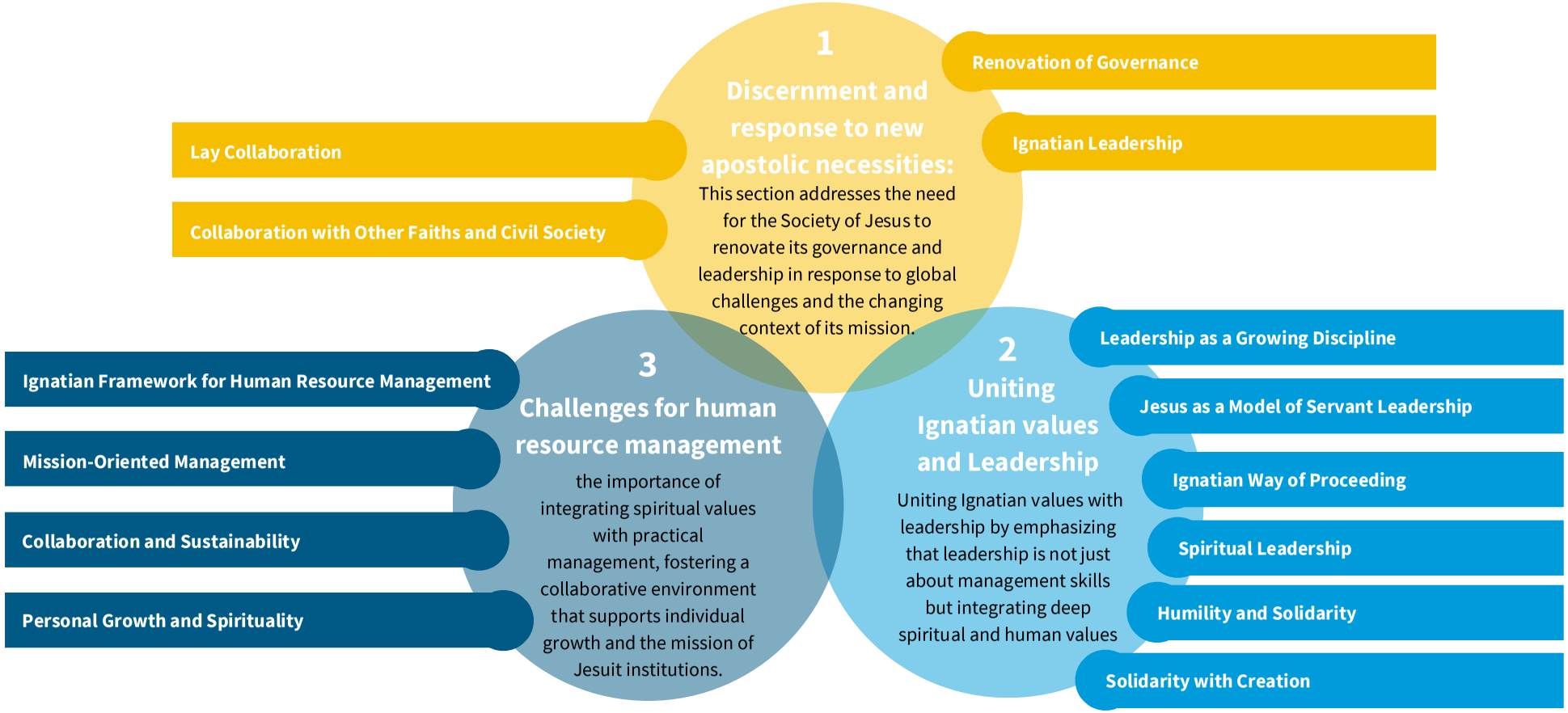
Hope and Resilience

Fr. Sosa calls for leveraging the international network of Jesuit institutions to strengthen North American universities and encourages a collaborative approach to leadership that continuously chooses and reaffirms their Jesuit identity.

