

ASSEMBLY THEOLOGY AND SACRAMENTALITY IN JESUIT SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This thesis proposes a connection between the theology of the assembly and the education offered by the Society of Jesus in its schools. For young people, the school should be a place where they learn that life in community is the fullest form of life. Sacramentality is a constitutive dimension of the Church and the Christian faith, and inspires us to live our faith in all situations and circumstances.

As a result, liturgy has a significant impact on the formation and transformation of the Christian community. It is essential that the liturgy is adequate to allow members to express their faith in God and experience God's life through the love they receive for the world.

Although not all students in Jesuit schools are Catholic, the Jesuit school is an assembly where all members must develop a sacramental look at reality. Liturgy can be a link between all these elements, for when it is “sacramentally adequate,” it is a source of nourishment and continual conversion for the faith life of a Christian community.

In summary, this thesis argues that assembly theology and Jesuit education must go together to form a sacramentally adequate Christian community where the liturgy is a source of ongoing transformation and conversion.

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INTRODUCTION

Jesuit schools are places of formation and faith experience for the educational community; how can a solid theology of the assembly celebrating the liturgy influence the sacramentality within these schools?

The pandemic of COVID-19 has put even more focus on the importance of gathering people. We saw this clearly in two dimensions of life, the gathering of liturgical assemblies and school. During the pandemic, several issues arose regarding the liturgical assembly. The fact that people could not gather in person made us go back to the fundamentals of the liturgical gathering, thinking of the assembly as the subject of the liturgy. Taking Louis-Marie Chauvet's sacramental theology as a basis, it will be helpful to see what place the assembly has in his sacramental theology. More recently, Gordon W. Lathrop has also worked on this theme. We will also engage this theologian from the Lutheran tradition and see which of his contributions we can apply to the sacramental practice in the schools of the Society.

Jesuit schools are places where we want to foster a personal relationship with God and its communal expression. This is reflected in the most recent documents of the Society of Jesus that deal with educational issues. The recent pandemic has emphasized the need to think about relationships in the school context on a strictly pedagogical and didactic level and in a broader context of the school community that includes students, educators, families, and the local

community. In this sense, how do we reconcile a solid theology of liturgical assembly with sacramentality in a Jesuit school?

The reconciliation happens because the liturgical assembly nourishes the school assembly, and the latter brings its reality to God through liturgical celebrations. We will see that, with its particular characteristics, the Jesuit school can be paralleled *mutatis mutandis* to a liturgical assembly. In terms of what the Society dreams it should be, the school community is a place where one can naturally educate to sacramentality. Thus, we intend to show that constituting itself as an assembly allows the Jesuit school in a more effective way to educate its community to see the world as a place where God manifests himself and, in the same way, the place where we have the opportunity to educate for a response to that manifestation.

Three chapters will be developed to respond in a structured way to our fundamental question. The first chapter will aim to present the theology of the liturgical assembly; the second, the challenges of the educational community; and the third, the consequences of thinking sacramentally about the school community.

To understand in-depth the theology of the liturgical assembly, we have to start from the Bible. We will deepen the biblical vocabulary for the reality of the assembly and try to understand its various meanings and consequences. Also, the Early Church can help illuminate our understanding of gathering together for worship. Thus, we will follow the rhythm of the early Christian assembly under the watchful eye of the authors of *Didache*, the *Apostolic Tradition*, the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, as well as Ignatius of Antioch and John Chrysostom. Taking a temporal leap, we will note the assembly's return to the magisterium discourse to echo its meaning in Scripture and the Early Church. Finally, we will see what space the assembly occupies in the sacramental theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet, knowing that the theologian

considers the assembly of Christians gathered in the name of Christ or in his memory as the first sacramental representation of the presence of Christ.

In the second chapter, *Challenges in the Education Community*, we will begin by characterizing today's youth. We will deal with data from the Portuguese and Spanish realities and some from the American reality. This clarification will help us to have a more precise reading of the documents of the Society of Jesus about education. We will give special attention to the four essential documents published between 1980 and 2019, the cycle of world meetings on education, and the Society's document that establishes the Universal Apostolic Preferences for 2019-2029, which also has implications in the field of education.

The path taken in the first two chapters will allow us to enter the third chapter. We will begin by justifying that we can consider the school as an assembly, recognizing the similarities and differences of this approach. Starting again from Chauvet, we will reflect on how we can think of the school sacramentally, now making a connection with the documents studied in the second chapter. We will end our journey by presenting some challenges. We do it in the light of the Ignatian category of *cura personalis* and the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm* that guides the action of the Society in the school environment.

In summary, we will show how Jesuit schools are favorable places for developing a sacramental vision of reality by being the image of a liturgical assembly.

1 THEOLOGY OF THE LITURGICAL ASSEMBLY

*When the day of Pentecost had come,
they were all together in one place. (Acts 2:1)*

Every epoch is composed of change, it is true. But ours has the particularity of being constituted as a change of epoch. This will be the great difference of our epoch and the unavoidable challenge that it constitutes, specifically, for the Catholic Church. “One could say that today we are not living an epoch of change so much as an epochal change,”¹ Pope Francis acknowledged in 2015 during a meeting with the participants of the Fifth Congress of the Italian Church in Florence. This is not a play on words. It is data, in fact, to access. In 2019, in a speech to the Roman Curia, he used the same expression to add that “We find ourselves living at a time when change is no longer linear, but epochal. It entails decisions that rapidly transform our ways of living, of relating to one another, of communicating and thinking, of how different generations relate to one another and how we understand and experience faith and science.”² A long historical cycle closes, giving us a glimpse of the progressive formation of another, with radically new characteristics.

¹ Francis, “Meeting with the Participants in the 5th Convention of the Italian Church,” 2015, accessed February 14, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/november/documents/papa-francesco_20151110_firenze-convegno-chiesa-italiana.html.

² Francis, “Audience of the Holy Father to the Roman Curia on the Occasion of the Presentation of Christmas Greetings,” last modified 2019, accessed February 14, 2023, <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/21/1022/02087.html#inglese>.

Aware that this epoch of change also has implications in liturgical terms, I propose an analysis of the assembly as the subject of the liturgy. To do so, I will divide this first chapter into four sections. First, I will address the biblical foundations of the assembly. In the second, I will explore how early Christians understood the assembly and what role it played in their lives. I will then go through the various documents of the liturgical reform and finally analyze the place that the assembly occupies in Chauvet's sacramental theology.

1.1 BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

It seems essential to take as a starting point what Chauvet assumes from the thought of P. Bégurier “the bible is born of the liturgy.”³ The two authors are not radical with this thesis. It is clear that we cannot absolutize the origin of all Sacred Scripture in a liturgical environment. But we cannot deny (1) “the importance of the ‘high places’ and ‘sanctuaries’ as places of pilgrimage from the time of the conquest;”⁴ (2) that several biblical texts as we know them have survived thanks to their proclamation in a liturgical environment; (3) if the three great pilgrimage feasts - Passover, Pentecost, and Tents - have been preserved in the bible, it is because they underwent, through a liturgical memorial, a reconversion into history; (4) the significant founding events of Israel are presented to us in the bible through liturgical recitations;⁵ (5) if the covenantal liturgies appear as such only in four moments of Israel's history, it is because these four are particularly

³ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence* (Collegeville, Minneapolis: Liturgical Press, 1995), 190.

⁴ Ibid., 191.

⁵ Ibid., 192.

significant.⁶ What Chauvet wants to demonstrate is that the bible does not exist as such or only by itself; it exists only in the hands of the *ecclesia*.⁷

David N. Power said, “it is not to be lightly assumed that the Word of God is transmitted simply through the scriptures, or even through the reading of the scriptures, even when as befits a culture of writing this remains a primary referent. In fact, however, it is the living word within the community that counts in liturgical action, as it connects with the living word of Christian behavior.”⁸ Aware of the scope of his words, it seems essential to see how Scripture speaks to us about the assembly itself.

The *Letter to the Galatians*, Lathrop explains,⁹ presents the assembly theme as a particularity; in it Paul addresses the assemblies of Galatia - *ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας*¹⁰ - in the plural. We are accustomed in modern translations to seeing this Greek expression from Gal 1:2 translated “to the churches of Galatia,”¹¹ but Jürgen Roloff clarifies that *ἐκκλησία* can also mean assembly of the people, (assembly of the) community, and only thirdly translates it by Church.¹² Lathrop points out with several examples¹³ that it seems obvious in the Pauline writings, but also from the author’s account of 1 Peter,¹⁴ that there was a diversity of *ἐκκλησίαι*

⁶ Ibid., 194.

⁷ Ibid., 210.

⁸ David N. Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God’s Giving* (New York: Crossroad Pub., 1999), 26.

⁹ Gordon W. Lathrop, “Assembly: A Biblical-Liturgical Reality We Will Need Again,” *Worship*, no. 95 (April 2021): 130. The argument is developed in Gordon W. Lathrop, *The Assembly: A Spirituality* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2022), 18.

¹⁰ Barbara Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 2007). All quotes from the New Testament in Greek are taken from this edition.

¹¹ Unless otherwise stated, the Bible texts are from the NAB translation.

¹² Jürgen Roloff, “ἐκκλησία,” ed. Horst Robert Balz, Omero Soffritti, and Gerhard Schneider, *Dizionario esegetico del Nuovo Testamento*, 015 (Brescia: Paideia, 2004), 1092.

¹³ There were assemblies in Judea (Gal 1:22), in Macedonia (2 Cor 8:1) and in Asia (1 Cor 1:2). Lathrop, *The Assembly*, 18.

¹⁴ Lathrop, “Assembly: A Biblical-Liturgical Reality We Will Need Again,” 130.

in Asia Minor and Rome. In the latter case, the sixteenth chapter of Romans even makes us aware that in the same city, there are several house-assemblies.¹⁵

However, the same Paul uses the word “assembly” in the singular, for example, in the very first chapter of the Letter to the Galatians “For you heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God” (Gal 1:13) - τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ. When used in the singular, the term ἐκκλησία seems to refer to the whole Church, to the union of all assemblies.¹⁶ What Roloff makes us note is that for the New Testament, the differentiation between ἐκκλησία (assembly) as an association of Christians in a particular place and ἐκκλησία (Church) as a congregating reality of all assemblies is totally strange. What the New Testament authors see in the ἐκκλησία is more of a theological reality than an organizational reality. The two realities equally and legitimately form the ἐκκλησία constituted by God.¹⁷ Roloff further emphasizes that when ἐκκλησία appears alone, when it is an ecclesiological term, we are to imply the τοῦ θεοῦ, the ἐκκλησία is of God, as *genitivus auctoris*.¹⁸

Although Matthew is the only Gospel writer who uses the term ἐκκλησία (16:18), recent studies of all the Gospels indicate that they were all written with the intention of being read within a community of believers. Lathrop notes that Mark, for example, depicts a clear image of such a community gathered in a house in Galilee, which is located at the very center of the book (Mark 9:33-37). Moreover, the circular structure of Mark’s Gospel suggests that its conclusion is meant to point readers towards this community, where they can witness the risen Christ.¹⁹

¹⁵ We can find other house-assemblies in Rom 16:4; 1 Cor 16:19; Phlm 2; and Col 4:15. Lathrop, *The Assembly*, 18–19.

¹⁶ Lathrop, “Assembly: A Biblical-Liturgical Reality We Will Need Again,” 131.

¹⁷ Roloff, “ἐκκλησία,” 1094.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1096.

¹⁹ Lathrop, *The Assembly*, 20.

So far, we have focused on the use of the word “assembly” in the New Testament, but some authors²⁰ hold that the word *ἐκκλησία* has older roots and that it is the translation that the LXX used in Greek for the Hebrew *qahal* (assembly, assembly of God’s people). While acknowledging that this is a hypothesis and even the most commonly accepted one, Roloff considers it unlikely.²¹ The word *qahal* is translated in the LXX not only by *ἐκκλησία*, but also by συναγωγή, and the latter has the most theological density for the designation of the community of salvation. Except for Acts 7:38, there is no evidence in the New Testament of a direct correlation of the term *ἐκκλησία* with a concept that would be so important in the Hebrew Scriptures. Judith M. Kubicki,²² however, points out that in Deuteronomy 5:19, 23:2-9, 1 Chronicles 28:8, Numbers 16:3, 20:4, and Micah 2:5.15 *qahal* has the sense of assembly of people gathered by the Lord to live in his presence. For the theologian, these passages not only focus on the divine initiative of the call and how that divine initiative constitutes the assembly but also portray that call as the source of the unity of the people. Thus, for both Kubicki and Lathrop,²³ the parallels with the Jewish use of *qahal* are clear. The example he presents is when the word *ἐκκλησία* is used to describe the early Christian community at Pentecost, seeing in it the eschatological continuation of the Sinai desert community. As at Sinai, at Pentecost, the community is described as being united in prayer, waiting for God to manifest himself. The novelty in Pentecost is that the manifestation is effected through Christ and in the Spirit.²⁴ This

²⁰ Judith Marie Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 38.

²¹ Roloff, “ἐκκλησία,” 1095.

²² Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 38.

²³ Lathrop, “Assembly: A Biblical-Liturgical Reality We Will Need Again,” 132.

²⁴ Joseph Lécuyer, “The Liturgical Assembly: Biblical and Patristic Foundations,” in *The Church Worships*, ed. Johannes Wagner and Heinrich Rennings, Concilium: liturgy in the age of renewal 12 (New York, N.Y.; Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1966), 5.

manifestation has a framework that seems relevant to us: on the one hand, the community gathering, and on the other, the expectation with which it gathers.

Kubicki lists the key moments of the assembly in the Pauline writings, giving particular emphasis to the charisms received according to the needs of the *ἐκκλησία*. In this regard, Lécuyer notes that Paul sees these charisms or gifts of the Spirit as a significant manifestation of Christ's presence in the assembly.²⁵

Kubicki brings one more element to the discussion. In addition to *ἐκκλησία*, the New Testament writings also use the Greek word *κοινωνία* to express the idea of an assembly gathered in Christ. It seems crucial because it expresses the identity of the assembly itself. *Koinonía* means communion, participation.²⁶ Paul's use of the word in 1 Corinthians 1:9 captures the reality by which Christians participate or share in the life of Jesus Christ: "God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." In sharing the life of Christ, the members of the assembly are thus in communion with God and with each other through the one Spirit.²⁷ Their living in fellowship through the Spirit allows, as David Power says, that "The Word gives itself delightfully in its own polysemy, allowing the promise of God's kingdom to come about in different ways, as communities in their own experience of life find the meaning of their sacraments in these narratives."²⁸

In his writings, Lathrop gives much importance, on the one hand, to the pastoral question that would be in Paul's mind for the use of the word *ἐκκλησία*, and on the other hand, to the eschatological dimension. Concerning the pastoral question, Lathrop argues that Paul wanted the

²⁵ Ibid., 8.

²⁶ Josef Hainz, "κοινωνία," ed. Horst Robert Balz, Omero Soffritti, and Gerhard Schneider, *Dizionario esegetico del Nuovo Testamento*, 015 (Brescia: Paideia, 2004), 63–64.

²⁷ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 40.

²⁸ Power, *Sacrament*, 154.

association with the Hellenic world not to create ambiguity. To demonstrate the eschatological character of the *ἐκκλησία*, the Lutheran theologian states that each local assembly (singular) around the Gospel of Jesus Christ and all assemblies as a single reality (plural), by God's gift, were already God's holy convocation around the life-giving word and feast.²⁹ Second, with this thought, Lathrop concludes that "'Assembly' then is not just a local meeting; it is a local meeting in the name and the presence of Jesus Christ, convoked by the Spirit of God, bearing witness to the word and mercy of God present in the world."³⁰

The next section explores whether this sense of *ἐκκλησία* as found in Scripture had continuity in the experience of early church Christians.

1. 2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ASSEMBLY IN THE EARLY CHURCH

After taking some time to understand what Sacred Scripture says about the assembly, we propose looking at early Christians' accounts to try to understand their conception of the assembly. We will analyze the *Didache*, the *Apostolic Tradition*, the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, some letters of Ignatius of Antioch, and a homily by John Chrysostom.

1.2.1 Didache

Let us begin with the *Didache*, also known as *The Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, because it is a document that provides important information about the liturgical action of the

²⁹ Lathrop, "Assembly: A Biblical-Liturgical Reality We Will Need Again," 133–134.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

period between 80 and 130 d.C.³¹ Here the preserved oral tradition of the practices of the domestic churches in the generation immediately following the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has been collected. In Aaron Milavec's view, the *Didache* "reveals more about how Christians saw themselves and how they lived their everyday lives than any book in the Christian Scriptures."³² The chapters that make the most direct reference to the liturgy are chapters 7-10 and 14-15. In the following, we will develop four references listed by Kubicki regarding gathering the community for the Eucharist.³³

The first reference appears in 9:4 and the second in 10:5. The first is part of a prayer that is recited at a thanksgiving meal - Περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐχαριστίας (9:1): "As this fragment of bread was scattered upon the mountains and was gathered to become one, so may your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom. For the glory and the power are yours through Jesus Christ forever."³⁴ Moreover, the second is part of a prayer for the unity of the Church: "Remember your Church, O Lord; save it from all evil, and perfect it in your love. And gather it from the four winds into your kingdom, which you prepared for it. For yours is the power and the glory forever."³⁵ The passage in 9:4, Kubicki reminds us, is quite recognizable because it continues to be used in various hymns even today. The assembly, the ἐκκλησία, is here primarily described as being "gathered together." Milavec suggests that we should interpret the word ἐκκλησία in this segment and also in 10:5 not as a place of worship nor as a local community or religious organization. Instead, ἐκκλησία in this context refers to what he calls the

³¹ Keith F. Pecklers, *Liturgia: la dimensione storica e teologica del culto cristiano e le sfide del domani*, *Giornale di teologia* 326 (Brescia: Queriniana, 2007), 51.

³² Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary*, Old Testament message (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2003), ix.

³³ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 41–43.

³⁴ "Didache," in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Loeb classical library 24 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 9:4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 10:5.

global gathering of the elect. It is the event by which the Father summons and gathers the elect from the world's far corners.³⁶

Supported by the thought of Kurt Niederwimmer, Kubicki sees in the assembly an eschatological and future event of the Church that was scattered over the mountains and then gathered from the four winds into the Kingdom of God. This eschatological event we already saw in Paul in the previous section.

Chapter 14 describes the Eucharist on the Lord's Day and explains that a confession of sins and reconciliation must precede it. "On the Lord's own day, when you gather together, break bread and give thanks [Or: celebrate the eucharist] after you have confessed your unlawful deeds, that your sacrifice may be pure."³⁷ The novelty here is that the gathering takes place on Lord's Day. It is important to note that those who gather are asked to confess so that their sacrifice may be pure. We are looking at a double sign of unity, not just physical unity, of their being gathered in the same place, but of an effective unity of hearts that will enable them to celebrate the eucharist in full communion.

In the last chapter of the *Didache*, the gathering is insisted upon again, and this time there is an appeal to be frequent: "Gather together frequently, seeking what is suitable for your souls. For the entire time of your faith will be of no use to you if you are not found perfect at the final moment."³⁸ This interpellation appears in an eschatological context, for the chapter opens with an imperative "Be watchful." Thus, the "Gather together frequently" guarantees the community members' perseverance to the end.

³⁶ Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, & Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York: Newman Press, 2003), 376.

³⁷ "Didache," 14:1.

³⁸ Ibid., 16:2.

Looking at these four excerpts we have analyzed from the *Didache*; we can see that the Christians who gathered in this period had a comprehensive view of looking at the act of gathering together. In this act, while embracing the present world, they were not without an eye projected toward the *parousia*. The *ἐκκλησία* gathered in that way was understood to be, in fact, the actualization of the kingdom of God.³⁹

Several elements in these passages from the *Didache* are worth highlighting. The first is the breadth of its vision, both embracing the world and looking toward the *parousia*. During this early period, those who practiced their faith imagined their actions in communal and cosmic terms. They understood that the very act of gathering and the unity it promoted had consequences for the Kingdom. In their view, the Church thus gathered is indeed the kingdom of God.

1.2.2 Apostolic Tradition

The second document we want to look at is the *Apostolic Tradition*. Dating from around 215,⁴⁰ it defines the liturgical assembly as a place where the Spirit flows: “Let him [the faithful] hasten to the church, where the spirit flourishes.”⁴¹ In explaining this passage, Goffredo Boselli⁴² insists that it is in the assembly that the epiphany of the gifts that the Spirit wants to give to the

³⁹ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 43.

⁴⁰ Goffredo Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy: School of Prayer, Source of Life* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2014), 127.

⁴¹ Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips, eds., *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary*, Hermeneia - a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 35. We have presented the translation based on the Latin text. Attridge also presents the Sahidic translation: “And let them hasten to go to the church, the place where the spirit sprouts forth.”; the Arabic: “Let them go quickly to the church, the place in which the spirit is and bears fruit.”; and the Ethiopic: “They are to hurry to go to the church, the place where the Spirit is, and they are to bear fruit there.”

⁴² Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 126–130.

Church takes place. In the gathering of the members, the gathering of the gifts of the Spirit takes place. Thus, the Italian liturgist argues that this liturgical practice should help us understand what should also be an ecclesial practice. According to the ministries received, each community member should collaborate in the Church where the “spirit flourishes.” There is a dynamic of constant adaptation and learning in this process of communion. For the monk of Bose, “[t]he structure and the dynamics of the liturgical assembly will have truly succeeded in shaping the concrete and ordinary life of the church when not only the liturgy is eucharistic, but the structures and dynamics of the church are also eucharistic.”⁴³ We see in the *Apostolic Tradition* that communion happens in both the liturgy and the daily life of the Christian community. It is a symbiotic communion in which the two communions nourish each other in the Spirit who brings them together and makes them flourish. Being for the world a sign of communion, the community of Christians is realized as the Body of Christ.⁴⁴

1.2.3 Didascalia Apostolorum

Another Early Church text - dating from the third century⁴⁵ - that interests us is the *Didascalia Apostolorum*. We are looking at a guideline given to bishops that deals with how they should preside at liturgical assemblies. Chapter 13 begins like this:

When you [the bishop] are teaching you are to command and exhort the people that they should gather in Church, and come together always, that none should be absent and so reduce the Church through their withdrawal, so as to make the body of Christ defective in a limb. People

⁴³ Ibid., 128–129.

⁴⁴ This is a transversal idea in the work of Paul A. Janowiak and Judith M. Kubicki.

⁴⁵ Alistair C. Stewart, ed., *The Didascalia Apostolorum: An English Version*, *Studia traditionis theologiae* 1 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2009), 50.

should not simply be thinking of others, but of themselves, since it is said: “Whoever does not gather with me, is a scatterer.” (Mt 12:20) 2. Since you are members of Christ you should not scatter yourselves from the Church by failing to gather with others.⁴⁶

Reading this indication given so clearly to the bishops, we realize that participation in the assembly was not simply the observance of a precept but had a deeper meaning; participation in the assembly was a Christological and ecclesiological action. Participation is thus, Boselli argues, identitarian.⁴⁷ To be a Christian implies participation in the assembly of the Church. The text continues, “do not neglect yourselves, nor distance the Saviour from his members, and do not tear or scatter his body.”⁴⁸ There is an invitation for the Church to see itself as a body, to be similar to Jesus himself, to the point that it should be the very life of Jesus.

1.2.4 Ignatius of Antioch

Another source from the Early Church concerning the assembly is Ignatius of Antioch’s letters. Kubicki⁴⁹ emphasizes that Ignatius gave exceptional attention to exhorting the young communities of Asia to remain united to Christ and the Church. They were to remain united, especially through the celebration of the eucharist, where they shared bread. The eucharist is, for Ignatius, the sacrament of unity par excellence: “Be eager, therefore, to come together more frequently to give thanks and glory [Or: to celebrate the eucharist and give glory] to God.”⁵⁰ The table concern is present when he writes to the Christians in Philadelphia, “And so be eager to

⁴⁶ Ibid., 178 §13 [2.59].

⁴⁷ Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 126.

⁴⁸ Stewart, *The Didascalia Apostolorum*, 178 §13 [2.59].

⁴⁹ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 43–44.

⁵⁰ Ignatius of Antioch, “Letter to the Ephesians,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman, Loeb classical library 24 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 233 §13:1-2.

celebrate just one eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup that brings the unity of his blood, and one altar, as there is one bishop together with the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow slaves. Thus, whatever you do, do according to God.”⁵¹ It becomes even more evident in the letter to the Magnesians,⁵² where Ignatius repeats the word “one” nine times. In all these exhortations, Ignatius of Antioch characterizes the assembly’s moment of gathering as a source of joy.⁵³

1.2.5 John Chrysostom

One last reference deserves our attention and is related to this chapter’s first section. Boselli reminds us that the Christian liturgy faithfully preserves the biblical conception of the assembly, affirming that the church is the place where the people of God is gathered.⁵⁴ There is a particular element of liturgical practice to prove this. The one presiding at the liturgy does not approach the assembly until it is gathered, and should not stop to greet the people while they are assembled.⁵⁵ This is a practice that is described already in John Chrysostom: “the church is the

⁵¹ Ignatius of Antioch, “Letter to the Philadelphians,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman, Loeb classical library 24 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 287 §4.

⁵² Ignatius of Antioch, “Letter to the Magnesians,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman, Loeb classical library 24 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 246–249 §7:1-2.

⁵³ Ignatius of Antioch, “Letter to the Philadelphians,” 292–293 §10:1; Ignatius of Antioch, “Letter to the Magnesians,” 246–249 §7:1.

⁵⁴ Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 110.

⁵⁵ “*When the people are gathered*, and as the Priest enters with the Deacon and ministers, the Entrance Chant begins. Its purpose is to open the celebration, *foster the unity of those who have been gathered*, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical time or festivity, and accompany the procession of the Priest and ministers.” Emphasis mine. “The General Instructions of the Roman Missal,” in *The Roman Missal: Study Edition* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), no. 47.

common home of all, and when ye have first occupied it, we enter in, [...] we also pronounce ‘peace’ in common to all, directly as we enter.”⁵⁶

It seems clear that Chrysostom sees the *ἐκκλησία* as the home of God’s people, “the church is the common home of all.” The president of the celebration is not the host, he is himself a member of the assembly. He also responds to God’s call to gather. It is God who calls, with his Word, men and women into holy community. The liturgy has already begun even before the liturgical procession makes its way through the assembly.⁵⁷ In this statement, Chrysostom focuses on an important biblical truth and a particular understanding of the church: the assembly gathering is the first of all liturgical actions.⁵⁸

From what we have said, we see that the assembly was not a marginal aspect of the life of the early Christians. On the contrary, the moment of the gathering was vital to the way they understood and lived the fact that they were the Body of Christ.

1.3 THE ASSEMBLY AND THE LITURGICAL REFORM

Having looked at the biblical foundations of the assembly, how the early Christians came together, and the theological motives that underpinned this being together, we will now explore the more contemporary contributions of liturgical reform. We are aware that we are making a substantial temporal leap. By this leap, we do not mean to ignore the understanding that was held

⁵⁶ John Chrysostom, *Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, ed. Philip Schaff, vol. 10, Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers 1 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), 216.

⁵⁷ Paul Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God: Liturgical Spirituality and the Presence of Christ* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2011), 148.

⁵⁸ Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 111.

of the assembly in the period we do not cover. As Brunk notes,⁵⁹ the importance of the assembly as the ecclesial Body of Christ gathered with eschatological symbolism diminishes during the Middle Ages; in its place appeared other problematics no less theologically important but which fall outside the scope of our study.

Since the reforms of Vatican II, the word “assembly” has been reintroduced into the discourse of the magisterium to correspond to its use in the New Testament and in the writings of the early Christian communities from which we have echoed in previous sections. Thus, when applied in a liturgical context, the word refers to the community gathered to celebrate the liturgy. The assembly reflects the understanding expressed in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that the liturgy is the preeminent place where the reality of the Church is manifested. According to Article 2 of the Constitution on the Liturgy, the liturgy enables “the faithful to express in their lives and portray to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.”⁶⁰ Therefore, while Article 48 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church describes the Church as “the universal sacrament of salvation,”⁶¹ Article 2 of the *SC* states even more strongly that the sacramental Church is most fully expressed in the liturgical assembly.⁶² Thus, Kubicki reinforces the awareness that the liturgical assembly’s true identity comes from coming together in the assembly itself and from our reflection of that experience.⁶³

⁵⁹ Timothy M. Brunk, “The Identity of the Liturgical Assembly,” *Questions liturgiques* 89, no. 4 (2008): 262.

⁶⁰ Vatican Council II, “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium,” in *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P. (Northport, NY; Dublin, Ireland: Costello Publishing Company; Dominican Publications, 1996), para. 2.

⁶¹ Vatican Council II, “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium,” in *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P. (Northport, NY; Dublin, Ireland: Costello Publishing Company; Dominican Publications, 1996), para. 48.

⁶² Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 45.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 46.

Number Seven of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is central to our argument. There, the assembly appears among the modes of Christ's presence in the Church. Let's look at the text:

To accomplish so great a work Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in *the sacrifice of the Mass*, both in the person of His minister, "the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross", and most of all in the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present *in the sacraments*, so that when anybody baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in *His word*, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. Lastly, He is present *when the Church prays and sings*, for He has promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).⁶⁴

These four modes of Christ's presence in his Church are framed within the scope of Christ's promise in Matt. 18:20. Although four are listed, Kubicki argues that Christ's presence in the Church, specified as the Church gathered for worship, forms the basis for the possibility of all other modes of presence. Supported by Ulrich Lutz, she considers Matt. 18:20 (the only verse quoted in this paragraph of *SC*) to be the theological center of that chapter. The biblicist further asserts that expanding the promise of Jesus' presence to include all church functions in his name is in keeping with Matthew's Christology,⁶⁵ which emphasizes mission, community, love, and suffering as characteristics of the church. However, historically, the term "gathered" was used in the context of some kind of formal church service. It is crucial that the church gather together "in the name of the Lord."

Although the multiform presence of Christ is familiar to us from *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the truth is that before and after this document others spoke about this mystery. Kubicki draws our attention to the fact that paragraph 20 of Pius XII's Encyclical *Mediator Dei* served as a model for the *SC* paragraph we have been reflecting on.⁶⁶ The paragraph says:

⁶⁴ Vatican Council II, "SC," 7. The emphases in the text are ours.

⁶⁵ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 458–459.

⁶⁶ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 48.

Along with the Church, therefore, her Divine Founder is present at *every* liturgical function: Christ is present at the august sacrifice of the altar both in the person of His minister and above all under the eucharistic species. He is present in the sacraments, infusing into them the power which makes them ready instruments of sanctification. He is present, finally, in prayer of praise and petition we direct to God, as it is written: “Where there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).⁶⁷

As we can see the structure is similar. Of note is that in *Mediator Dei*, Pius XII clearly states that Christ is present in every liturgical action. This makes us extend Christ’s presence to moments that are not strictly sacramental, but whenever the assembly comes together. We must remember that in a previous encyclical, the same Pope had laid the ecclesiological foundation by declaring, based on the Pauline tradition, that the Church is the Body of Christ.⁶⁸

Paul VI, after *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, also developed paragraph seven. He does so in the context of the encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, and dedicates some paragraphs (§35-39) to the multiform presence of Christ.⁶⁹ These paragraphs are important because, once again, Paul VI identifies Christ’s presence in the Church as the foundation of the other forms of presence. Note that the first form of presence addressed here is precisely “Christ is present in His Church when she prays.” Paul VI makes a point of explaining the fact that it is said in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that Christ is present “especially under the Eucharistic species,”⁷⁰ It does not mean that Christ’s presence is not real in the other forms listed. In this regard he explains: “This presence is called ‘real’ not to exclude the idea that the others are ‘real’ too, but rather to indicate

⁶⁷ Pius XII, *Encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy Mediator Dei* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1947), para. 20, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei.html. The emphasis is ours.

⁶⁸ Pius XII, *Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ Mystici Corporis Christi* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1943), https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html.

⁶⁹ Paul VI, *Encyclical on the Holy Eucharist Mysterium Fidei* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_03091965_mysterium.html.

⁷⁰ Vatican Council II, “SC,” 7.

presence par excellence, because it is substantial and through it Christ becomes present whole and entire, God and man.”⁷¹

Still, on the subject of the multiform presence of Christ, the *GIRM* puts Christ’s presence in the assembly first and in the Eucharistic species last.⁷² Regardless of its place in the formulations of the documents, it is important to retain the clear affirmation of the importance and centrality of this theological statement in relation to belief in the presence of Christ.

These modes of presence, besides not being able to be placed in competition with each other, when seen in harmony, invite believers to a deeper intimacy and communion with Christ and with each other. They help, in fact, to see and feel themselves as part of the Body of Christ. In this sense, Janowiak proposes a liturgical spirituality embedded in the profound call to worship that roots us as a community of believers in the very life of God, in whose name we say we gather to pray: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.⁷³

1. 4 THE ASSEMBLY IN THE CONTEXT OF CHAUVET’S SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY

Although in *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*⁷⁴ we can find seeds of Chauvet’s thoughts on assembly, it is in *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*⁷⁵ that the French theologian explores our topic more

⁷¹ Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, para. 39.

⁷² “GIRM,” 27.

⁷³ Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God*, 12.

⁷⁴ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*.

⁷⁵ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville, Minneapolis: Liturgical Press, 2001).

systematically. In *Symbol and Sacrament* he writes: “[t]he assembly of Christians gathered in the name of Christ (Matt 18:20) or in his memory is, as we said, the first sacramental representation of his presence.”⁷⁶ Indeed, in the symbolic theology he proposes, he argues that the true original sacrament is Jesus Christ, the real symbol who leads to the Father and that the Church is the subject that receives the Word of God. Chauvet wants to make the passage from Scholastic theology, which thinks of the sacraments under the model of the hypostatic union (the mystery of the incarnation), to a theology in which the sacraments must be understood in the framework of the paschal mystery of Christ.⁷⁷ The sacraments are, precisely, symbolic expressions of the dynamism of Christ’s resurrection.

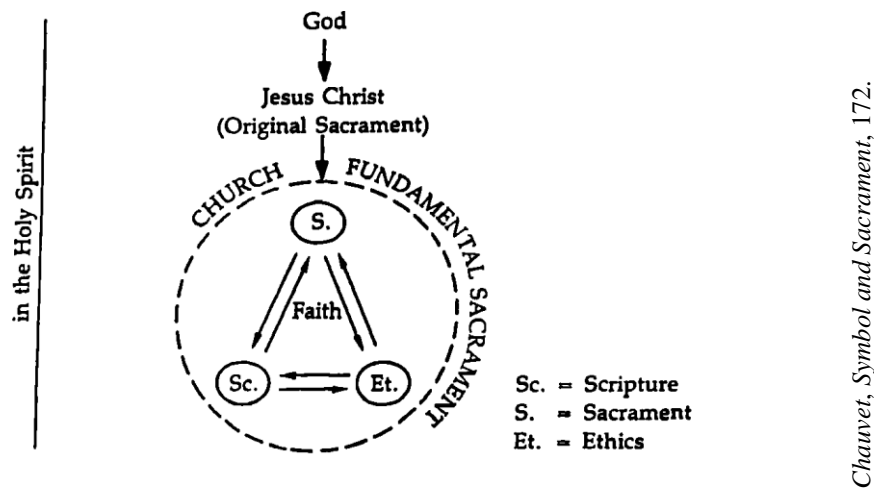
It seems imperative that in speaking of the assembly, we have to contextualize the theology that Chauvet wants to develop and of which our topic is an element. He argues, “our proposal for a fundamental theology of sacramentality, or for a reinterpretation of the whole of Christian life from the viewpoint of sacramentality, must be articulated according to two principal axes: the axis of *language and symbol* and the axis of the *LOGOS of the cross*.”⁷⁸ We can thus state that sacramentality is the constitutive element of the Christian life. