JESUIT SCHOOLS

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education

An abridged version

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education
– An Abridged Version
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The full text of *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) is available in print or online from the Jesuit Institute.

Ignatian Pedagogy (1993) is also available from the Jesuit Institute, in full text and abridged versions.

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Introduction

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education is the result of a long process of reflection and discussion in the 1970s and 80s around questions of identity and mission in contemporary Jesuit schools. Schools around the world contributed to this debate and the document has, since its publication in 1986, become the foundational text of Jesuit education worldwide.

The *Characteristics* document returns to the roots of the Jesuit tradition which is to be found in the life of St Ignatius. Based on Ignatius' own vision of what it is to be human (itself drawn from encounter with Christ in the gospels), the *Characteristics* sets out what a school needs to be and do if it to be true to its Ignatian identity and fulfil its Jesuit mission.

Further work was done on a characteristically Jesuit approach to teaching and learning and this was published as a second document, *Ignatian Pedagogy*, in 1993.

Writing in the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus (1540), St Ignatius states that the aim of Jesuit schools is 'improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of God and the common good'. Just as the *Ratio Studiorum* put flesh on the bones of this sparse statement for generations of Jesuit educators from its publication in 1599 to the restoration of the Society and it schools in the 19th century, so *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* offers a vision of Jesuit education for our own times.

A distinctive spirit still marks any school which can truly be called Jesuit. This distinctive spirit can be discovered through reflection on the lived experience of Ignatius, on the ways in which that lived experience was shared with others, on the ways in which Ignatius himself applied his vision to education, and on the ways in which this vision has been developed and applied to education in the course of history, including our present times. A common spirit lies behind pedagogy, curriculum and school life, even though these may differ greatly from those of previous centuries, and in detail from country to country. (8)

This document will try to provide a vision or an inspiration that can make the day-to-day struggle of those involved in education have greater meaning and bear greater fruit. It is a resource for reflection and study rather than a finished work. (17/19)

The vision of Jesuit education

Jesuit education affirms the radical goodness of the world 'charged with the grandeur of God', and it regards every element of creation as worthy of study and contemplation, capable of endless exploration. Education in a Jesuit school tries to create a sense of wonder and mystery in learning about God's creation. (23/24)

God is especially revealed in the mystery of the human person, 'created in the image and likeness of God.' **Jesuit education, therefore, probes the**

meaning of human life and is concerned with the total formation of each student as an individual personally loved by God. (25)

To all, whatever their beliefs, **Christ is proposed as the model of human life.** Everyone can draw inspiration and learn about commitment from the life and teaching of Jesus, who witnesses to the love and forgiveness of God, lives in solidarity with all who suffer, and pours out his life in the service of others. (61)

For Christian members of the educational community to be Christian is to follow Christ and be like him, to share and promote his values and way of life as far as possible. (62)

Jesuit education is preparation for life, which is itself a preparation for eternal life. **Jesuit education is also concerned with the ways in which students will make use of their formation in the service of others** 'for the praise, reverence, and service of God'. The success of Jesuit education is measured not in terms of academic performance of students or professional competence of teachers, but rather in terms of this quality of life. (37)

The curriculum is centred on the person rather than on the material to be covered. Each student is allowed to develop and to accomplish objectives at a pace suited to individual ability and the characteristics of his or her own personality. (42)

The educational community, based on the example of Christ, and reflecting on today's culture in the light of the teachings of the church, will promote:

- a **spiritual vision of the world** in the face of materialism;
- a **concern for others** in the face of egoism;
- **simplicity** in the face of consumerism;
- the **cause of the poor** in the face of social injustice. (96)

In Jesuit education, the criterion of excellence is applied to all areas of school life. School policies are such that they create an ambience or climate which will promote excellence. The pursuit of academic excellence is appropriate in a Jesuit school, but only within the larger context of human excellence. (107/113)

A traditional aim of Jesuit education has been to train leaders. **Today, our aim is to educate leaders in service.** The Jesuit school will help students to develop the qualities of mind and heart that will enable them, in whatever station they assume in life, to work with others for the good of all in the service of the Kingdom of God. (110)

Jesuit education tries to instill a joy in learning and a desire to learn that will remain beyond the days in school. Education is a life-long process. (46)

The Jesuit school

The Jesuit school is a community of faith, and expresses this faith through appropriate religious or spiritual celebrations. For Catholics, the Eucharist is the celebration of a faith community centred on Christ. All adult members of the community are encouraged to participate in these celebrations, not only as an expression of their own faith, but also to give witness to the purposes of the school. (68)

Jesuit schools are a part of the apostolic mission of the church in building the Kingdom of God. Jesuit education is an instrument to help students know God better and respond to him. The school is available for use in response to emerging needs of the people of God. The aim of Jesuit education is the formation of principled, value-oriented persons for others after the example of Jesus Christ. Teaching in a Jesuit school, therefore, is a ministry. (93)

The purposes and ideals of members of other faiths can be in harmony with the goals of the Jesuit school and they can commit themselves to these goals for the development of the students and for the betterment of society. (94)

Making the *Spiritual Exercises* is encouraged as a way of knowing Christ better, loving him, and following him. The *Exercises* will also help the members of the educational community understand the vision of Ignatius, which is the spirit that lies behind Jesuit education. They can be made in various ways, adapted to the time and the abilities of each person, whether adult or student. (65)

Every Jesuit school does what it can to make Jesuit education available to everyone, including the poor and the disadvantaged. (86)

Jesuit schools form a network, joined by a common vision with common goals. Teachers and administrators in Jesuit schools share ideas and experiences in order to discover the principles and methods that will provide the most effective implementation of this common vision. (148)

The policies and programmes of a Jesuit school give concrete witness to the faith that does justice. They give a counter-witness to the values of the consumer society. School policy and school life encourage mutual respect; they promote the human dignity and human rights of each person, adult and young, in the educational community. (79)

As part of its service of the church, a Jesuit school will serve the local civil and religious community and co-operate with the local bishop. For greater effectiveness in its service of human needs, a Jesuit school works in cooperation with other Jesuit apostolic works, with local parishes and other Catholic and civic agencies, and with centres for the social apostolate. All members of the educational community are active in service as members of the local community and of their churches. (97/98/99)

All members of the educational community are concerned with one another and learn from one another. (44)

Intellectual formation

Intellectual formation includes mastery of basic humanistic and scientific disciplines through careful and sustained study that is based on competent and well-motivated teaching. **This intellectual formation includes a growing ability to reason reflectively, logically, and critically.** In a Jesuit school, a framework of inquiry in which a value system is acquired through a process of wrestling with competing points of view is legitimate. (26/53)

Jesuit education also includes a careful and critical study of technology together with the physical and social sciences. (27)

In Jesuit education, particular care is given to the development of the imaginative, the affective, and the creative dimensions of each student in all courses of study. These dimensions are essential in the formation of the whole person and are a way to discover God as he reveals himself through beauty. For these same reasons, Jesuit education includes opportunities for all students to come to an appreciation of literature, aesthetics, music and the fine arts. (28)

Jesuit schools of the 17th century were noted for their development of communication skills or eloquence, achieved through an emphasis on essays, drama, speeches, debates, etc. In today's world, **Jesuit education develops traditional skills in speaking and writing and also with modern means of communication.** Jesuit education enables students to understand and critically evaluate the influence of mass media. Through proper education, these instruments of modern life can help men and women to become more, rather than less, human. (29/30)

Jesuit education includes a well-developed programme of sports and physical education. In addition to strengthening the body, sports programmes help young men and women learn to accept both success and failure graciously; they become aware of the need to cooperate with others, using the best qualities of each individual to contribute to the greater advantage of the whole group. (31)

All of these distinct aspects of the educational process have **one common purpose: the formation of the balanced person with a personally developed philosophy of life that includes ongoing habits of reflection.** To assist in this formation, individual courses are related to one another within a well-planned educational programme. Every aspect of school life contributes to the total development of each individual person. (32)

Cura personalis

Cura personalis (care for the individual) **remains a basic characteristic of Jesuit education.** (43)

