

THE DECREES OF GENERAL CONGREGATION 3

35

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DECREES

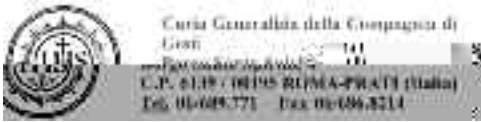
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GENERAL CONGREGATION 35 PROMULGATION OF THE DECREES

TO THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Pax Christi!

In accordance with the Formula of a General Congregation n. 142, and following the decision of General Congregation 35 taken during its concluding session on 6 March 2008, we have concluded all the tasks associated with the preparation of the decrees and documents of the General Congregation. This important and complex task was carried out with the wise counsel of the *Assistentes ad Providentiam* as well as other members of the Curia with the right to take part in the affairs of a General Congregation.

The decrees of General Congregation 35 are effective as of today, the date of their promulgation.

On this occasion it is certainly fitting for us to pray in gratitude to the Lord who accompanied us during the time of the Congregation. These two months were marked by a sincere search for his will, deep communication with one another and fervent prayer. We were particularly blest by our common morning prayer and our evening Eucharist. From our first session we implored the Lord for guidance and confirmation; we experienced his Spirit until the final Mass of Thanksgiving. At no time did we sense even a hint of resistance to what the Lord was asking of us.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

RELIGIOUS STAGES

The aim of this historical introduction is to help us to understand the important elements and the development of this 35th General Congregation from its convocation on 2nd February 2006 until its conclusion on 6th March 2008.

On 2nd February 2006, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, Father General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach wrote to the whole Society that "it had become more and more clear that the Society had arrived at a situation....which required a General Congregation."

Besides that, having obtained the agreement of his Holiness Benedict XVI and having heard the advice of the assistants *ad providentiam* and of the provincials of the whole Society, in accordance with the provision of Complementary Norm 362 §2 for the resignation of a superior general, Father Kolvenbach decided that the General Congregation must also be convened to provide for the supreme government of the Society. Consequently, he decreed the convocation of the 35th General Congregation for 5th January 2008 and added that it was the responsibility of major superiors to convene and prepare provincial congregations which should conclude by 1st March 2007.

a) Remote Preparation

There is no doubt that the preparation of this 35th General Congregation had begun several years before its official convocation. Here are some milestones:

In September 2003, the 69th Provincial Chapter of the Society of Jesus was held in Rome, Italy.

The purpose of the meeting in Loyola was to “examine the state, the problems and the initiatives of the universal Society as well as international and supra-provincial collaboration.” (GC 34, D.24, C5).

The following themes were treated: the government of the Society, apostolic preferences, formation and collaboration with non-Jesuits. After a week of examination on the state of the Society and after prayerful reflection and discussion on the different themes, the provincials made numerous recommendations (21 in all) for the whole Society.

the right to

1. An inspirational document to express our Jesuit identity and our charism.
2. A document on mission in order to reformulate the apostolic orientations of the 34th General Congregation (faith/justice, culture, dialogue).
3. Collaboration with others.
4. Apostolic obedience.
5. Leadership and governance.

The commission then proposed a list of twelve subjects concerning ordinary government.

The commission also reflected upon the process and practical functioning of the Congregation so that the delegates' time might be put to the best possible use. It proposed a possible schedule, pointing out mainly that there would be two phases in the General Congregation: the first the election of the new general and the second the examination of some important questions affecting the universal Society and its mission. The first phase (*ad electionem*), devoted to the resi

ica), Mudiappasamy Devadoss (South Asia), Bienvenido Nebres (East N

identiam on the reasons for the resignation of Father General. This time for questions was followed by a moment of silent individual prayer before proceeding to the ballot.

Father General, who had left the Aula during the ballot, was invited to return to learn the result of the ballot. The Congregation had accepted the reasons which had led him to present his resignation. Fr. Menéndez, in moving terms and in the name of the whole Society, thanked him for his 25 years as general at the service of the Society. In his turn Fr. Kolvenbach thanked the delegates and concluded: "At this time before the election of my successor and before the choices which the General Congregation will have to make, I make my own the prayer with which St. Ignatius finishes his letters: 'May it please the Lord by His infinite and sovereign goodness to grant us his perfect grace so that we may always have the sense of his most holy will and that we may fulfil it completely.'"

THE ELECTION OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

After four days of prayer, reflection and consultation among themselves (*murmurationes*), the 217 electors of the 35th General Congregation were ready, on the morning of 19th January 2008, to proceed to the election of the new general.

Under the chairmanship of Fr. Francis Case, secretary of the Society, they concelebrated the Mass of the Holy Spirit in the nearby church of the Holy Spirit in Sassia. When this was over, the electors went immediately into the Aula of the Congregation where there were enclosed. After the prayer *Veni Creator*, they listened to the exhortation of Fr. Jacques Gellard (assistant *ad providentiam*). Then in silence each of the electors continued in prayer until the end of the first hour of the session. Each elector then wrote, in his own hand, on a printed ballot sheet, the name of the one whom he chose as general.

By a majority of votes, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás was elected, from the province of Japan. Former provincial of Japan, he had been for three years President of the Conference of Major Superiors of East Asia and Oceania.

The decree of appointment was immediately drawn up by the secretary of the Congregation and signed by Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach as delegate of the Holy Father.

The newly elected General approached the crucifix in the centre of the Aula and pronounced the profession of faith.

The name of the elected was immediately communicated to the Holy Father.

Then, after Fr. Kolvenbach, the secretary and h.euthy

ten

Finally, on 18th February, the General Congregation elected the four assistants *ad providentiam* (FGC 130-137): Frs. Lisbert D'Souza, James Grummer, Federico Lombardi, and Marcos Recolons. https://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/holy_father_documents/hf-docs_20140218_gc-130-137_20140218.html

many other

DECREE

WITH RENE ED, IGOR AND EAL'

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS RESPONDS TO THE INVITATION OF THE HOLY FATHER

I. A Spiritual Experience of Consolation in the Lord

1. The 35th General Congregation experienced the deep affection of the Holy Father on two occasions, in his letter of January 10, 2008 and at the audience on February 21, 2008. Following in the footsteps of St. Ignatius and his companions, we gathered, the 225 delegates led by our Father General Adolfo Nicolás, as the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, to be hosted by the Vicar of Christ and to listen, with open hearts to what he would say about our mission. It was a powerful moment and a moving spiritual experience.