Ignatian Leadership and Human Resource Management

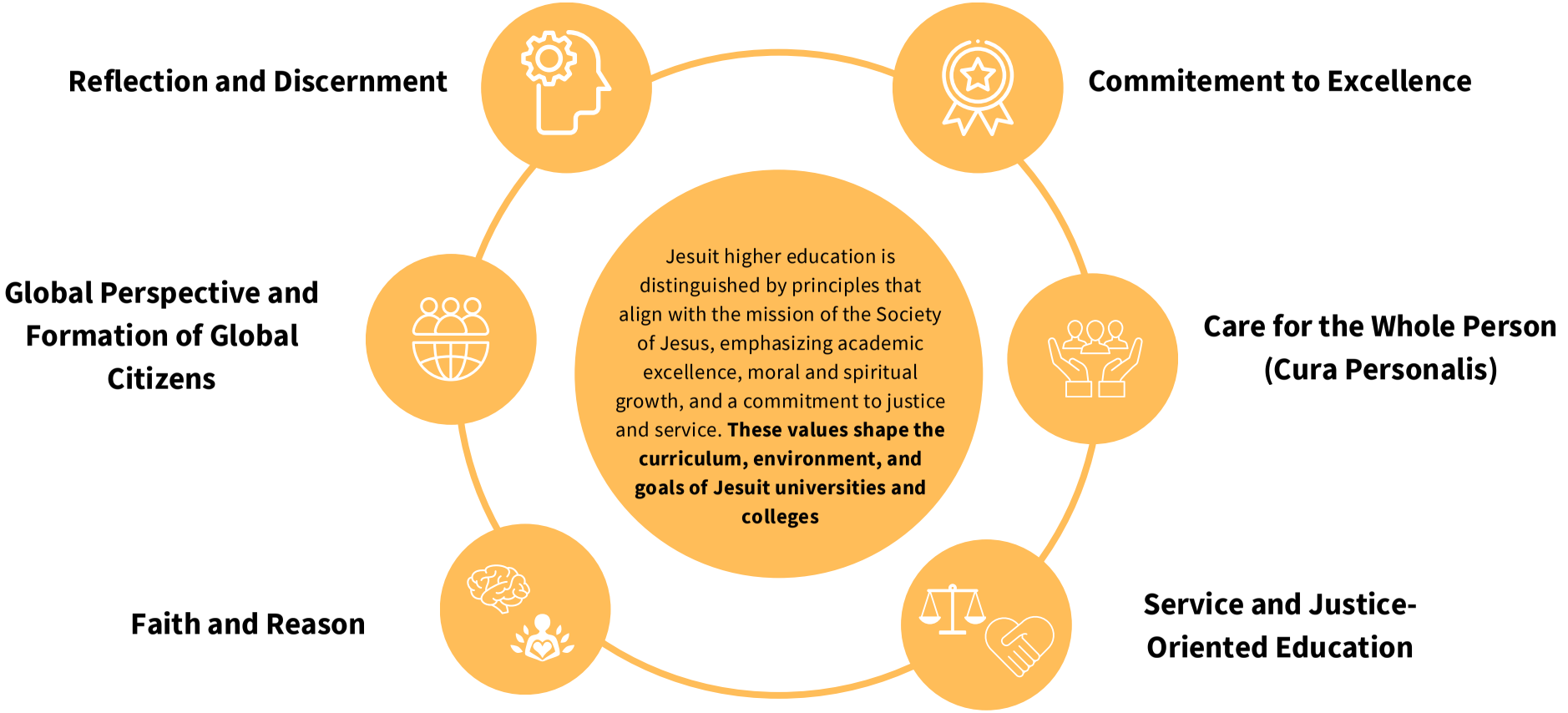
José María Guibert, SJ

The articles reflects about the challenges faced by institutions of the Society of Jesus. It is structured in three parts:



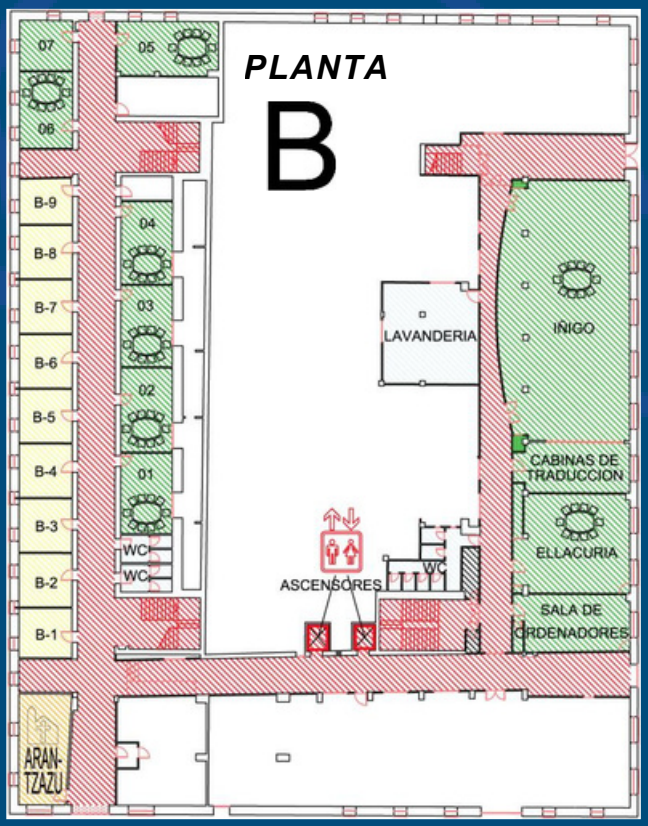
A summary of the Main Characteristics of Jesuit Higher Education