Jesuit education recognizes the developmental stages of intellectual, affective and spiritual growth and assists each student to mature gradually in all these areas. Thus, **the curriculum is centred on the person rather than on the material to be covered.** Each student is allowed to develop and to accomplish objectives at a pace suited to individual ability and the characteristics of his or her own personality. (42)

Personal development through the training of character and will, overcoming selfishness and lack of concern for others and the other effects of sinfulness, and developing the freedom that respects others and accepts responsibility, is all aided by the necessary and fair regulations of the school; these include a fair system of discipline. Of equal importance is the self-discipline expected of each student, manifested in intellectual rigour, persevering application to serious study, and conduct toward others that recognizes the human dignity of each individual. (52)

Concern for total human development emphasizes the happiness in life that is the result of a responsible use of freedom, but it also recognizes the reality of sin and its effects in the life of each person. It therefore tries to encourage each student to confront this obstacle to freedom honestly, in a growing self-awareness and a growing realization that forgiveness and conversion are possible through the redemptive love and the help of God. (54)

Students are helped in their efforts to discover prejudice and limited vision on the one hand and to evaluate relative goods and competing values on the other. (55)

While they accept their gifts and develop them, students also accept limitations and overcome these as far as possible. (56)

Religious formation

Jesuit education is committed to the religious development of all students. They will receive instruction in the basic truths of their faith. (101)

For Christian students, this includes a knowledge of the Scriptures, especially the Gospels. For Catholic students, Jesuit education offers a knowledge of and love for the church and the sacraments, as privileged opportunities to encounter Christ. **In ways proper to a school, concrete experiences of church life are available to all students**, through participation in church projects and activities. (101/102/103)

Since every programme in the school can be a means to discover God, all teachers share a responsibility for the religious dimension of the school. However, the integrating factor in the process of discovering God and understanding the true meaning of human life is theology as presented through religious and spiritual education. **Religious and spiritual formation is**

integral to Jesuit education; it is not added to, or separate from, the educational process. (34)

Jesuit education tries to foster the creative Spirit at work in each person, offering the opportunity for a faith response to God while at the same time recognizing that faith cannot be imposed. In all classes, in the climate of the school, and most especially in formal classes in religion, **every attempt is made to present the possibility of a faith response to God as something truly human and not opposed to reason**, as well as to develop those values which are able to resist the secularism of modern life. (35)

Every aspect of the educational process can lead, ultimately, to worship of God present and at work in creation, and to reverence for creation as it mirrors God. **Worship and reverence are parts of the life of the school community; they are expressed in personal prayer and in appropriate community forms of worship.** The intellectual, the imaginative and affective, the creative, and the physical development of each student, along with the sense of wonder that is an aspect of every course, and of the life of the school as a whole, can all help students to discover God, active in history and in creation. (36)

[**School chaplaincy**] **is a dimension of *cura personalis* that enables the seeds of religious faith and religious commitment to grow in each individual** by enabling each one to recognize and respond to the message of divine love: seeing God at work in his or her life, in the lives of others, and in all of creation; then responding to this discovery through a commitment to service within the community. [**Chaplaincy programmes**] **are available to all members of the educational community in order to awaken and strengthen this personal faith commitment.** (63)

[**Chaplaincy**] **is centred on Christ present in the Christian community. Students encounter the person of Christ as friend and guide; they come to know him** through Scripture, sacraments, personal and communal prayer, in play and work, in other persons; they are led to the service of others in imitation of Christ the 'man for others'. (64)

Making the *Spiritual Exercises* is encouraged as a way of knowing Christ better, loving him, and following him. They can be made in various ways, adapted to the abilities of each person. (65)

The Jesuit school encourages and assists each student to respond to his or her own personal call from God, a vocation of service in personal and professional life, whether in marriage, religious or priestly life, or a single life. (66)

Prayer is an expression of faith and an effective way toward establishing the personal relationship with God that leads to a commitment to serve others. **Jesuit education offers a progressive initiation to prayer**, following the example of Christ, who prayed regularly to his Father. All are encouraged to praise and thank God in prayer, to pray for one another within the school community, and to ask God's help in meeting the needs of the larger human community. (67)

The faith relationship with God is communal as well as personal; the educational community in a Jesuit school is united by bonds that are more than merely human: it is a community of faith, and expresses this faith through appropriate religious or spiritual celebrations. For Catholics, **the Eucharist is the celebration of a faith community centred on Christ.** (68)

Catholic members of the educational community receive and celebrate the loving forgiveness of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Depending on local circumstances, the Jesuit school prepares students, and also adults, for the reception of other sacraments. (69)

The obedience of Christ to his Father's will led him to give of himself totally in the service of others; a relationship to God necessarily involves a relationship to other persons. **Jesuit education promotes a faith that is centred on the historical person of Christ, which therefore leads to a commitment to imitate him as the 'man for others'.** (70)

Horizons and perspectives

The concern of Jesuit education is preparation for life, which is itself a preparation for eternal life. Formation of the individual is not an abstract end. **Jesuit education is also concerned with the ways in which students will make use of their formation within the human community, in the service of others** 'for the praise, reverence, and service of God.' (37)

As part of its service of the church, a Jesuit school will serve the local civil and religious community. For greater effectiveness in its service of human needs, a Jesuit school works in cooperation with other Jesuit apostolic works, with local parishes and other Catholic and civic agencies, and with centres for the social apostolate. All members of the educational community are active in service as members of the local community and of their churches. (97/98/99)

Since the truly human is found only in relationships with others that include attitudes of respect, love, and service, Jesuit education stresses and assists in developing the role of each individual as a member of the human community. Students, teachers, and all members of the educational community are encouraged to build a solidarity with others that transcends race, culture or religion. **In a Jesuit school, the atmosphere is one in which all can live and work together in understanding and love**, with respect for all men and women as children of God. (33)

Teachers in a Jesuit school

The quality of the relationship between the guide of the *Spiritual Exercises* and the person making them is the model for the relationship between teacher and student. Like the guide of the *Exercises*, **the teacher is at the service of the students, alert to detect special gifts or special difficulties, personally concerned, and assisting in the development of the inner potential of each individual student.** (155)

Teachers are more than academic guides. They are involved in the lives of the students, taking a personal interest in the intellectual, affective, moral and spiritual development of every student, helping each one to develop a sense of self-worth and to become a responsible individual within the community. While they respect the privacy of students, they are ready to listen to their cares and concerns about the meaning of life, to share their joys and sorrows, to help them with personal growth and interpersonal relationships. In these and other ways, the adult members of the educational community guide students in their development of a set of values leading to life decisions that go beyond self and that include a concern for the needs of others. **They try to live in a way that offers an example to the students, and they are willing to share their own life experiences.** *Cura personalis* (care for the individual person) remains a basic characteristic of Jesuit education. (43)

The task of the teacher is to help each student to become an independent learner, to assume the responsibility for his or her own education. (45)

Teachers assist students in this growth by being ready to challenge them, helping students to reflect on personal experiences. (56)

All teachers share a responsibility for the religious dimension of the school since God can be found in all things. (34)

Teachers try to become more conscious of the faith that does justice, so that they can provide students with the intellectual, moral and spiritual formation that will enable them to make a commitment to service, that will make them 'agents of change'. (78)

The Jesuit school encourages personal and professional development by providing staff development programmes in every school and, as far as possible, providing the necessary time and financial assistance for more extended training and formation. (152)

Lay people need to have an understanding of Ignatian spirituality, of Jesuit educational history and traditions, and Jesuit life. The Jesuit school provides programmes to encourage a growing awareness and understanding of the aims of Jesuit education. (153)

An educator in the Jesuit tradition is encouraged to exercise great freedom and imagination in the choice of teaching techniques, pedagogical methods, etc. (145)

The adult members of the educational community witness to excellence by joining growth in professional competence to growth in dedication. (114)

In a Jesuit school, there is a willingness on the part of both lay people and Jesuits to assume appropriate responsibilities: to work together in leadership and in service. **Efforts are made to achieve a true union of minds and hearts and to work together as a single apostolic body in the formation of students.** There is, therefore, a sharing of vision, purpose, and apostolic effort,

and a willingness to discuss hopes, aspirations and experiences, successes and failures. (119/123)

