



Jesuit Conference
The Society of Jesus
in Canada and the United States

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“Becoming Discerning Communities with Open Horizons”

“LEADING AND COLLABORATING FOR A NEW EPOCH”

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Remarks at Jesuits West Province Workshop
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Several years ago, I visited St. Xavier School in Delhi, India. When I was asked to address the student body, I used an image which I thought might connect me to the Indian Jesuits whom the students knew. I pointed to their Jesuit faculty and said, “Your Jesuit teachers are my brothers, and I have 17,000 Jesuit brothers throughout the world.” Just after the assembly, a young girl in the 7th standard (our 7th grade) came up to me and said, “You have 17,000 brothers? I would like to meet your mother!”

The Jesuit Order is a global mission with hundreds of schools, thousands of students and millions of alumni. We serve parishes, retreat centers, social ministries, think tanks, refugees, and migrant populations. We have missions as far ranging as the Apostleship of Prayer and the Vatican Observatory; Christian Life Communities and The Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem. We are as old as the Renaissance and as new as your 41-day-old Jesuits West Province. This worldwide network can only exist because of each singular, distinct and cherished ministry. Just as one mother cannot bear 17,000 children, the name Jesuit cannot say everything about each work that bears our name.

As president of the Jesuit Conference, which helps to unite our mission in Canada and the United States, I have not come to speak on behalf of a franchise or a brand. I am here to share my passion for this mission, a global mission, which embraces the entire world.

Sometimes it’s hard to capture the right metaphor to describe the global character of the Jesuit Order. One of Saint Ignatius Loyola’s first companions, Fr. Jerome Nadal, captured it well when he said, “The World is our House.” The 29th Superior General of the Society, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, described Fr. Nadal with these words:

“Thanks to Father Nadal the letter and spirit of our mission was spread among the first generations of Jesuits, often with the help of expressions like ‘we are not monks,’ ‘the world is our house,’ and ‘working in our bedroom takes the place of singing in choir stalls,’ expressions that even today tell us what the Lord expects of Jesuits today.”

Nadal understood “global” before it became a popular term. Unlike other religious orders that found their identity in monasteries and daily order, he found an image which identified us as global, international and worldwide, before these terms became popular.

But what was groundbreaking then, can sound rather common now. Quite frankly, “global” has become a trend which can mean anything and nothing. For an airline, global connects international destinations; for a global



telecom, data is transferred thousands of miles in mere seconds; for a food franchise, global guarantees the same tasting *latte* from Kansas to Kuala Lumpur; and for a global media enterprise, the world can fit into 30 minutes of programming. Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, the 30th Superior General, cautioned against what he called the superficiality of globalization. A corporate understanding of global differs from what Fr. Nadal intended when he said, “the world is our house.”

Whereas global has come to mean smaller, more accessible, and interdependent, Fr. Nicolás asked if such connectivity was meaningful or superficial? Can this lead us away from the painstaking work of critical thinking; of forming communities of dialogue in search of truth and understanding; and of building true and meaningful relationships? To counter this growing trend, Fr. Nicolás spoke of our need to promote depth of thought, greater intercultural dialogue, and a serious encounter with the world, particularly at the frontiers of society.

Tonight, we gather in what is now the largest territorial province in our Conference, to embrace the global Jesuit mission. We are called to reflect on this world which is “our house”. We are the leaders of the vital and varied ministries in this growing new province. We recognize that as leaders, we need to better understand and engage each other in the critical work which lies ahead.

This past fall Jesuits from around the world gathered in Rome for our 36th General Congregation – only the 36th such meeting in our 477-year history. In addition to electing a new Superior General, Fr. Arturo Sosa, we promulgated decrees. The first Decree is entitled “Companions in a Mission of Reconciliation and Justice.” This decree recognized that even the first Jesuits were subject to the pitfalls of global superficiality. The decree says:

During their time in Venice, the companions were not always together; they were dispersed in order to fulfill many tasks. Nevertheless, it was at that time that they shared the experience of constituting a single group, united in following Christ, in the midst of the diversity of their activities. We Jesuits today are also engaged in a great variety of apostolates, which often demand specialization and a great deal of energy. If, however, we forget that we are one body, bound together in and with Christ, we lose our identity as Jesuits and our ability to bear witness to the Gospel.

In the Decree, this passage is entitled, “Discerning Communities with Open Horizons.” This is also the title of tonight’s address. My hope tonight is to invite us into a deeper understanding of how, though diverse, we form a single group. And what it means for us to **discern** our future, in contrast to the more familiar concepts of planning and strategic thinking.

For many of you, the terms: Companions, Discernment, Mission and Identity are very familiar and are used in your work. For some of you, these are novel expressions which might sound like “Jesuit speak.” The good news is that my presentation tonight should be as accessible to the novice as well as the expert on things Jesuit. I will go to some of our more foundational Jesuit sources and reflect on their relevance and importance for all of us tonight.

Last week I attended a meeting of the Conference of Major Superiors of Male Religious in the U.S. With so many Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, Christian Brothers, and Carmelites in the same place, there were bound to be Jesuit jokes. The first one came from a Dominican provincial who was giving instructions for the meal after Mass. He said, “A Dominican will help you find the food, but a Jesuit will tell you how to get it for free.” During a coffee break, a Capuchin Franciscan explained the difference between the First Order Franciscans by saying, “Remember, it wasn’t a Capuchin but a Conventual Franciscan who suppressed the Jesuit Order.” Finally a De Lasalle Christian Brother asked me if Jesuits minded being made fun of. I was quiet for a moment and then I said, “If you’re going to go to the corners of the earth and dream of changing the world, you’re bound to make a fool of yourself.” So “No” I said, “We’re quite used to it!”

The conversation evolved when another Religious somewhat playfully asked, “Where in his *Spiritual Exercises* does Saint Ignatius Loyola talk about transforming the world?” I realized that Jesuit jokes are often an entrée into “what



makes us tick.” This led to a conversation about the dynamic interplay between the better known *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius with the essential *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus.

Let us now look at this interplay into what makes us tick.

The Dynamic Interplay between the *Spiritual Exercises* and the Jesuit *Constitutions*

In 2006, I heard Fr. Peter Schineller of the UNE Province deliver a talk at the Gregorian University titled, “From an Ascetical Spirituality of the *Exercises* to the Apostolic Spirituality of the *Constitutions*: Laborers in the Lord’s Vineyard.” For many of us who are more familiar with the *Spiritual Exercises*, it highlighted the essential role that the Jesuit *Constitutions* have for both Jesuits and companions alike. I would like to highlight six key themes from his talk.

The Audience of the *Exercises* is the INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN seeking to find the will of God in life. The Audience of the *Constitutions* is the SOCIETY OF JESUS and the CHURCH OFFICIALS upon whom we depend for our legitimacy.

There is a shift from the basic imagery of the AESTHETIC PILGRIM of the *Exercises* to the image of LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD in the *Constitutions*.

The emphasis upon TEST or TRIAL spirituality of the *Exercises* shifts to PROJECT or MISSION spirituality (and theology) in the *Constitutions*.

Choices which look more ascetically to the NEXT LIFE in the *Exercises*, shifts to Choices which have a more WORLDLY, APOSTOLIC, PRAGMATIC emphasis in the *Constitutions*.

God in the *Exercises* is found in PRAYER and MEDITATION whereas in the *Constitutions*, God is served primarily in ACTIONS and in MISSION.

We see a shift from an emphasis upon saving one’s soul in the *Exercises* to the Mission of FRUITFUL LABORER IN THE LORD’S VINEYARD at the end in the *Constitutions*.

This image of “Fruitful Laborer in the Lord’s Vineyard” is central to Part VII of the Jesuit *Constitutions*. I believe that this is a very central image for St. Ignatius Loyola. I also believe that it is a central image for understanding how to act globally. It should guide our reflection tonight and during these days.

Let’s look back at how Saint Ignatius was “a Fruitful Laborer.”

Saint Ignatius, the Fruitful Laborer in the Lord’s Vineyard

When we imagine the world, we so often use this shot from space. We use it because this image is beautiful, we see the oceans, the continents, the cloud formations and the wonder of our planet. There is a risk, though, in only seeing the world from such a distance. We risk seeing everything and nothing.

Recently I met with Fr. Michael Czerny, SJ, a Canadian Jesuit, who was appointed by Pope Francis to head the section for refugees and migrants in the new Vatican Department for the Promotion of Integral Human Development. While addressing a group of us at the Jesuit Curia, he cautioned us against romanticizing the world as seen from outer space. Highlighting his work with migrants and refugees, he noted that from this perspective we don’t see the earth. We see a planet no different from an uninhabited one.