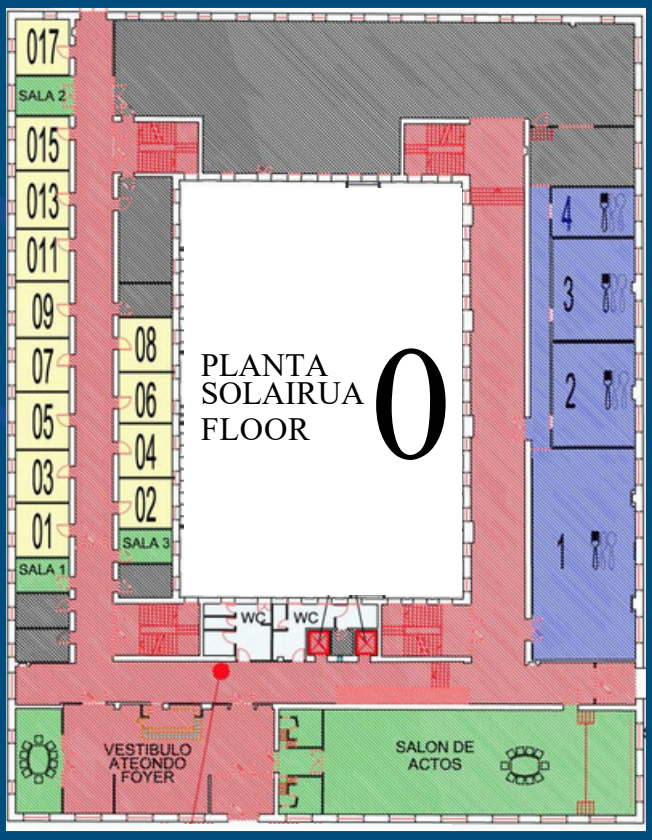
Susana Di Trolio, PhD

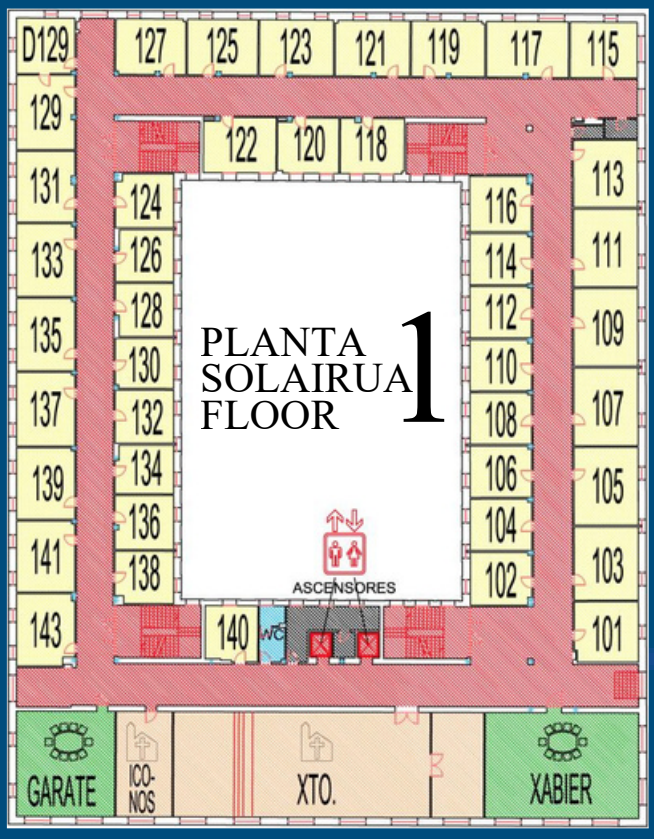


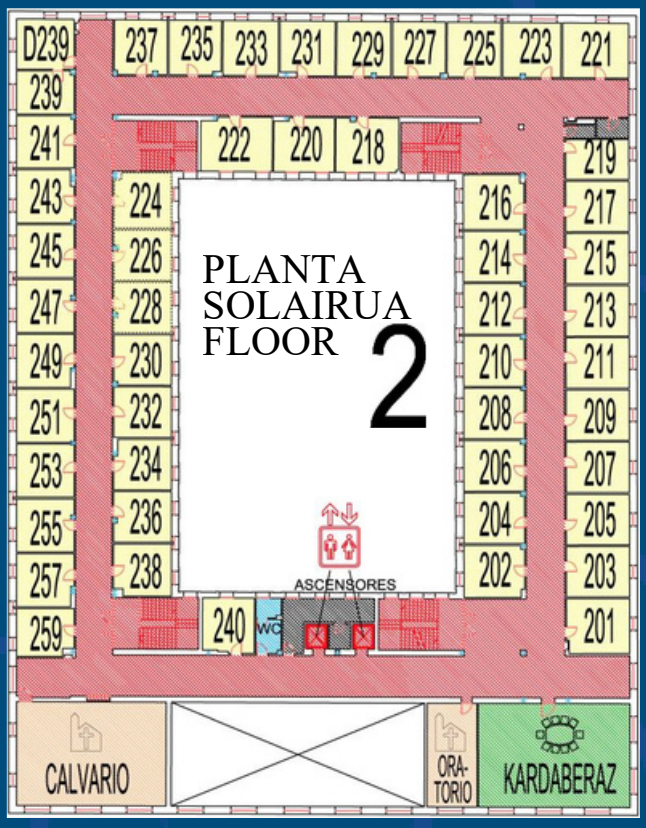
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SPIRITUAL CENTER









1 Albergue – Aterpetxea
Youth Hostel – Auberge

2 Estatua de San Ignacio
San Inazioren irudia
Statue of Saint Ignatius
Statue de Saint Ignace

3 Parque privado – Parke pribatua
Private park – Parc privé

4 Aparcamiento para autobuses
Autobus-aparkalekua
Bus parking
Parking pour autocars

5 Aseos – Komunak
Toilets – Toilettes

6 Acceso minusválidos
Elbarrientzako sarbidea
Disabled access
Accès handicapés

7 Biblioteca – Liburutegia
Library – Bibliothèque

8 Basílica – Basilika
Basilica – Basilique

9 Casa Natal de San Ignacio
San Inazioren Jaiotetxea
Birthplace of Saint Ignatius
Maison natale de Saint Ignace

10 Acogida de visitantes
Bisitarien harrera
Welcoming visitors
Accueil des visiteurs

11 Aparcamiento – Aparkalekua – Parking

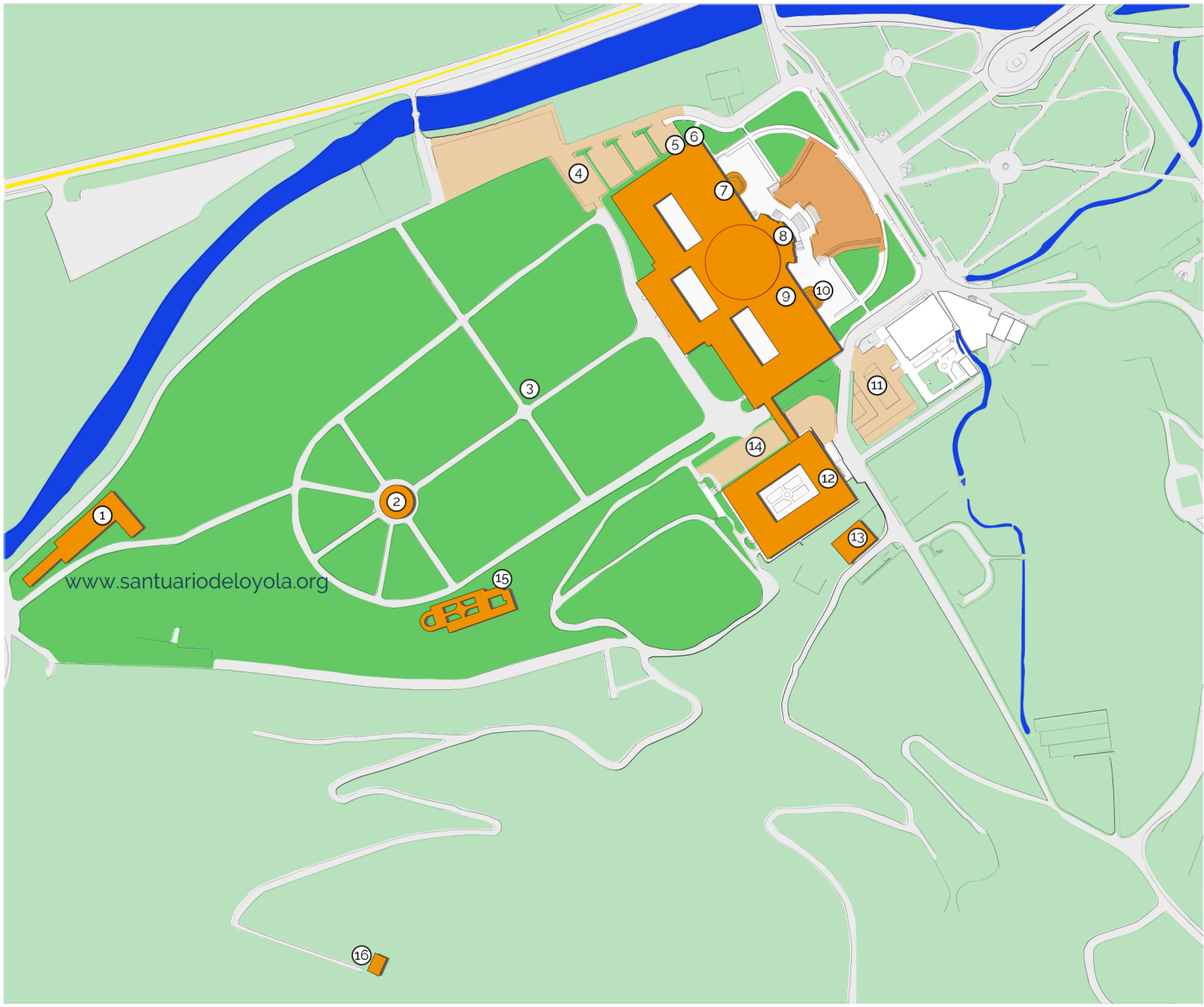
12 Centro de Espiritualidad
Gogartetxea
Retreat House
Centre Spirituel

13 Casa natal del Hno. Gárate
Garate Dohatsuaren Jaiotetxea
Birthplace of Bro. Garate
Maison Natale du F. Garate

14 Aparcamiento – Aparkalekua – Parking

15 Cementerio de Jesuitas
Jesuiten hilerria
Jesuit cemetery
Cimetière des Jésuites

16 www.santuariodeloyola.org



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