In his address, Pope Benedict XVI openly revealed his confidence in the Society of Jesus, as well as his spiritual closeness and deep esteem, in words that touched our hearts, stirring and inspiring our desire to serve the Church in this contemporary world marked "by many complex social, cultural and religious challenges."¹

2. These two events gave new clarity to the challenging task of the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus.

5. For the delegates this was the spiritual effect of the allocution of the Holy Father at the audience on February 21st. In presenting to us with deep affection a dynamic vision of our mission and our service to the Church, he seemed to say: Turn your gaze to the future "in order to respond to the expectations the Church has of you."⁵

II. Confirmed and Sent on Mission

6. With such powerful words, the Holy Father definitively placed the future of our mission before us, a mission expressed with complete clarity and firmness: the defense and proclamation of the faith, which leads us to discover new horizons and to reach new social, cultural and religious frontiers. As Fr. Adolfo Nicolás noted in his words to the Holy Father, these frontiers can be places of conflict and tension that threaten our reputation, our peace, and our security. That is why we were so moved by the Pope's evocation of the memory of Fr. Arrupe. The Holy Father referred to his proposal that Jesuits be in service to refugees as "one of his last farsighted intuitions."⁶

The service of faith and the promotion of justice must be kept united. Pope Benedict reminded us that the injustice that oppresses the poor and the sick is a

III. The Response of the Society to the Call of the Holy Father

8. It is obvious that the Society can not let this historic moment pass without giving a response at the same high level as the ecclesial charism of St. Ignatius. The Successor of Peter told us of the confidence he has in us; for our part, we sincerely want to respond to him, as an apostolic body, with the same warmth and same affection he has shown us, and to affirm in a resolute way our specific availability to the "Vicar of Christ on earth."¹³ The 35th General Congregation expresses its full adherence to the faith and the teaching of the Church, as they are presented to us in the intimate relationship that unites Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium.¹⁴

9. The 35th General Congregation calls all Jesuits to live with the great spirit and generosity that is at the center of our vocation: "to serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the Cross... and to serve the Lord alone and the Church his spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth."¹⁵

10. From the beginning of our formation and throughout our lives, we must be and remain men familiar with the things of God. Our desire is to grow now and in the future in the "interior knowledge of Our Lord, who became human for me, that I may love him more intensely and follow him more closely,"¹⁶ especially in prayer and in community life and in apostolic work. As Nadal said, "La Compañía es fervor."¹⁷

11. As we know, "mediocrity has no place in Ignatius' world view."¹⁸ It is therefore essential to give young Jesuits a human, spiritual, intellectual, and ecclesial formation as deep, strong, and vibrant as possible to allow each of them to achieve our mission in the world with "a proper attitude of service in the Church."¹⁹

12. To be authentically "contemplatives in action," seeking and finding God in all things, we must continually return to the spiritual experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Aware that they are "a gift which the Spirit of the Lord has made to the entire Church," we should, as we are called by the Holy Father, "focus special attention on that ministry of the *Spiritual Exercises*."²⁰

13. We are aware of the importance of the intellectual apostolate for the life and mission of the Church today, as Pope Benedict XVI has told us on several occasions since the beginning of his pontificate. We have heard his appeal and want to respond fully. In this context, we encourage our theologians to carry out their task with courage and intelligence; as we have heard the Holy Father say: "This is not of course a simple task, especially when one is called to proclaim the Gospel in very different social and cultural contexts and is obliged to address different mindsets."²¹ Given the difficulties inherent in the task of evangelization in our time, it is important that they are disposed "in the m—x0]J[—abS3AS10]YsdTda—x0]Yabde' JáSiTã—x0áSnruã—tTã—x0]Yc

selves and before God, that some of our reactions and our attitudes have not always been expressed as our Institute demands of us: to be "men humble and prudent in Christ."²³ We regret, this, conscious of our common responsibility as an apostolic body. Therefore, we call on each Jesuit, with a resolutely constructive attitude, to strive with the Holy Father, to create a spirit of "communion" so that the Church can bring the Gospel of Christ to a world as complex and troubled as ours.

15. Recalling the Examen²⁴ and asking the Lord for the grace of conversion, we ask each of our companions to examine his own way of living and working at "the new frontiers of our timei6SrTX]ggn6SrTX]0af]aaaw]gSrTX

DECREE

A FIRE THAT KINDLES OTHER FIRES

REDISCOVERING OUR CHARIS

Many Sparks, One Fire: Many Stories, One History

1. The Society of Jesus has carried a flame for nearly five hundred years through innumerable social and cultural circumstances that have challenged it intensely to keep that flame alive and burning. Things are no different today. In a world that overwhelms people with a multiplicity of sensations, ideas, and images, the Society seeks to keep the fire of its original inspiration alive in a way that offers warmth and light to our contemporaries. It does this by telling a story that has stood the test of time, despite the imperfections of its members and even of the whole body, because of the continued goodness of God, who has never allowed the fire to die. Our attempt here is to present it anew as a living narrative that, when brought into contact with the life-stories of people today, can give them meaning and provide focus in a fragmented world.

