

**A MEDITATION
ON OUR RESPONSE
TO THE CALL OF CHRIST**

FROM THE PROVINCIALS OF THE UNITED STATES ASSISTANCY



15. *This principle [love] is the starting-point for understanding the great parables of Jesus. The rich man (cf. Lk 16:19-31) begs from his place of torment that his brothers be informed about what happens to those who simply ignore the poor man in need. Jesus takes up this cry for help as a warning to help us return to the right path. The parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:25-37) offers two particularly important clarifications. Until that time, the concept of “neighbor” was understood as referring essentially to one’s countrymen and to foreigners who had settled in the land of Israel; in other words, to the closely-knit community of a single country or people. This limit is now abolished. Anyone who needs me, and whom I can help, is my neighbor. The concept of “neighbor” is now universalized, yet it remains concrete. Despite being extended to all mankind, it is not reduced to a generic, abstract and un-*

demanding expression of love, but calls for my own practical commitment here and now. The Church has the duty to interpret ever anew this relationship between near and far with regard to the actual daily life of her members. Lastly, we should especially mention the great parable of the Last Judgement (cf. Mt 25:31-46), in which love becomes the criterion for the definitive decision about a human life’s worth or lack thereof. Jesus identifies himself with those in need, with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison. “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40). Love of God and love of neighbor have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God.

Benedict XVI, “Deus Caritas Est”

This meditation is offered as a grounding for the strategic discernment process of the United States Assistency, and as a way for all of us to pray and engage in conversation about the call of Christ in this time and place. The ultimate outcome of our strategic discernment will be renewed national direction for the Society of Jesus in the United States that serves as a reference – but not a replacement – for province level planning. In discerning the apostolic needs of the People of God today and how we are called to respond, we recognize that our response will be shaped by at least four key factors: a context for ministry that has changed dramatically over the past several decades; inspired and transformative developments in our relationship with partners in ministry; persistent calls for a community life that better witnesses our vows and better provides the context for being “friends in the Lord”; and the challenge to renew outdated governance structures and institutional relationships in service of our mission. To help us accomplish these goals, we have appointed four commissions and have empowered them to explore critical questions and make recommendations for our discernment. These commissions include:

- | *Ministries*
- | *Partnerships*
- | *Jesuit Life*
- | *Governance*

Through this process we seek to respond to the call that grounds the discernment, recognize and address the issues listed above, and better mobilize our resources in service to our mission.

This meditation will serve as the context for the work of the commissions as well as our own strategic discernment. We invite you to participate in this process by bringing the following pages to prayer and spiritual conversation.



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I

THREE PRELUDES

Composition of Place: Our Nation and Our World

1. In the contemplation of the Incarnation in the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Holy Trinity looks upon the world, sees its wide range of needs, and sends Jesus into that world. Jesus is born in our human flesh, proclaims God's reign, gathers disciples, dies, and rises to new life. Before he ascends back to the Father, he sends his disciples into the whole world to preach and to serve as he did. In the United States today, he sends us still to a world that needs the challenge of his good news.

2. Our country is one of the most "faith-filled" in history, with high rates of church attendance, numerous religious media outlets, and strong religious claims on public policy. Out of that shared faith we have seen countless acts of generous service and compelling movements of greater unity and acceptance among the churches. Yet some of that faith is nominal and domesticated, often inclined to ignore the cross as it focuses on self-fulfillment and the protection of privilege. The challenging and transforming power of the Gospels and the call of Christ to the great Commandments of Love are easily repressed if faith is made to conform to us rather than we being conformed to the will of God.

3. At the same time, the United States is the unequalled power of the world. No other nation can compare with our wealth, our capacity to shape culture, and our ability to act unilaterally in geo-politics. Yet this status has not engendered a broader sense of solidarity with the rest of the world, but

rather a pervading disregard for the realities and urgencies of the poor and disenfranchised. Not only do they carry our success on their shoulders, but they have little or no opportunity to encounter the healing and liberating message of Christ.

4. Of equal significance is the dynamic nature of our culture: creative, restless, forward-looking, novelty-oriented. The internet is its hallmark, bringing the world to one's desktop as information; conversation and entertainment appear with a few taps on a touchpad. The benefits of such access brighten all fields of knowledge and human activity. Yet the dark side of the internet provides a sharp contrast. Vices and addictions can stream into our offices and homes, and the sheer quantity of information – accurate and otherwise – can undermine the constants of human experience that connect us to each other and God.