If we want a “global worldview” we must focus on the local and the marginal so that we might better understand the world as our home.

How did Saint Ignatius view the local, the marginal in his day?

Remember that Saint Ignatius had his eyes on the Holy Land, this was dominant in his worldview. He and his first companions went to Venice and waited a year for passage to Jerusalem. When this did not work, they went to Rome. On the way to Rome, the Lord promised our Founder that He would be propitious to him.

What did Rome look like at the time of Saint Ignatius?

Here is the early map of Jesuit Rome which hangs in our Curia. You can see the Gesu and the Roman College (a) and (b) on the map.

In 1551, 11 years after the Order was founded, Saint Ignatius founded the Roman College. It was founded to make up for the shortage of schools in Rome and to provide for better training of both religious and secular clergy during the Counter Reformation. The funding came from the Borgia family (fundraising existed from the beginning), and this mission continues today at the Gregorian University. There was a need, they discerned their response, and they bore fruit in the vineyard of the Lord -- a mission which still bears fruit today.

But this institution was not the only fruit that they bore. The school filled a utilitarian need, but the mission was not fulfilled by granting diplomas or degrees. From the outset Saint Ignatius sought the consolation of poor souls. The school was founded to train ministers for the Church and the world.

In this image, we can see the “new basilica” which Saint Ignatius often visited. On the lower left-hand side, you see a long-peaked building. This long and narrow building is Holy Spirit Hospital, an important place for Saint Ignatius and his first companions in Rome. Here they found “the particular” and “the local” which would affect their view of the world and their future ministry.

On the side of the hospital was a “Foundling Wheel.” Foundling hospitals are places for new born children. Only this wheel served a specific purpose. For those mothers who were either too poor to feed another new-born child, or too ashamed to have a child out of wedlock, this was their only hope. They could ring the bell and the religious sisters would turn the wheel. Through the center ring they could lay their swaddling infant and trust the child to the care of the sisters. These wheels were created so that no mother would abandon her infant by the side of the road.

Imagine the pain and the desolation of a mother sending her child through this wheel? Saint Ignatius knew this pain, and he told his first Companions to minister there. He instructed them to encourage these young mothers that what they were doing was good. The mission was to console these mothers so that they could see how much God loved and cared for them.

Until his first companions could console one of these poor souls, they were not ready to sail to the corners of the earth. For the world to be your home, you had to know these “frontiers,” these “peripheries” these places where burning needs of humanity met the apostolic witness of the Gospel.

Discerning with the Superior General and his Council

Having looked ever so briefly at these founding missions, what fruit are we called to bear today?



For Saint Ignatius, the starting point begins with the questions: How do I see the world? Whom do I see in this world? Where is God leading me?

Two months ago, Fr. General gathered his extended council together for a period called “Tempo Forte” – “Strong Time.” No, we did not lift weights or run any marathons. This was a time for us to discern the future apostolic preferences of the Society from our international perspectives.

What did we do?

Our meeting began by looking at the world through five windows. Individual Jesuits were asked to present on the following topics:

- Jose Magadia from the Philippines (a political scientist) spoke about Asia
- Agbonkianmeghe Orobator from Kenya (theologian) spoke about Africa
- Patxi Alvarez from Spain (philosopher) spoke about Europe
- Roberto Jaramillo from the Amazon (environmental worker) spoke about the Amazon
- Douglas Marcouiller from the Midwest (economist) spoke about the United States

Their reflections took the form of an Ignatian Contemplation (rooted in the Spiritual Exercises) where the reflector would imagine the Divine Trinity looking down on the world, and see the faces, the trends and the challenges that would help us discern what to do next.

Asia

The first window was Asia as seen by Fr. Jose Magadia, a political scientist.

There are currently 5,647 Jesuits on the continent. Over 4,000 of these live in India, the others reside in Asia Pacific-- from Australia in the south to China and Japan toward the north.