2. The continued narrative of the Society has provided, over the centuries, the ground for numerous experiences of unity-in-multiplicity. We Jesuits are frequently surprised that, despite our differences in culture and context, we find ourselves remarkably united. Through prayerful discernment, open discussion, and spiritual conversations, we have again and again been privileged to know ourselves as *one* in the Lord:¹ one united, apostolic body seeking what is best for the service of God in the Church and for the world. This graced experience reminds us of the experience recounted in the Deliberation of the First Fathers. Our earliest companions, even though they considered themselves weak and fragile and originating from many different places, found the will of God together amid great diversity of opinion.² What enabled them to find God's will was their "decided care and alertness to initiate a completely open way" and to offer themselves fully to it for the greater glory of God.³ Thus they began a narrative; they lit a fire, which was handed on in subsequent generations whenever people encountered the Society, enabling the personal histories of generations to become embedded in the Society's history as a whole.

is able to shine. God labours intensely in this hiddenness. Rising from the tombs of personal life and history, the Lord appears when we least expect, with his personal consolation as a friend¹⁶ and as the centre of a fraternal and servant community.¹⁷ From this experience of God labouring in the heart of life, our identity as “servants of Christ’s mission”¹⁸ rises up ever anew.

Our ‘Way of Proceeding’

8. To find divine life at the depths of reality is a mission of hope given to us Jesuits. We travel again the path taken by Ignace of Loyola, who, in the words of St. Ignace of Loyola, “the heart of the Lord is the heart of the world” (GC 33, GC 34).

¹⁶ *Spiritual Exercises*, 224.

¹⁷ Matthew 18:20.

¹⁸ GC 34, D. 2.

¹⁹ Cf. John 4:10-15.

²⁰ Cf. Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 22; also GC 34, D. 6.

²¹ Cf. Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH, *Sobre la vida religiosa*, Havana (Cuba), 1 June 2007, p. 1.

²² Cf. Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH, *Sobre la vida religiosa*, Havana (Cuba), 1 June 2007, p. 3.

²³ GC 33, GC 34.

²⁴ Cf. Pierre TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, *Le Milieu Divin*, London, Collins, 1960 (original 1957), p. 66.

²⁵ *Autobiography*, 96.

²⁶ Diego LAYNEZ, *Adhortationes in librum Examinis (1559)*, §7 (MHSI 73, 133).

²⁷ *Autobiography*, 97.

²⁸ Cf

belong

³⁶ *Spiritual Exercises*, 91-98.

³⁷ Cf. Matthew 12:28, Luke:11:20; 17:21.

³⁸ Mark 10:45.

³⁹ GC 34, D. 2, 1.

⁴⁰ GC 34, D. 2.

⁴¹ Cf. *Spiritual Exercises*, 352-370.

⁴² Cf. *Spiritual Exercises*, 23, *Constitutions*, 622.

⁴³ *Letter to the Jesuits of Portugal (26 March 1553)*, § 2 (MHSI 29, 671).

⁴⁴ 2 Corinthians 3:18.

⁴⁵ *Constitutions*, 511.

⁴⁶ John 1:39.

⁴⁷ Cf

22. God has created a world with diverse inhabitants, and this is good. Creation expresses the rich beauty of this lovable world: people working, laughing, and thriving together⁴⁸ are signs that God is alive among us. However, diversity becomes problematic when it is not accompanied by love and respect for the dignity of each person.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Cf. *Spiritual Exercises*, 106.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Spiritual Exercises*, 108.

⁵⁰ *Spiritual Exercises*, 97.

⁵¹ *Constitutions*, 622.

⁵² *Spiritual Exercises*, 147.

⁵³ Adolfo NICOLÁS, *Homily on the Day After his Election as Superior General of the Society of Jesus (20 January 2008)*.

⁵⁴ Jerónimo NADAL, *13^a Exhortatio Complutensis (Alcalá, 1561)*, § 256 (MHSI 90, 469-470).

⁵⁵ Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH, *Homily Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae*, celebrating the anniversary of the approval of the Society of Jesus (27 September 2007).

⁵⁶ Cf. *Spiritual Exercises*, 230-237.

⁵⁷ Luke 12:49.

DECREE 3

CHALLENGES TO OUR MISSION TODAY

SENT TO THE FRONTIERS

I. Re-affirming Our Mission

1. As servants of Christ's mission, we recall with gratitude the graces received from the Lord during the past years. In our lives together as Jesuits, we have experienced an ongoing process of renewal and adaptation of our mission and way of proceeding as called for by the Second Vatican Council.¹

2. Since the Council, the Spirit has led the whole Society gathered in General Congregations to the firm conviction that:

"The aim of our mission received from Christ, as presented in the Formula of the Institute, is the service of faith. The integrating principle of our mission is the inseparable link between faith and the promotion of the justice of the Kingdom."²

3. Reflecting on our experience during GC 34, we discerned that the service of faith in Jesus Christ and the promotion of the justice of the Kingdom preached by him can best be achieved in the contemporary world if inculturation and dialogue become essential elements of our way of proceeding in mission.³ We experience this mission as being part of the Church's overall mission of evangelization, "a single but complex reality" containing all these essential elements.⁴ We want to re-affirm this mission

5. Our pastoral, educational, social, communication and spiritual ministries have increasingly found creative ways of implementing this mission in the challenging circumstances of the mo

¹² *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, § 575

This reconciliation calls us to build a new world of right relationships, a new Jubilee reaching across all divisions so that God might restore his justice for all.

17. This tradition of Jesuits building bridges across barriers becomes crucial in the context of today's world. We become able to bridge the divisions of a fragmented world only if we are united by the love of Christ our Lord, by personal bonds like those that linked Francis Xavier and Ignatius across the seas, and by the obedience that sends each one of us in mission to any part of this world.¹⁹

IV. Our Apostolic Response

18. As servants of Christ's mission we are invited to assist him as he sets right our relationships with God, with other human beings, and with creation. "Our world is the theatre of a battle between good and evil," the Holy Father reminded us:²⁰ and so we again place ourselves before the Lord in the meditation on the Two Standards. There are powerful negative forces in the world, but we are also aware of God's presence permeating this world, inspiring persons of all cultures and religions to promote reconciliation and peace. The world where we work is one of sin and of grace.