As far as possible, people chosen to join the educational community in a Jesuit school will be men and women capable of understanding its distinctive nature and of contributing to the implementation of characteristics that result from the Ignatian vision. (122)

Pupils in a Jesuit school

Growth in the maturity and independence that are necessary for growth in freedom depends on the active participation of students rather than passive reception. (45)

Jesuit education is committed to the religious development of all students. They will receive instruction in the basic truths of their faith. Concrete experiences of church life are available to all students, through participation in church projects and activities. (101/103)

The Jesuit school encourages and assists each student to respond to his or her own personal call from God, a vocation of service in personal and professional life. (66)

Jesuit education includes formation in values and attitudes. Jesuit education takes place in a moral context where knowledge is joined to virtue. Jesuit education includes personal development through the training of character. (51/52)

In a Jesuit school, pupils are encouraged to develop a value system acquired through a process of wrestling with competing points of view. Students are helped in their efforts to discover prejudice and limited vision on the one hand and to evaluate relative goods and competing values on the other. While they accept their gifts and develop them, students also accept limitations and overcome these as far as possible. (53/55/56)

Jesuit education tries to develop in students an ability to know reality and to evaluate it critically. This awareness includes a realization that persons and structures can change, together with a commitment to work for those changes in a way that will help to build more just human structures. (58)

The Jesuit school is centred on Christ present in the Christian community. Students encounter the person of Christ as friend and guide; they come to know him through Scripture, sacraments, personal and communal prayer, in play and work, in other persons; they are led to the service of others in imitation of Christ the 'man for others'. (64)

'Love is shown in deeds.' The free human response of love to the redeeming love of God is shown in an active life of service. Jesuit education assists in the formation of men and women who will put their beliefs and attitudes into practice throughout their lives. (73)

The decisive action called for today is the faith that does justice. The Jesuit school provides students with opportunities for contact with the world of injustice, with the poor and for service to

them, both in the school and in outside service projects. To be educational, this contact is joined to reflection – an analysis of the causes of poverty. (74/80/89/90)

Jesuit education helps students to realize that talents are gifts to be developed, not for self-satisfaction or self-gain, but rather, with the help of God, for the good of the human community. **Today our prime educational objective must be to form 'men and women for others'.** (82)

The *magis* (the 'more') is it the fullest possible development of each person's individual capacities at each stage of life, joined to the willingness to continue this development throughout life and the motivation to use those developed gifts for others. (108/109)

Those who graduate from our schools should have acquired, in ways proportional to their age and maturity, a way of life that is a proclamation of the charity of Christ, of the faith that comes from him and leads back to him, and of the justice which he announced. (165)

Parents

Teachers in a Jesuit school cooperate closely with parents, who are also members of the educational community. There is frequent communication. Parents are offered support and opportunities for growth in exercising their role as parents, and they are also offered opportunities to participate in advisory councils. In these and other ways, **parents are helped to fulfill their right and responsibility as educators in the home and family**, and they in turn contribute to the work of education going on in the school. (131)

As far as possible, parents understand, value and accept the Ignatian world view that characterizes the Jesuit school. The school provides opportunities by which parents can become more familiar with this worldview and its applications to education. (132)

There is consistency between the values promoted in the school and those promoted in the home. At the time their children first enrol in the school, parents are informed about the commitment of Jesuit education to a faith that does justice. Programmes of ongoing formation are available to parents so that they can understand this aim better and be strengthened in their own commitment to it. (133)

Jesuit school leadership

A Jesuit school chooses as qualified leaders of the educational community those who can teach and give witness to the teachings of Christ presented by the Catholic Church. (95)

The role of the Director (ie. Head Teacher) **is that of an apostolic leader. The role is vital in providing inspiration, in the development of a common vision and in preserving unity within the educational community. In addition to his role of inspiration, the Director remains ultimately responsible for the distinctively Jesuit nature of this education.** (139)

The responsibility entrusted to the Director of a Jesuit school always includes a mission that comes from the Society of Jesus. This mission, as it relates to the Jesuit character of the school, is subject to periodic evaluation by the Society. (138)

Governing boards are aware of and are open to the Ignatian vision as this is applied to education. They are able to work together with mutual support and respect, making use of the talents of each. (140)

Effective authority in the school can be exercised by anyone who has a knowledge of, sympathy for, identification with, and commitment to the Jesuit character of education. (141)

The educational community in a Jesuit school studies the needs of present-day society, and then reflects on school policies to find those means that will best accomplish the purposes of the school and implement its educational philosophy. The principles on which this reflection is based can be found in current documents of the Church and of the Society of Jesus. In addition, the Jesuit *Constitutions* provide criteria to guide discernment in order to achieve the *magis*: the more universal good, the more urgent need, the more lasting value, work not being done by others, etc. **The whole life of the school is adapted to fit the specific needs of the place where the school is located, and the people it serves.** (145/146/147)

Conclusion

A description of the characteristics of Jesuit education can never be perfect, and can never be final. But a growing understanding of the heritage of these schools, the Ignatian vision applied to education, can be the impetus to renewed dedication to this work, and renewed willingness to undertake those tasks which will make it ever more effective. (168)

The Vision of St Ignatius and the Characteristics of Jesuit Education

The 28 characteristics which describe Jesuit education are derived from the understanding St Ignatius had of a universe created and sustained in being by God, of the place of human beings in that creation, and of their relationships with God and with one another.

The characteristics articulate the way in which a community grounded in the Ignatian vision applies the insights and values of that vision to a school. In this way a school lives out its distinctive Jesuit identity and mission.

The vision of St Ignatius is set out in the left-hand column. The corresponding implications of that vision for a school in the Ignatian and Jesuit tradition are set out in the right-hand column.

The Vision of St Ignatius	The Characteristics of Jesuit Education
1 For Ignatius, God is Creator and Lord, Supreme Goodness, the one Reality that is absolute.	
All other reality comes from God and has value only insofar as it leads us to God.	1. Jesuit education is an apostolic instrument.
This God is present in our lives, 'labouring for us' in all things.	2. Jesuit education includes a religious dimension that permeates the entire education.
He can be discovered, through faith, in all natural and human events, in history as a whole, and most especially in the lived experience of each individual person.	3. Jesuit education is world-affirming. 4. Jesuit education promotes dialogue between faith and culture.

	5. Jesuit education assists in the total formation of each individual within the human community.
2 Each man or woman is personally known and loved by God. This love invites a response which, to be authentically human, must be an expression of a radical freedom. Therefore, in order to respond to the love of God, each person is called to be: • free to give of oneself, while accepting responsibility for and the consequences of one's actions: free to be faithful; • free to work in faith toward that true happiness which is the purpose of life: free to labour with others in the service of the Kingdom of God for the healing of creation.	6. Jesuit education insists on individual care and concern for each person. 7. Jesuit education encourages life-long openness to growth. 8. Jesuit education emphasizes activity on the part of the student.
3 Because of sin, and the effects of sin, the freedom to respond to God's love is not automatic. Aided and strengthened by the redeeming love of God, we are engaged in an ongoing struggle to recognize and work against the obstacles that block freedom, including the effects of sinfulness, while developing the capacities that are necessary for the exercise of true freedom. This freedom requires a genuine knowledge, love and acceptance of self, joined to a determination to be freed from any excessive	9. Jesuit education encourages a realistic knowledge, love, and acceptance of self.

	attachment to wealth, fame, health, power, or even life itself. True freedom also requires a realistic knowledge of the various forces present in the surrounding world and includes freedom from distorted perceptions of reality, warped values, rigid attitudes or surrender to narrow ideologies. To work toward this true freedom, one must learn to recognize and deal with the influences that can promote or limit freedom: the movements within one's own heart, past experiences of all types, interactions with other people, the dynamics of history, social structures and culture.	10. Jesuit education provides a realistic knowledge of the world in which we live. 11. Jesuit education is value-oriented.
4	The world view of Ignatius is centred on the historical person of Jesus. He is the model for human life because of his total response to the Father's love, in the service of others. He shares our human condition and invites us to follow him, under the standard of the cross, in loving response to the Father. He is alive in our midst, and remains the 'man for others' in the service of God.	12. Jesuit education proposes Christ as the model of human life. 13. Jesuit education provides adequate pastoral care. 14. Jesuit education celebrates faith in personal and community prayer, worship and service.
5	A loving and free response to God's love cannot be merely speculative or theoretical. No matter what the cost, speculative	15. Jesuit education is preparation for active life commitment.