5. As cultures interact more and more in this electronic world, we become more aware of the religious traditions that shape distinctive responses to faith, justice and culture. The “melting pot” dynamic of the United States can blend these differences, yet our Christian tradition has not always responded as neighbor to those who express God differently. Looking beyond our borders, there seems to loom a clash of the major religious families, particularly Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam – especially if they ignore the deepest truths of their religions and cannot dialog out of faith.

6. These realities shape the world in which we serve, and many – our students, colleagues, parishioners, alumni, to name a few – look to us for collaboration and direction in confronting such challenges. The true uniting of faith, justice, culture and dialog is Christ: his call of us to discipleship, his identification with the least of our brothers and sisters, his gift of the Eucharist where we partake of his very life.

Composition of Time: The Ignatian Vision

7. The Society of Jesus was born of a great desire. The visionary was Ignatius Loyola – wounded, converted, searching. His dream was to help souls.

8. Ignatius took the pilgrim road seeking to fulfill his dream in Jerusalem, in Spain, in Paris, and eventually in Rome. Through the power of an intense commitment grounded in his mystical experience of God, Ignatius gathered companions and formed a new community to serve the Church of his era, a Church divided and sometimes corrupt, yet ready for new life.

9. The Church of Ignatius' day was mostly a European Church, and Europe was restless. Horizons were expanding: Columbus landed in America the year after Ignatius was born; and as Ignatius prayed and did penance in Manresa in 1522, the first ships to circle the globe arrived home in Spain. Religious controversy tore political maps apart. The Catholic Church itself was in crisis, its priests often ignorant of the Gospels and Sacraments, its bishops often indifferent. New learning began to erode more than a century of certitude: in 1514, while Ignatius served at a Spanish court, the Polish civil servant Nicolaus Copernicus began articulating his heliocentric theories.¹ Ethics itself seemed to be unraveling. Loose morals and fiscal scandal among the clergy provoked calls for reform.

10. To this world – no longer flat, no longer the center of the universe – Ignatius and his young, well-educated friends brought energy, integrity, intelligence and vision. They made their voices heard in churches, piazzas, marketplaces – in any well-placed pulpit. They gave themselves to the service of the Church.

11. With a profound Christian Humanism, they used their intellectual and spiritual gifts for a zealous engagement of whatever culture they found themselves in – as missionaries, as guides in the *Spiritual Exercises*, as ministers of Sacraments living with the poor in hospitals, as scientists and theologians, and, signally, as innovative educators. What bound them together in their diverse works was a living and urgent faith in Christ Jesus.

Composition of Our Context: The Church and the Society of Jesus Today

12. To look at our Church today is to see a mixed bag holding saints and sinners.² Despite manifold examples of holiness and good works, we face many difficulties. In our Church, the leadership is challenged and often dismissed. Structures are questioned. Buildings are abandoned and inner-city parishes closed. Millions who identify themselves as Catholics rarely practice their faith. A generation has little grasp of Catholic literacy. A moral collapse of some clergy has led to suspicion and distrust. Shrill voices and political tactics polarize Catholics. A generation ago Pedro Arrupe said we had “a planet to heal.”³ Today in the United States, there is a Church to heal as well.

13. Our healing will be made possible only by a wholehearted response to the call of Christ. While Jesuits are only a small part of the call to heal the Church and world, we must be willing to do our part, as Ignatius himself did, in assisting the labors of bishops and all our fellow Catholics. Ignatius knew that we must discern God’s gifts and God’s call in the context of our lives. So it is with us today. We build on the gifts.

14. An enduring resource for our mission is the *Spiritual Exercises*. We have all contemplated the classes of men, the degrees of humility. We have heard the call of the King. We have all chosen – perhaps reluctantly or tentatively at times, but in the end with open hearts and holy desires – to serve under the standard of Christ. The *Exercises* foster our enduring intimacy with Jesus Christ and the grace of discernment. This is our core identity.