Reconciliation with God

19. The *Spiritual Exercises* invite us to a renewed and deepened experience of reconciliation with God in Christ. We are called to share, with joy and respect, the grace of this experience that we have received and that nourishes our hope. Globalisation and new communication technologies have opened up our world and offer us new opportunities to announce with enthusiasm the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom he proclaimed. Our ministries of the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the life of Christ in the sacraments continue to be fundamental for our mission and our lives together as Jesuits. They must be seen as part of the three-fold responsibility that lies at the heart of the deepest nature of the Church: proclamation of the word of God (*kerygma-martyria*), celebrating the sacraments (*leitourgia*), and exercising the ministry of charity (*diakonia*).²¹ In 'J-ā-Bā-Bāp-ē-gō-pā-syā-ā-āy-ndc-bā-[SITā-x0á-cdb'J[J—ós a afe]]b

¹⁹ *Constitutions*, 655-659.

²⁰ *Allocution*, § 6.

²¹ BENEDICT XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (2005), 25.

²² *Allocution*, § 2.

²³ *Allocution*, § 3.

²⁴ *Allocution*, § 4.

outside institutional religion. The *Spiritual Exercises*, which from the start have been a precious instrument in our hands, are today of invaluable assistance to many of our contemporaries. They help us to initiate and to progress in a life of prayer, to search for and to find God in all things, and to discern his will, making faith more personal and more incarnate. Our contemporaries are also helped in the difficult task of feeling a deeper sense of integration in their lives; the experience of the *Exercises* helps them achieve this by entering into a dialogue with God in freedom. We encourage Jesuits to give the *Spiritual Exercises*, "to allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord"²⁵ to lead people to a deeper relationship with God in Christ and through that relationship to service of his Kingdom.

22. We live in a world of many religions and cultures. The erosion of traditional religious beliefs and the tendency to homogenise cultures has strengthened a variety of forms of religious fundamentalism. Faith in God is increasingly being used by some to divide people and communities, to create polarities and tensions which tear at the very fabric of our common social life. All these changes call us to the frontiers of culture and of religion. We need to strengthen and support those Jesuits and collaborators actively involved in the fourfold dialogue recommended by the Church,²⁶ to listen carefully to all,^{ss}

²⁵ *Spiritual Exercises*, 15.

²⁶ Cf. GC 34, D. 5, n. 4: dialogues of life, action, religious experience, and theological exchange.

²⁷ *Allocution*, § 8.

²⁸ *Allocution*, § 8.

²⁹ JOHN PAUL II, *From the Justice of Each Comes the Peace of All, World Day of Peace Message* (

the displaced on one hand, and people who work for the protection of the environment on the o

as a privileged means for the Society to respond adequately to the important intellectual contribution to which the Church calls us. Advanced studies for Jesuits must be encouraged and supported throughout formation.

(iv) The *Inter-provincial Institutions in Rome* are a special mission of the Society received directly from the Holy Father.⁴¹ Ignatius wrote that we should "treat the missions from His Holiness as being most important."⁴² This Congregation

¹ See *Complementary Norms* [NC] 149-156, 252-262; GC 31, D. 17; GC 32, D. 11; GC 34, D. 11.

² Cf. Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH, *The Holy Father's response (21 February 2007)*, Letter to all Major Superiors and electors of GC 35, 2007/03.

³ Vatican II, *Perfectae Caritatis*, 2.

⁴ *Spiritual Exercises*, 45-47.

⁵ *Spiritual Exercises*, 91-100.

⁶ *Spiritual Exercises*, 97, 96.

⁷ *Spiritual Exercises*, 136.

⁸ Jeronimo NADAL, *Orationis Observationes*, § 308, Mi

16. By his resurrection, the Lord continues to be present in the Church through the Spirit, and through the Church he continues to make his voice heard. "Wh

³⁴ Luke 10:16.

³⁵ Formula of the Institute, *Exposcit Debitum* (1550), §3 (MHSI 63, 376).

³⁶ *Constitutions*, 813.

³⁷ NC 149-156.

³⁸ ~~NC 156-158.~~ \$GbbA8

⁴⁵ Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH S.I., *"Sur la vie communautaire" (12 March 1998), AR 22 (1996-2002) 276-289.*

⁴⁶ NC 150-51.

⁴⁷ BENEDICT XVI, *Allocution to the Membe*

place of Christ our Lord for us.”⁵⁴ This is why we speak of being united with the pope effectively and affectively. Taken together, the fourth vow and our ecclesial spirituality move us to offer the service asked of us by the pope.⁵⁵

34. The Society is deeply grateful to God for its vocation to serve the Church and derives great consolation from the innumerable examples of generous Jesuits who offer their lives in service to the mission of Christ throughout the world, making themselves available for missions from the Holy Father and collaborating with local churches under the guidance of their pastors. In the name of the whole Society, the Thirty-Fifth General Congregation asks the Lord’s pardon for those times when its members have been lacking in love, discretion, or faithfulness in their service of the Church. At the same time, this Congregation affirms the Society’s commitment to grow daily in love for the Church and availability to the pope.

VII. Obedience in Daily Life

35. This Congregation does not want to repeat everything set down about obedience in the Constitutions and Complementary Norms; neither does it want to repeat the directives on obedience to be found in the decrees of the most recent General Congregation.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Constitutions*, 552.

⁵⁵ *NC* 253.

⁵⁶ “We can tolerate other religious institutes outdoing us in fasting and in other austerities that they practice according to their Rule, but it is my desire, dear brothers, that those who serve the Lord our God in this Society be outstanding in the purity and perfection of their obedience, the renunciation of their will, and the abnegation of their judgment.” *Letter to the Jesuits of Portugal (26 March 1553)* (MHSI 29, 671).

⁵⁷ *NC* 223 §4.

⁵⁸ GC 34, D. 11

DECREE

GOVERNANCE AT THE SERVICE

OF UNIVERSAL MISSION

Introduction

1. General Congregation 35 establishes three principles to guide our consideration of governance in the Society of Jesus based on the experiences of recent decades and our

3. The revised *FCG* should be approved by GC 36 in its first sessions. After consulting with the Major Superiors and receiving the approval of the General Council by deliberative vote, Father General may approve revisions in the *FCG* that would take effect before GC 36, as well as any related changes in the *Formulae* of the Congregation of Procurators and the Province Congregation.

4. The revision should, in accord with the principles enunciated in the introduction (cf. n. 1), aim at better facilitating the effective, responsible, and adaptable use of the rich diversity of human and material resources that are employed in the preparation and conduct of a General Congregation, for the service of the life and mission of the universal Society. The revision should also respect, among other things, the following:

a) The threefold character of the General Congregation as

a.1. the body which elects the General and which has a major role in the choice of the members of the General Council;

a.2. the highest instance of giving expression to the self-understanding of the universal body of the Society at a given moment; and

a.3. the supreme legislative body of the Society.

b) Given the traditional conviction that a General Congregation is an exceptional occurrence in the governance of the Society, its work should be confined to "matters of greater moment" (*FCG* 1 § 2).

c) The importance of the whole Society's being represented in the General Congregation, especially in the Congregation *ad electionem*. In this context, at least two other matters are to be respected:

c.1. the number of elected members being greater than that of the appointed and ~~exj~~

6. The Congregation of Procurators should be maintained, as representing the “rank and file” of the membership of the Society. As indicated above, however, its *Formula* should be reviewed along with and in consequence of the revision of the *FCG*.

Central Governance

Principle

7. The Superior General is a source of unity in the universal body of the Society.² The Congregation recognizes the rich diversity in the Society’s membership and the inculturation necessary and proper for carrying out our mission within the universal Church and in an increasingly globalized world. As governance in the Society is always measured in an appropriate balance of union and diversity, the office of General must be exercised in a manner which respects diversity while placing it at the service of our universal mission and identity.

Reorganization

8. The General Congregation confirms the procedures to elect the four Assistants *ad providentiam* and to renew Father General’s Council determined by GC 34, d. 23 E, II, 1.

9. In order that the General may have the most effective support for carrying out his responsibilities, he is directed by this General Congregation to undertake a comprehensive review of the central governance of the Society, with a view to reorganization for the service of mission.

10. Included in the purpose of this review is the provision of the resources and staff needed to handle the ordinary business of the Society, while allowing the General the opportunity to do comprehensive apostolic planning and to animate the whole body of the Society.

11. This review should take account of but is not limited to:

a) the framework provided by *NC* 380-386;

b) the need for communication among the various p[

c) Conferences have followed varying courses of development in the Society due to regional differences

b.2. Although the President is endowed with the proper faculties to make decisions, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of his moral authority with the Provincials, which will enable him to propose objectives for collaboration and to promote discerned consensus among the Provincials. He himself needs to be an especially good leader, prudent, tactful, and considerate (cf. *Const.* 667).

c) *Relations with Provincials and Regional Superiors:*

c.1. The existence of Conferences with their Presidents, as well as their decision making authority in the inter- and supra-provincial sphere, implies that Provincials and Regional Superiors are involved in a new way of interconnection and interdependency, and are oriented toward cooperation.

c.2. The President does not have any direct authority in the internal governance of the Provinces nor does he supervise it. Provincials depend directly on the General. They are accountable to him in what concerns the internal governance of Provinces; they are accountable to the President in the strict area of his competence.

c.3. In exercising apostolic leadership, the President should be involved, as appropriate, in the apostolic discernment of Provinces and Regions.

21. The President is also the Major Superior of the common houses and works of the Conference, which the General has designated as such. In this sense,

- a) the President, together with the other Major Superiors, has the responsibility to provide the human and financial resources needed for houses and works dependent on the Conference;
- b) the President hears the manifestation of conscience of the Jesuits assigned on a stable basis to common houses and works;
- c) the President has the responsibility for the ongoing formation and health care of the Jesuits assigned to common houses and works.

22. The President of the Conference attends a General Congregation as an *ex-officio* elector.

23. The Presidents of Conferences shall meet together with the General at least once a year, or whenever called by him for consultation on important matters.⁶

II. Province Governance

The nature of the Province

24. While our vocation is to the universal Society, Provinces have been established for greater apostolic effectiveness and more effective governance so that the specific articulation of a Jesuit's mission is the direct result of the animating leadership of the Provincial.

⁵ The second sentence of GC 34, D. 21, n. 24 is thus modified.

⁶ Cf. GC 34, D. 21, n. 25.

Essential in this governance is the manifestation of conscience, conducted in an atmosphere of transparency and trust that enable the Provincial to assign men to specific ministries after discerning carefully how the holy desires, needs and gifts of his men meet the needs of the Province's apostolic plan and works alongside those of the Conference as well as the apostolic preferences established by the General.

25. Through the centuries, the structure of Province governance has had much to commend it in apostolic and administrative efficiency; respect for varied cultural, linguistic, national and regional traditions; and the effective uniting of *cura personalis* with *cura apostolica*. Given today's globalized context within which Jesuits exercise ministry, sophisticated communications technologies, growing apostolic networks, and transnational realities, new challenges and new opportunities for ministry require reflection, formation, and concerted action that enables us to think and act across Province and even Conference boundaries.

This constantly evolving context calls for greater and better coordination and cooperation among Provinces (for example, in apostolic planning and financial administration) at the service of our universal mission. It also suggests a need for consideration of how Provinces can best be governed including the regular evaluation and review of effective governance, apostolic plans, administration of apostolic resources, and engagement with other Provinces through Conference structures (cf. *supra* nn.19-20).

26. With a view towards better serving our universal mission, the General Congregation requests the General to commission a process of reflection on the following issues: *How can we better serve our universal mission through greater coordination and cooperation among Provinces? How can we better serve our universal mission through greater engagement with other Provinces through Conference structures?*

d) the Commission on Ministries (cf. NC 260 § 1) be an effective instrument for apostolic planning and its review, especially as this relates to established works and ministries of the Province, the creation of new apostolic works, and the ongoing apostolic formation of collaborators.

e) the legal and economic aspects of any decision should be considered.

f) there be structures for implementation and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of Province plans.