principles must lead to decisive action: 'love is shown in deeds'. Ignatius asks for the total and active commitment of men and women who, to imitate and be more like Christ, will put their ideals into practice in the real world of ideas, social movements, the family, business, political and legal structures, and religious activities.	16. Jesuit education serves the faith that does justice. 17. Jesuit education seeks to form 'men and women for others'. 18. Jesuit education manifests a particular concern for the poor.
6 For Ignatius, the response to the call of Christ is in and through the Roman Catholic Church, the instrument through which Christ is sacramentally present in the world. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is the model of this response. Ignatius and his first companions were all ordained as priests and they put the Society of Jesus at the service of the Vicar of Christ, 'to go to any place whatsoever where he judges it expedient to send them for the greater glory of God and the good of souls.'	19. Jesuit education is an apostolic instrument, in service of the church as it serves human society. 20. Jesuit education prepares students for active participation in the church and the local community, for the service of others.
7 Repeatedly, Ignatius insisted on the *magis*: the *more*. His constant concern was for *greater* service of God through a *closer* following of Christ, and that concern flowed into all the apostolic work of the first companions. The concrete response to God must be 'of greater value.'	21. Jesuit education pursues excellence in its work of formation. 22. Jesuit education witnesses to excellence.

8 As Ignatius came to know the love of God revealed through Christ and began to respond by giving himself to the service of the Kingdom of God, he shared his experience and attracted companions who became 'friends in the Lord', in the service of others. The strength of a community working in service of the Kingdom is greater than that of any individual or group of individuals.	23. Jesuit education stresses collaboration. 24. Jesuit education relies on spirit of community among teaching staff, administrators, Jesuit community, governing boards, parents, students, former students, and benefactors. 25. Jesuit education takes place within a structure that promotes community.
9 For Ignatius and for his companions, decisions were made on the basis of an ongoing process of individual and communal discernment, done always in a context of prayer. Through prayerful reflection on the results of their activities, the companions reviewed past decisions and made adaptations in their methods, in a constant search for greater service to God (*magis*).	26. Jesuit education adapts means and methods in order to achieve its purposes most effectively. 27. Jesuit education is a system of schools with a common vision and common goals. 28. Jesuit education assists in providing the professional training and ongoing formation that is needed, especially for teachers.

A Short Glossary

Cura Personalis (care for the person) is the characteristic way in which Jesuit works, including schools, aim to respond to the full range of needs that people have (ie. the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, as we as the spiritual).

Discernment is the core of Ignatian spirituality. It describes the practice of weighing up the pros and cons of a decision in order to know the better path to take, which accords more with what God desires for me, and draws me towards God. In order truly to discern, I need to be attentive to my experience (see *Reflection*) and to free myself from what Ignatius calls 'attachments' by which he means preferences, comforts, principles, presumptions, which can get in the way of true freedom.

Faith that does justice – the idea that Christian faith cannot have integrity without action for social justice.

Ignatius Loyola, born (1491) of a Basque noble family; chose a life of chivalry and fame until wounded at the battle of Pamplona (1521); during long convalescence he underwent a spiritual conversion; lived as a hermit at Manresa where he began to see how God was active in his life; his notes from this time became the *Spiritual Exercises*; with companions he founded the Society of Jesus (1540); Ignatius spent the rest of his life developing and governing this new order; died 1556.

Ignatian describes a view, a principle, or a practice held by St Ignatius. In his own day, many people sought help and guidance from St Ignatius, just as since and in our own time, large numbers of people continue to find the spiritual insights and practices of Ignatius inspiring and a helpful guide for their own lives. In Jesuit schools, the distinctively Ignatian spirit is applied to education and the formation of young people.