His insights:

- Urbanization is growing in Asia. This is an image of Kuala Lumpur, and 7 of the projected top-10 megacities by 2025 are in Asia – the top 4 being: Tokyo, Mumbai, Delhi, Dhaka, Calcutta, Shanghai and Karachi.
- High population density, with inadequate infrastructure, the lack of affordable housing, flooding, pollution, slums, crime and congestion, all adversely affect the poor.
- The majority of the world’s youth population lives in Asia.
- India has the world’s highest number of those aged 10-24 years at 356 million, followed by China with 269 million, Indonesia has 67 million.
- Asia’s 717 million young people, aged 15-24, comprise 60% of the world’s youth. Youth unemployment is high, which leads to much at-risk behavior.
- Three of the greatest geopolitical hotspots are in Asia: Syria in the Middle East, the Taliban in Afghanistan and North Korea.
- There are long-term border tensions in Kashmir with India/Pakistan and on the South China Sea. The poor always suffer the most in these geopolitical crises.
- Asia has many of the world’s religions and it continues to be a place of plurality. Fundamentalism is strong in parts of Asia and with it comes strong religious intolerance that breeds violence.
- Yet the Catholic Church remains a sign of hope, even though it is a minority in many parts of Asia. The Church engages in inter-religious dialogue and Her care for the poor has a profound effect on people.

Africa

The second window was Africa, as seen by Fr. Orobator, President of the Conference of Africa and Madagascar (a theologian).

There are 1,593 Jesuits in Africa and Madagascar. This is double what there were 50 years ago and the number is growing. But compared with the growth of the overall population, this is a very small percentage.

His insights:

- There are an estimated 250 million people ages 16-24.
- This brings youth, energy and passion.
- This also brings a scarcity of depth, wisdom and experience.
- For too many of these young people, the world outside of Africa is the most popular destination.
- Orobator described what it was like for him to fly from Lagos to Nairobi. Most African airlines fly in and out of Africa, the ones that fly to cities across the continent are very expensive. Sometimes it is cheaper for him to fly through Europe (Amsterdam, Paris, Brussels) than it is to fly direct. What does this say about building a sustainable infrastructure?
- This is an image that is only too common, the site of refugees seeking hope across the seas. We learned a new expression, “When a rat runs directly into a fire, know that it is being pursued by something hotter than fire.”
- My first mission after ordination was with Jesuit Refugee Service in Northern Uganda, where we ministered to Sudanese refugees. The refugee crisis in Africa has not abated since then.
- The digital world is changing the continent significantly. Banking, health, education and agriculture are all greatly enhanced by the digital world. Villages which had never seen a phone can now provide cellular service for everyone.
- And like most of the world, the digital device risks taking the place of human interaction and inter-personal communication.
- The East is becoming the preferred business partner.
- Chinese is the most popular foreign language and there is an emerging Sino-African relationship.
- The impact is massive, as Chinese are building roads, rails and much infrastructure across the continent. But if you look at the arrows, for every investment China makes in Africa, they take out that much more in natural resources and agricultural goods. Much of this investment is to make extraction and tourism easier for the Chinese.
- There is great ideological polarization. We have all seen the devastating effects of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Shabaab in Somalia. Terror wreaks havoc on innocent people.

“When we look at Africa, we see much more than its great natural richness. We see its joy of life, and above all, we see grounds for hope in Africa’s rich intellectual, cultural and religious heritage. But we cannot fail to see the fratricidal wars decimating peoples and destroying these natural and cultural resources.” Benedict XVI, Africae Manus, no. 9

- The Church may still be small in Africa, but it is a powerful force for good.
- When one thinks of Pope Francis’ recent visit to Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic, one cannot help but be edified.
- When Pope Francis visited the Central African Republic, many said that he risked his life. Fr. Nicolás said, “The people of God surrounded him and protected him, he was never in danger.” The Church can be a strong force.



Europe

The third window was Europe as seen by Fr. Paxti Alvarez from Spain (philosopher).

His insights:

- He began with this Greek word -- πρόσωπο. If “that’s Greek to you” it means person.
- The concept of the person was created during the Christological and Trinitarian debates in the 3rd and 4th centuries.
- The Jesuit educated Renee Descartes taught us that the person was a reference for every truth.
- Emmanuel Kant saw the person as an end in himself.
- Evolving from this there is a growing tendency to go away from the Christian tradition which sees the person in relationship to others to a growing individualism.
- In 1987, a European Prime Minister said, “There is no such thing as Society. There are individual men and women and there are families.”
- We are all familiar with Dr. Freud and the Id, Ego and Super Ego.

Look at some of the dynamics of individualism:

- Personal freedom: I am free to do what I want
- I am the reference for all truth
- Weak sense of belonging to a community
- Importance of looking for my own interests
- Economic liberalism and neoliberalism
- Meritocracies: inequalities due to different capacities and efforts.

- Considering this growing individualism, how does the “individual person” understand the corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless when a boat of refugees reaches its shores?
- We all know the looming security threats to the individual person in Europe. How do individuals respond to these threats? How do we reconcile Pope Francis’ call to “welcome the stranger” with the widening fear of terrorism?
- A student at a European high school was once quoted as saying, “Of course I don’t believe in God, I am already 16 years old.” While individualism is tolerant of many faiths, there is an emerging “post Christian” mentality. “Faith was for your grandparents, we are more enlightened now.”
- Can believers work together, or is the physical proximity of the Mosque and the Church the only relationship that these faiths have? How do we engage ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue?
- How do we reconcile the Christian understanding of “the person in relationship with the other” with this increasing individualism? These are major questions for Europe today.

The Amazon

The fourth window was the Amazon as seen by Fr. Roberto Jaramillo, President of the Conference of Latin American Provincials. As a former Regional Superior of the Amazon Region, he discussed the health of our planet.

His insights:

- There are three main eco-systems on our planet: Amazonia, Congo and Southeast Asia.
- In Southeast Asia, the Rainforest is disappearing.
- The Congo also faces challenges.



- The Amazon is one of the lungs of the planet. What happens if we lose it? Pope Francis highlighted this in his Social Encyclical *Laudato Si*.
- The Amazon region is immense and you can see how many countries it covers, the largest being Brazil. It is a significant holder of the world's fresh water, as well as "flora and fauna."
- A significant percentage of it is disappearing.
- Remembering back to how we should not romanticize the globe from a distance, Pope Francis clearly wants to draw us closer to the planet, which sustains all human life.

The United States

The fifth window was the United States economy and culture as seen by Fr. Douglas Marcouiller, Fr. General's assistant for Canada & the US, and an economist.

Why the US? As a major financial and economic engine of the world, the General and his Council realize that its decisions and policies have ramifications that are felt the world over.

Saint John Paul II used to say of the United States, "When it is raining in the US, it is cloudy all over the world."

His insights:

The United States economic situation is not bad:

- Almost a decade of sustained economic growth.
- Unemployment rate of 4.3%.
- Wages are rising, yet...
- There are regional and sectoral imbalances.
- Inequalities in wealth and income are increasing.
- Growth on average does not mean growth for everyone -- 40% of US adults have no schooling beyond high school, fewer jobs for these 40% (robots are replacing many factory jobs).
- Immigrants are a significant portion of our country.
- 43 million are foreign born, this equals 13.4% of the population, the highest proportion in 100 years.
- 27% are born in Mexico, 27% born in South or East Asia.
- 11 million immigrants are undocumented.
- 42% of Catholics are immigrants or children of an immigrant.
- 13% of the US population (39 million people) are African-American. Only 3% of them are Catholic.
- The legacy of slavery remains with us. Recently the Society of Jesus and Georgetown University apologized for the Jesuits' tragic and shameful history with slaveholding.
- Indigenous or Native American communities also suffer from a tragic history.
- Border security and strengthening of borders was a factor in recent elections.
- The US subscribes to a doctrine of "American Exceptionalism" which is not new to any presidential administration. Unemployment, inequality and border fears drive an "America First" mentality in many.
- The European concept of the person and individualism is equally strong here.
- How does and will the US relate with the rest of the world?

Discerning the Future

These were the five windows that Fathers Magadia, Orobator, Alvarez, Jaramillio and Marcouiller took of Asia, Africa, Europe, the Amazon and the US.



This was not all that we did at “Tempo Forte,” but Fr. General had us begin with these reflections so that we could better understand the context in which we were praying and discerning.

There are currently 16,750 Jesuits around the world. One thing that we know for certain is that we cannot respond to these challenges ourselves. That’s why we’re here.

How do we make choices in this world? How do we prioritize? What is worthy of our sacrifice, our energy and our resources?

Returning to the dynamic interplay between the Spiritual Exercises and the Jesuit *Constitutions*, Saint Ignatius would have us begin with the Contemplation to Attain Divine Love (*Spiritual Exercises 231-237*).

“I will reflect upon myself, and consider, according to all reason and justice, what I ought to offer the Divine Majesty, that is, all I possess and myself with it.”

And now moving from the aesthetic spirituality of the Spiritual Exercises to the apostolic spirituality of the *Constitutions*: how should **we** labor in the Lord’s Vineyard?

St. Ignatius teaches us that, “The world is not seen as a battlefield, prison, or vale of tears, but as God’s garden or the Lord’s vineyard...As laborers in the vineyard, we make a difference in this world...We do not just pass through or simply weave baskets in the day and take them apart at night. Rather we are here to tend the garden and bear fruit, fruit that will last.”

Let us look at some of his very straightforward gems from the *Constitutions*, which Saint Ignatius gives us for discerning our future ministry:

“The more universal the good is, the more it is divine.” – This is a central theme of St Ignatius. As an international religious order, we should choose that which serves the greater universal good. This does not always equate with boarding an airplane. What can we do locally that serves the more universal good?

“Spiritual aid which is given to important and public persons ought to be regarded as more important, since it is a more universal good.” – we educate leaders, we form leaders, we accompany leaders, and when necessary we challenge leaders.

“This holds true also of spiritual aid given to persons who are distinguished for learning and authority.”

“Preference ought to be shown to aid which is given to large nations such as the Indies, or to important cities, or to universities.” There is an old adage: St. Benedict liked the mountain tops; St. Bernard liked the valleys; St. Francis liked the small towns; and St. Ignatius liked the great cities. St. Ignatius studied in Paris and founded the Society in Rome because of the influence these cities had on the world.

“Similarly, in places where the enemy of Christ our Lord is seen to have sown cockle.” While some may run away from places of tension and hardship, we are drawn to them. An Italian Jesuit was recently appointed bishop of the diocese of Anatolia, Turkey. The prior bishop was murdered. The former Superior General said, “This is a good place for a Jesuit.”

“Considering the greater divine honour and the greater universal good.”

“In the ample vineyard of the Lord, one ought to select, other things being equal, that part of the vineyard which has greater need.” This is where we find the MAGIS in the *Constitutions*. A discernment which leads us to always choose what is MORE important in the Divine sight.



“Consideration should also be given to where greater fruit is likely to be reaped through the means usual in the Society.” One of the reasons why education was favored for so many years is because of the influence of our pedagogy and teaching on decision makers. Where can we reap the greatest fruit today?

At a recent meeting of the World Union of Jesuit Alumni, the first such meeting in the United States, Father General “Skyped” us from Rome for some Q & A. At one point, he made a keen observation on the word discernment. He said, “Discernment is not a technique for making decisions, it is a way of finding what God wants us to do.”

As we enter these days together, how do we discern our vocation (both individual and collective) and discern what God wants us to do?

I close with a story. When I served JRS in the mid-1990s we oversaw education for the Sudanese refugees who lived in northern Uganda. The UN charter required our work in primary education. We also opened a Refugee Secondary School, which was mostly college preparatory.

Technically we were to educate for repatriation. We hoped that our efforts would serve the refugees well for their return home to Sudan.

But those students who completed their secondary studies wanted tertiary or “higher” education and asked for our help. Suddenly we who worked for JRS debated whether our mission was to educate for repatriation or for the diaspora. We found ourselves in that gray area between what UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) wanted from us, and the stated needs of those we were serving. There was no right answer. It was difficult to know who was the competent authority to make such a decision.

In the end, many left Africa and received advanced degrees. Many returned to Sudan and were instrumental in forming the new nation of South Sudan.

The most important thing for us to do in such a situation was to debate, discern and pray. We were called to listen to the voices of many, and the quiet revelation of God. These are the peripheries and the frontiers where Jesuits thrive, these are the voices that beg for our attention.

If there is anything that distinguishes us from other global organizations is that we pray and discern. We do this in the real world with all its complexities. And we do this with faith that God is God and we are not.

I pray that these days feed you with conversation and discernment. I hope that they inspire you through testimony and prayer.

And most especially, I hope that I have opened your horizons, so that as a new province, you may grow into a discerning community dedicated to the greater honor and glory of God!