Apostolic Works of the Province

29. Another critical aspect of the Provincial's governance is comprehensive care for the Province's apostolic works, including a thorough evaluation of their contribution to the Society's mission and of their Jesuit character. These works should be visited regularly by the Provincial (or his delegate) (cf. NC 391 § 3), a report of which is to be included in his letters to the General. When the director of a work is someone other than a Jesuit, that director is expected to report on the work during the Provincial's visitation. A comprehensive articulation of the relationship between apostolic works (including international works of the Society) and the Province is expected and would include written agreements as helpful or required.

Training for Leadershi

32. In addition to leadership training courses or workshops, there is great value in using forms of apprenticeship and mentoring. In appropriate ways potential leaders can be identified and be put in situations where they can learn from an experienced and wise leader.

III. Local Governance

Local Superior

Principles

33. The effectiveness of the local superior is critical to the apostolic vitality of the Jesuit community as a sign to the world of the Reign of God which we proclaim by our lives together. For Ignatius, love for the members of his community was to be the distinguishing mark of the Jesuit Superior.¹⁰ From that starting point, the Superior can encourage the mission of apostolic men and ensure the quality of religious and community life that enables them to fulfil their mission.¹¹

In a spirit of service, the Superior supports the members in their apostolic responsibilities and religious lives as servants of Christ's mission. These duties require an intimate knowledge of each man made possible by regular spiritual conversation and, where appropriate, manifestation of conscience. With such aids, the Superior can help each Jesuit to see how his apostolic work, assigned by the Major Superior, is properly integrated into the universal mission of the Society of Jesus.

b) It is fundamental that every Jesuit be able to maintain a direct relationship with his Major Superior; but ready access to modern communication technologies can facilitate bypassing the local superior to directly communicate with the Major Superior in ways which undermine the proper relationship with the local superior.

c) It is often too easy to minimize the importance of decision making at the local level by concentrating too much authority at the provincial level, in apparent violation of the principle of subsidiarity in governance.

d) In some circumstances, relationships between local superiors and the director of the work, whether Jesuit or not, are a source of confusion and even conflict.

Recommendations

36. The General Congregation recommends that, in each Province or Conference of Major Superiors, formation sessions be developed in order to assist new superiors to come to an understanding of the work of the Society.

DECREE

COLLABORATION

AT THE HEART OF MISSION¹

Encouraging the dynamism initiated by GC34

1. When Jesus wanted to teach his disciples about the power of the word of God, which every Jesuit ministry proclaims, he began: "Listen! Imagine a sower going out to sow."² He explained how some seed falls upon rocky ground, some among weeds, and other upon fertile soil where it yields a rich harvest. In his allocution to the members of GC 35, Pope Benedict XVI stressed the importance of the mission in which we are all engaged: "make the face of the Lord known to so many for whom it remains hidden or unrecognisable."³ He told us that the Church needs the Society, counts on it to "reach the geographical and spiritual places where others do not reach or find it difficult to reach."⁴

2. As men sent by the Vicar of Christ, we are led more and more to offer our gifts and to share with others the Good News of the Kingdom. Following the inspiration of the Second Vatican Council, the Society of Jesus has been transformed by a profound movement of the Spirit. Recognising this, GC 34 approved the decree, "Cooperation with the Laity in Mission," that both affirmed and encouraged apostolic collaboration, calling on Jesuits to cooperate with others in their projects and in ours.⁵ GC 35, reviewing our own life and service to the Church, and noting how the seeds which have been scattered through the inspiration of GC34 are yielding a harvest "thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold,"⁶ renews our commitment to **alpatha**

¹ 'Collaboration in mission' is described in different ways in various languages across the Society: Ignatian apostolic partners, partnership in mission, companions, collaborators, co-workers, colleagues. The common aspiration is apostolic companionship based on discernment and oriented towards service. In this document, we have simply used the word 'collaboration.'

² Mark 4:3.

³ BENEDICT XVI, *Allocution to the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (21 February 2008)*, §4 (Allocution).

⁴ *Allocution*, §2.

⁵ GC 34, D. 13, n.7.

⁶ Mark 4:8.

Challenges and Responses since GC34

4. Since GC 34 we have learned much. In some regions the development of collaboration has been limited because the participation of lay people in the local Church is minimal. In other regions, where Christians are in the minority, the challenge rests on bringing an awareness of the Ignatian charism to those whose spiritual experiences are often far different. Furthermore, in places oppressed by mass culture, the distractions of exaggerated individualism and consumerism have encouraged resistance to the powerful call of community and service found in our mission. Furthermore, our own uncertainty, born of the changing face of our ministries in a time of growing collaboration, has led to some hesitation and even resistance to a full engagement with the call of GC 34.

5. At the same time, the powerful spirit acknowledged and encouraged by GC 34 has not been idle, and for every challenge greater creativity and zeal have been the response. Numerous programmes of Ignatian formation have grown up around the world, adapted to various cultures and contexts.

8.3 What bonds might

c) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to develop tool

21. Recommendations:

- a) We encourage Conferences and Assistancies to examine the program of Jesuit formation to ensure that all men in formation have appropriate experience of collaborative ministry.
- b) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to assist in the continuing development of opportunities and structures for the on-going formation of Jesuits in collaborative ministry.
- c) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to assist in the continuing development of opportunities and structures for the formation of others who collaborate in the mission of the Society.
- d) We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to ensure the development of opportunities and structures for the appropriate formation of those in leadership positions in Jesuit ministries.

What Connections Might Make our Work More Fruitful?