Jesuit – includes all that is Ignatian, but adds the experience and practice of those who have lived the Jesuit life through 500 years in diverse places and circumstances around the world. Jesuit schools are Ignatian in spirit and Jesuit in mission.

Magis (Latin for 'more') is the Ignatian principle that, in order to be fully human and fully alive in the ways God calls us to be, we should always seek to be more, do more, go deeper. It is about generosity and being big-hearted.

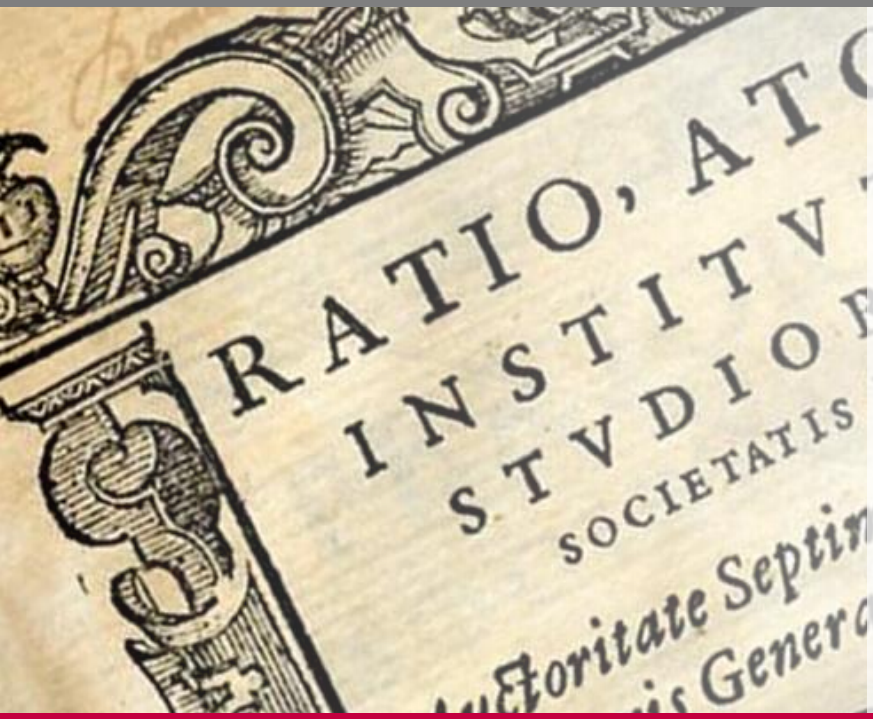
Men and women for others is a phrase of Fr Pedro Arrupe (1907-91) addressing former students of the world's Jesuit schools in which he challenged them to use their Jesuit education for the benefit of others – to be 'agents of change', making the world a better and more just place. It combines the ideas of a 'faith that does justice' and the *magis*.

Spiritual Exercises – a small book in which St Ignatius collected his notes, reflections, prayers, rules and principles, for people who wished to learn to engage with God and find freedom. He began these notes while convalescing in 1521, adding to and rearranging them subsequently until publication in 1548. The definitive guide to Ignatian spirituality.

The **Ratio Studiorum** was the original blueprint for Jesuit schools, published in 1599. It sets out the responsibilities and principles by which each person in a Jesuit school should work (from youngest pupil to headteacher to the Provincial).

Reflection – Ignatius emphasizes the importance of taking time to reflect, to be attentive to one's own experience. From this attentiveness we begin to notice what is truly good for us (what leads to an increase in faith, hope and love) and what is not good for us, what leads us towards God and what alienates us from God. Reflection is the basis for discernment.

The **Society of Jesus**, often known simply as 'the Society' or 'the Jesuits', is the religious order founded by St Ignatius and nine companions in 1540 – a group of men bound by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, who devote their lives to service of the church and all people, especially the poor and marginalized. Today, there are 18,000 Jesuits worldwide.



Ratio Studiorum (1599) – the plan of studies for Jesuit schools and universities

"The aim of Jesuit education is the formation of principled, value-oriented persons for others after the example of Jesus Christ."

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education n.93

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