15. We Jesuits enjoy many other gifts besides. Our elders built the schools and churches, prayer centers and social centers; in these men, we have gifts of wisdom and prayer. Our men in active ministry continue to teach, to inspire, to intercede, to care; in them we have gifts of dedication and imagination. Our young men learn and push and challenge; in them we have gifts of energy and hope and the ability to speak to tomorrow’s world. As we continue to invest in and care for established ministries, we have also begun to use traditional expert-

ise in new approaches. Every individual's ministry – old or new – is the ministry of the whole Society, from the sought-after teacher on a thriving campus to the hospital chaplain making his solitary rounds, from the bold community organizer to the gentle spiritual guide. The Church needs these gifts.

16. Frequently enough, Jesuits may remind themselves of their “limited resources” and “smaller numbers.” But far more remarkable are those who accompany us. We minister with partners who embrace Ignatian spirituality and effectively undertake the Jesuit mission. With us are friends and benefactors whose interest and support make our work possible. We have committed alumni, many of whom serve their schools and works beyond those schools, helping us sustain old ministries and start new ones. All of these are part of who we are. The Church needs these gifts too.

17. General Congregation 34 noted, “each Jesuit encounters the impulse to unbelief first of all in himself,” and it is only when he deals with that dimension of himself that he can help the world make sense of its questions.⁴ We must likewise confront the impulse to doubt, to fear, to compromise, to back away, to rest comfortably. Our mission requires our belief, our trust, our courage, our commitment, our resilience, our energy. With these we can confront crucial issues of Jesuit identity, common life, collective impact. With these we can attract the young men who will carry this mission forward into tomorrow.

18. Our heritage shows us that great things are possible. We have our saints and heroes to inspire us to dig in and do the work God offers us. We have our friends and colleagues to offer ideas, to make demands, to bring out the best in us. And we have the commitment of all our brother Jesuits who take up our founder's dream and join in our determination to contribute what we best can to serve our Church, to proclaim the reign of God, to help souls.

19. In our time and place, the vision of Ignatius still lives.

II

THE CALL TO GREATER SOLIDARITY IN FAITH

Who Calls Us: Our Lord, the Church, the Society of Jesus

20. As Jesuits, each of us has heard the call of Jesus to know him more intimately, love him more truly, and follow him more closely. Aware of our own sinfulness, yet drawn by Christ's invitation to become his companions, we preach his good news to draw others into the dynamic personal life of the Trinity.

21. For the past forty years we have heard the repeated call of our Church to make our own the "joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted..."⁵ With regular insistence, popes, synods, and conferences of bishops have urged us to look deeply into the reality and causes of global human suffering. Pope John Paul II peered beneath this world's dominant culture and values to detect and confront the "thirst for power" and "desire for profit" at the heart of its economic and political injustice,⁶ the false gods driving much of today's practical atheism.

22. Today the context of our Jesuit call is what our brothers at GC 34 saw as "a world beguiled by self-centered human fulfillment, extravagance, and soft living; a world that prizes prestige, power, and self-sufficiency."⁷ They challenged us to preach the Gospel to such a world in ways that "focus on trans-

forming the cultural values which sustain an unjust and oppressive social order.”⁸ Similarly, Benedict XVI reminds us that our philosophical, theological and other works must engage modern culture, promoting, with other parts of the church, “a culture inspired by the values of the Gospel.”⁹ For U.S. Jesuits, then, our proclamation of the Gospel must acknowledge our nation’s power, privilege, and position as well as the considerable influence of our institutions, our colleagues, and our selves within that nation.

23. Over the past few months, we provincials have prayed together and discussed, have spoken with our fellow Jesuits in groups and in personal manifestations of conscience, have conferred with many of our friends and colleagues in mission. We now come back to some haunting questions. Are there people in the world through whom Christ is calling out to us most urgently? Is his call being heard? And by his identification with them, are we ourselves called to greater identification, greater solidarity – not only with them, but also with Our Lord?

24. We ask these questions against the backdrop of our own labors and those of our companions in ministry during past centuries. We ask them as well in the context of the healing that is needed not only in the church but also in the world. And we ask them, aware of our gifts in the service of evangelization. The answers suggest a new perspective on our works and challenge us to a deeper conversion of our hearts and minds.



Solidarity with “The Least” and with “All”

25. Every human being is not only created in the image and likeness of God but is also one with Christ. In the parable of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25), Jesus identifies himself with “the least” of his brothers and sisters. Indeed, all of us count for the least, but our Lord goes to great pains to identify himself with those persons suffering the hardships of hunger and

homelessness, thirst and nakedness, the alien and the imprisoned. As the Holy Father reminds us in his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, the entire activity of the Church is evangelizing through Word and Sacrament embodied *in the service of charity*.¹⁰ “Love of God and love of neighbor have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God.”¹¹

26. In this light, how can we ignore the fact that those most in need of our solidarity are those who suffer painful hardships? Their misery seems almost inescapable. Many are trapped in poverty. So limited are their opportunities, their poverty has become structurally entrenched. Their lives are severely diminished; their hopes are crushed by a persistent and oppressive poverty that denies to all but the boldest the basics of human dignity and the opportunity to live happy and fulfilled lives. Perhaps the most pressing and painful examples are *forced migrants* (refugees, migrant workers, the undocumented); *inner city populations* (racial minorities, the elderly, the homeless, the persistently poor); *indigenous peoples* at home and abroad; and the *globally destitute, more than 800 million people who go to bed hungry each night*.¹²

27. These groups represent all those whom poverty relegates to the very margins of society where their dignity is ignored, their rights are violated, their humanity is degraded, and their hopes are shattered. Solidarity with them is not a matter of politics. It is part of our solidarity with Christ and the expression of our love for God.¹³

28. In light of the vision articulated in the parable of the Last Judgment and the Two Standards of the *Spiritual Exercises*, we need no persuading that “a preferential but not exclusive love for the poor”¹⁴ is more than something optional; we have an urgent duty to bring the Gospel to the entire contemporary world. This commitment may be offensive to some, but as Jesuits, we make choices that flow from our commitment to choose poverty, dishonor, and humble service of the least among us, even if it must be in the face of a culture promoting self-indulgent economics, political domination, and lifestyle enclaves.

29. This apostolic call became all the more poignant and vivid after Hurricane Katrina. Floodwaters swept aside the camouflage covering the radical inequities of two Americas, rich and poor, and reminded us of stark failures in our domestic social responsibilities. This call upon our attention and our care rises to heaven in union with the cries of the aborted unborn, the euthanized elderly, the invisible people with disabilities, and the hundreds of millions of women, men, and children starving across the world. Sadly, our culture seems only to hear their cries in times of disaster and fleeting media attention.

30. The need for solidarity with “the least” and with “all” is intensified by the emergence of global interdependence; it must be embodied in habits of life and social institutions far more lasting than ephemeral headlines and sporadic response to crises. Calling for personal and structural conversion, Pope John Paul II named this solidarity a “virtue.” As such, he said, it calls for commitment and action:

This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good, that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all.¹⁵

31. Our solidarity is not just with the poor. It must be as broad as it is deep, drawing all those with whom we work and those whom we serve into union with one another. This greater solidarity for the sake of the Gospel and our mutual salvation begins to answer the questions that marked our discernment. Solidarity practiced in faith, as the late Pope observed, will not only challenge the dehumanizing “underdevelopment” that affects the poor; it also challenges the “overdevelopment” that “tends to reduce the person to an economic unit in an ever more oppressive consumer network.”¹⁶ This solidarity is for the sake of us all.

One Call, Many Voices

32. The call to solidarity we have situated in the context of our culture and contemporary world is ultimately the call of Christ to everyone. It is a mission, then, shared in solidarity with all Christians. As Jesuits, we answer that call armed with the special charisms, traditions and works of our Order, especially the *Spiritual Exercises*. But no matter what our work, from university to infirmary to barrio, it is for the glory of God and the help and salvation of souls. Even within the Society of Jesus, there is a great variety of voices, an array of talents, but we are all at the service of the call and the mission. Some are gifted at social analysis, others at immediate and effective working with people at the margins of life or society. Many are scholars, many are missionaries. Whether teaching, preaching, giving the sacraments or praying for the society, our voices are as varied as the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, but there must be one message: to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. That is the radical foundation of our solidarity with “the least.” Thus, while this new perspective does not necessarily mean that we change our works or ministries, it does require that all of our works be somehow informed and motivated by it.