22. As means of communication develop, the Society works more effectively as an international body and seeks synergies in service of its universal mission. Jesuits are often engaged beyond their province boundaries in national and international networks and in collaboration with a variety of persons, including other Jesuits. Some of these international networks such as Jesuit Refugee Service, Fe y Alegría, and the Global Justice Center are examples of such networks.

fragile world, many hands are surely needed. Collaboration in mission is the way we respond to this situation: it expresses our true identity as members of the Church, the complementarity of our diverse calls to holiness,¹⁶ our mutual responsibility for the mission of Christ,¹⁷ our desire to join people of good will in the service of the human family, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is a grace given to us in this moment, one consistent with our Jesuit way of proceeding.

¹⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Vita Consecrata*, 12.

¹⁷ 1 Cor 12:12 ff.

In Africa good work is being done in Jesuit institutions and there are advocacy efforts to prevent the forced displacement of people and the exploitation of resources. These initiatives, however, are not

² Africa is one of the global preferences established by Decree 3, n. 39 (i).

³ BENEDICT XVI, *"To the members of the Society of Jesus" (22 April 2006)*, AR 23.4 (2006) 676-679, *"Discourse to the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus" (21 February 2008)*.

⁴ The intellectual apostolate is another of the global preferences established by the GC35 Decree 3, n 39 (iii).

⁵ The Roman Houses are another of the global preferences established by the Decree. The intellectual apostolate is another of the global preferences established by the GC35 Decree 3, n 39 (iv).

⁶ Cfr. GC 35, D. 3, n. 29

Brothers: The commission appointed by the 35th General Congregation was composed mostly of brothers and presented several practical proposals in a plenary session.

The commission first proposed that the government of the Society always keep the brothers in mind when planning programs for studies for Jesuits in formation.

It was suggested there be some programs of formation specifically for brothers, as is already being done in some parts of the Society. The “Alphonsus Month” would be an example. Attention should be given to the ongoing formation of formed brothers.

Youth Ministry: Although only three postulates on this topic were received, the General Congregation decided to appoint a commission to study the issue.

¹² This is another global preference established in GC35, D. 3, n° 39 (v).

¹³ Cfr. United Nations: *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)*, page 1.

Vocations: The commission evaluated the impleme

¹⁴ Peter-Hans KOLVENBACH S.I., *"Sobre la promoción de vocaciones"* (29 September 1997), AR 22 (1996-2002) 158-161.

LET

The challenges that faced the Society in the years of your generalate were considerable. These were years of rapid change both in the Church and in the wider world, changes from which the Society could not be, nor would wish to be, immune.

It was your gift to motivate us to take up the opportunities for mission provided by these new contexts. As our work expanded on the new geographic

COLENTAR DOCUMENTATION

TO THE REVEREND FATHER
ETER-HANS OL ENACH S,
SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

1. On the occasion of the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, it is my ferH

maintain it in the channel of its founding charism. For objective reasons, you have at var

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS
· BENEDICT THE SIXTEENTH

that they do not recognize him as the Saviour, are far away not so much from the geographical point of view as from the cultural one. The obstacles challenging the evangelisers are not so much the seas or the long distances as the frontiers that, due to a mistaken or superficial vision of God and of man, are raised between faith and human knowledge, faith and modern science, faith and the fight for justice.

4. This is why the Church is in urgent need of people of solid and deep faith, of a serious culture and a genuine human and social sensitivity, of religious priests who devote their lives to stand on those frontiers in order to witness and help to understand that there is in fact a profound harmony between faith and reason, between evangelical spirit, thirst for justice and action for peace. Only thus will it be possible to make the face of the Lord known.

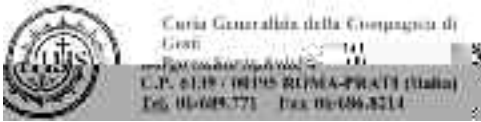
genuine Ignatian sense of “feeling with the Church and in the Church – to “love and serve” the Vw



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THE HOL FATHERS

*Paterson Harris - 11 November in
London*



LETTER TO HIS HOLINESS · BENEDICT XVI

HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
Vatican City

Most Holy Father,

The General Congregation has received with profound attention and gratitude the message that His Holiness, Pope Benedict

Papa Karol Wojtyła
16 Novembre 2005

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FIRST GREETINGS

TO THE HOLE SOCIET

Dear Friends in the Lord,

This is the first time I write to you since the election, exactly one month ago, on January 19. I think you can easily imagine the surprise, even shock, I received with the election. I had considered myself out of bounds because of my age, without entering into the long series of inadequacies and shortcomings that are well known to those with whom I have lived and worked.

Maybe the most difficult thing to explain is the experience we all went through on those days, searching in the fog, looking for the Will of God and the good of the Church and the Society. It was this intense, sincere and open search that made it impossible for me to decline or refuse the choice. You cannot say "no" to people so sincerely looking for the Will of God. And now I assure you that I will give all my energy and person to the work of helping the Society move forward, supporting what is good, responding to new challenges, encouraging to face the difficult task of being consistent with and credible witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that we believe in.

The task is daunting, the service needed is unlimited, the pace of change in our world is dizzying; we could not even dream of contributing to the mission of our Society if the Lord were not with us, guiding, supporting and comforting us with his Spirit. We will be led and supported by this Spirit



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LETTER

*Pellegrini - 16 Novembre in
Loreto*

HOIL OF HIS E INENCE
THE OST RE, EREND FRANC CARD ROD C



Dear members of the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus,

St Ignatius considered the General Congregation “work and a distraction” (Const. 677) which momentarily interrupts the apostolic commitments of a large number of qualified members of the Society of Jesus and for this reason, clearly differing from what is customary in other religious Institutes, the Constitutions establish that it should be celebrated at determined times and not too often.

Nevertheless, it must be called principally on two occasions: for the election of the Superior General and when things of particular importance or very difficult problems which touch the body of the Society must be treated.