33. Our mission today is not a mission of Jesuits alone, but a mission in solidarity with numerous women and men who share the spirit of Ignatius. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, we are all asked to respond generously to the call of Christ the King – even to the extent of accepting hardship for the sake of his mission. We recognize that colleagues, alumni, parishioners, retreatants, benefactors, and others have heard the call of the King and have entered into our communal mission. Many are now responsible for the care of ministries founded by Jesuits, and these partners will lead them in continued service to the Gospel. Many also now stand at the center of American society in places and positions that can make them friends of the poor and humble Christ and, together with Christ’s poor, artisans of a new society. Together, then, we accept Ignatius’ invitation to save our souls through service to others.¹⁷

34. The apostolic perspective that emerges from a meditation on our contemporary response to Christ, in short, calls all Jesuits and colleagues to conversion.¹⁸ Every institution that presents itself as “Jesuit” must answer this call as well.



Living the Solidarity

35. Solidarity with “the least” and with “all” is actually not new and certainly not alien to us. This reflection, rather, is more like a “repetition” meditation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, whereby we enter more deeply into the sources of life and faith that have moved us to respond to God in love. We re-enter the mystery of our faith, of our vocations, of our discipleship, but now with the added perspective that our solidarity with Christ calls us to a more profound conversion. Such a conversion opens our imagination to new ways we might encounter and serve Our Lord. More importantly still, it invites all of us, no matter what our work or station, to experience a zeal and love that is as strategic to the world as it is necessary for our happiness.

36. In higher education, when we do scholarship and research that lifts the human spirit and heals the human body, when we provide an environment where love and service to others are fostered in our students, when we nurture them in their faith life and in the greatest traditions of Christian Humanism and train them to be scientists, doctors, teachers and businesspersons of integrity, when we engage our benefactors or alumni to build not only a better university but a better world, when we stand openly in “solidarity with the poor, the marginalized, and the voiceless,”¹⁹ when our students travel to Central America or Africa to see a hidden face of Christ, when national and international realities are critically examined with an advocate’s eye for the downtrodden, when our faculties reach out to China or send libraries to Africa, we are working in solidarity with “the least” and with all.

37. In secondary and pre-secondary education, when our curricula that enhance excellence in scholarship and sport point to the greater glory of God, when dedicated Jesuit and lay partners devote themselves to faith development and spiritual formation that free our students from cultural and religious myths of power, pleasure and possession, when service projects open young eyes to suffering and oppression in their own cities and neighborhoods, when *Kairos* retreats give students a felt experience of the power of the Holy Spirit across race and culture, when parents share a school's commitment to those who cannot afford to attend, when alumni return to ask how they can make a difference in our broken world, when we imagine and create new centers of education such as Cristo Rey or Nativity schools, when the seeds of great dreams, holy aspirations and the passion for justice are sown, we are living in true solidarity.

38. In our pastoral ministries, when we recognize Christ present in those we console and instruct, when we bestow him in the sacraments, whether to politician or prisoner in their poverty, when we serve inner city parishes and the poor, frail and alienated who worship there, when we twin our parishes with marginalized communities in the developing world, when we offer our retreat centers to those without home, when we help a bewildered single mother keep her unborn child, when we accompany our parishioners, our staffs, our friends on the road not to despair but to Emmaus, when we carry Eucharist and Reconciliation to all who need them in the languages they speak, we express a true solidarity that unites us and those we serve to the poorest of the poor.

39. In our social ministries, when we address the great inequities in our nation as apostles bringing the good news, when we accompany the gang member to a job interview, when we demonstrate our solidarity with those in the developing world in deeds, not mere words, when we serve the immigrant or refugee regardless of document status, when we encourage students to attend the March for Life and the Ignatian Family Teach-In, when we lobby for human rights and housing rights, when we analyze the structures that create our world so in need of healing, when we help communities to organize themselves to claim the goodness of God in this world, when we

become part of or encourage our families and friends to join and support the Jesuit Refugee Service, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, or Boys Hope Girls Hope, we deepen the solidarity that already exists and, once again, profess our faith.

40. In our other ministries, from communications to the arts, whether serving internationally or locally, in the animation of the mission or the creative solitude of the scholar, we are likewise united as servants of Christ's mission in broad and deep solidarity.

41. When we give our lives to the Lord in formation and studies, when we struggle to find him in our apostolates, our prayer, our community, when we encounter the Lord in our service of the Church, when we embrace new languages and new cultures, when we deepen our commitment to religious life and priesthood with Christ poor and humble, we are preparing ourselves for solidarity with Christ's people under the banner of his cross.

42. When we endure the poverties of infirmity and dependence, we once again do it in solidarity with the least of our brothers and sisters, praying with and in Our Lord, not only for the works of the Society but with the words of Jesus and all who call on his father, "Into your hands, I commend my spirit."

43. Finally, when we as provincials bind ourselves to deepen our own commitment, when we encourage collaboration across ministerial sectors, when we open ourselves to yet unknown ways of responding to the call of Christ, and when we call our brothers and communities to reflect on our vocation in the light of "the least" and "all," we do this in solidarity with them, and in union with the Lord.

III

UNION IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST

44. We offer this meditation as a challenge to renew our existing commitment to Christ. We deepen our commitment because we take seriously the Church's reflections about the Gospel's place in the contemporary world and about the responsibility of every Christian to act in solidarity with neighbors near and far. We recognize that we are one group of workers in a vast vineyard and that many others can teach us much. But we also realize that this moment in our history, a *kairos* moment, invites us to deeper reflection and a wider course of action. This new perspective must shape our response in prayer, discernment, and concrete actions, helping us to know more authentically the answer to the question: "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison and did not come to your help?"

45. Ours is a Eucharistic faith. And the Eucharist remains the center of our lives as Jesuits. But there are *two* sacraments of the "real presence." At communion, in our own poverty we receive the body and blood of Christ under the humble appearances of bread and wine. When we reach out, however, to the least and to all, we reach out in justice and mercy to Christ himself, now under the appearances of our neighbors. For he has said of them as well, "This is my Body." "You have done it for me." When we labor in solidarity with the least of our brothers and sisters, it is not merely a work of justice. It is a matter of faith. It is a matter of whether we believe in Him whose name we bear.

A.M.D.G.

Our hope is that during the year ahead, your prayer, your response and your lived experience of this meditation will help to inform and shape our decisions. Specifically, we ask you to share with your provincial in the account of conscience how you experience Christ calling you personally and calling the apostolic body of the Society in the United States through this meditation. By means of this special instrument of our governance we seek “a greater union with God’s intentions for us, a greater union of minds and hearts as well as a deeper apostolic enthusiasm for our Mission.”²⁰

As we pray this meditation with you and ground our deliberations in it, we will continue the formal work of strategic discernment through the commissions we have appointed, our dialogue with you and with our lay partners, and our work together as the Jesuit Conference board. Our intention is to bring all of this together into a clear vision and directions for our assistancy in the summer of 2007.

Please continue to remember the strategic discernment process in your prayers. May the vision, mission and prayer of Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier and Peter Faber inspire us to deeper union with the Lord and greater solidarity with his people.

Endnotes

¹ The year 1514 is frequently cited as the latest date for composition of a small work (“Small Commentary”) that Copernicus circulated; a printed work (“On the Revolution...”) did not appear until after his death in 1543.

² See St. Augustine’s doctrine of the church, cited in Alister E. McGrath, Christian Theology: An Introduction, p. 20.

³ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., *A Planet to Heal*, 1977.

⁴ General Congregation 34, Decree 4, No. 20.

⁵ Vatican II, *Church in the Modern World*, 1965, No. 1.

⁶ Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1987, No. 37.

⁷ GC34, Decree 26, No. 5.

⁸ GC34, Decree 4, No. 28, 3.

⁹ “Pontiff Exhorts Jesuits to Heed Ignatius’ Legacy,” Zenit, May 4, 2006.

¹⁰ Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, Section 19. Emphasis is in the papal text.

¹¹ Ibid. Last Sentence of Section 15 (Quoted in full in the box on the title page).

¹² United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005*, pp. 6-9.

¹³ Sacred scripture uses the Hebrew word *anawim* to identify the poor, the afflicted, the remnant who keep faith in their creator. The *anawim* of our time are those living an entrenched poverty that leads to powerlessness and marginalization. It is the *anawim* whom the prophets defend and Jesus befriends, and because they are made in the image of God, denying their dignity is a blot on this image. This call to solidarity, then, is rooted in biblical justice.

¹⁴ Pope John Paul II often described the option for the poor in these terms.

¹⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1987, No. 38.

¹⁶ Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia*, 1999, No. 32.

¹⁷ See the First Principle and Foundation in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

¹⁸ In both *The Challenge of Peace* (1983) and *Economic Justice for All* (1986), the U.S. bishops underscore the need for widespread conversion in order to accept the teachings of the Church on war and peace and economic justice.

¹⁹ GC34, Decree 26, No. 14.

²⁰ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Letter on *The Account of Conscience*, 2005.

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