This is the second time in the history of the Society wherein a General Congregation gathers to elect a new Superior General while his predecessor is still living. The first time was in 1983, when the XXXIII General Congregation accepted the resignation of the much loved Fr. Arrupe, for whom the exercising of the role of governance had become impossible, due to a serious and unforeseen illness. Today it gathers a second time, to discern, before the Lord, the resignation presented by Fr. Kolvenbach, who has directed the Society for nearly twenty-five years with wisdom, prudence, commitment and loyalty. This will be followed by the election of his successor. I wish to express to you, Fr. Kolvenbach, in my name and in the name of the Church, a heartfelt thanks for your fidelity, your wisdom, your righteousness and your example of humility and poverty, Thank you Fr. Kolvenbach.

The election of a new Superior General of the Society of Jesus has a fundamental value for the life of the Society, not only because its centralized hierarchical structure constitutionally concedes to the General full authority for good governance, the conservation and growth of the whole Society, but also because as Saint Ignatius says so well, “the wellbeing of the head resounds throughout the whole body and as are the Superiors so are the members.”

Within your charism and your tradition you can find valuable points of reference to enlighten the choices which the Society must make today.

Certainly and necessarily, during this Congregation you are carrying out an important work but it is not a "distraction" from your apostolic activity. As St Ignatius teaches you in the *Spiritual Exercises* you must with the same vision of the three Divine Persons, look at "the entire surface of the earth crammed with men" (n 102) Listening to the Spirit, the creator who renews the world and returning to the fonts to preserve your identity without losing your own lifestyle, the commitment to discern the signs of the times, the difficulty and responsibility of working out

us, he gives us faith in him and in his Spouse, which is the Church. Without the gift of faith in the Church there can be no

Ignatian phrase must be an instrument united to God . It is the Ignatian echo to the Gospel proclaimed today: *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit* (Jn.15, 15). Union with the vine, which is love, is realized only through a personal and silent exchange of love which is born in prayer, "from the internal knowledge of the Lord who became man for me and who, integral and alive, extends himself to all who are close to us and to all that is close to us." It is not possible to transform the world, or to respond to the challenges of a world which has forgotten love, without being firmly rooted in love.

Ignatius was granted the mystic grace of being "a contemplative in action" (annotation to the Examine MNAD 5, 172). It was a special grace freely given by God to Ignatius who had trodden a tiring path of fidelity and long hours of prayer in the Retreat at Manresa. It is a grace which, according to Fr. Nadal, is con-

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HOMILY OF FR. FRANCIS CASE, S.J.,



ASSOCIATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

These days the General Congregation, in the persons of the Electors, is passing through a moment of profound obedience on behalf of the entire Society of Jesus. It has been and will be for many one of the most meaningful and memorable acts of obedience of your Jesuit lives. The word "obedience" comes from the Latin root *audire*, to hear or to listen. You have been listening to the Spirit of the Lord, both in personal prayer and in your conversations with one another. The election of a new Superior General today is a key fruit of this listening. It takes place here in Rome in the context of and in solid continuity with the Society's founding over four and a half centuries ago, so that we might "serve the Lord alone and the church, his spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth." It takes place also in the context of today's first reading from Paul's letter to the Corinthians describing the gifts of the Spirit to the Church we serve, gifts packaged in a variety of mixes in the men you have been considering these past four days.

In today's gospel we see Jesus, after his resurrection, breathing on his apostles, giving them the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins. This Holy Spirit, whom Jesus gives, will abide in the Church to remind us of who Jesus was and of what he said and did, and to guide us in carrying His message faithfully to all the cultures and historical epochs where the gospel has been preached and is being preached today. In reminding us of who Jesus was and what he said and did, the Holy Spirit will guide us in carrying His message faithfully to all the cultures and historical epochs where the gospel has been preached and is being preached today.

HOIL OF FATHER GENERAL ADOLFO NICOLAS GESU' CHURCH

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ASS ON THAN SGLING

Above all I would like to say that this is not a message for the whole world. Rather, it is merely a simple homily; a prayerful reflection of today's readings for us Jesuits who are here this afternoon.

The first reading taken from the prophet Isaiah briefly describes to us Christians our mission in the world. The prophet Isaiah tells us that we have all been called to serve, that we are here precisely to serve. It is a clear message regarding our mission as Jesuits, as Christians, as the people of God. God has made us servants and, in so doing, God finds delight. The Spanish version of this first reading says that God is proud of the servant, while the Italian version says that God "is satisfied." I believe the latter is closer to what the Bible wants to say. The more we become as servants, the more pleased God is. I think this is an image we should all take home today.

Newspapers and magazines these past few days have been toying with a number of clichés, namely, the Black Pope, the White Pope, power, gatherings, discussions...But it is all so superficial, so artificial! These are but crumbs for those who love politics, but they are not for us.

The prophet Isaiah says that serving pleases the Lord. To serve is what counts: to serve the Church, the world, our fellow men and women, and the Gospel. Saint Ignatius also has written in summary form about our life: in all things to love and to serve. And our pope, Holy Father Benedict XVI, has reminded us that God is love; he has reminded us of the Gospel's essence.

Later on the prophet Isaiah describes the servant's strength. God is the servant's only strength. We do not have any other source of strength: not the external strength found in politics, in business, in the media, in studies, in titles, nor the internal fortitude found in

reáSaTã—xO['aáStJ—óOáSrTX]bã—rTã—xã—xOpttOáSsTbã—xx
tOáSStmSj]p-[oáSOj]flaxOáOpTãáSs]-TãáSxO]yed]d]L]bOáS

today. However, there may be other nations, other non-geographic communities, human communities, that claim our aid: the p

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In all things. This is not an act of heroism; it is a way of life. This is what we have prayed for these two months.

The Gospel takes us still further. It tells us that everything we have done is for mission. I did not choose the Gospel text for our Mass here in the Gesù. Others chose the mission of Christ as the text. At the very heart of the sending is the "remaining." We are sent, as you have discussed these days and indicated in the documents. We are sent because we have entered into Christ and it is Christ who has sent us. The mission has its source, its zampilla as the Italians say

fruits you will know who is true and who is not." Our question, then, must always be this: What signs do we need in our parishes, our schools, our services and all our works?

Now I conclude for today. I belie

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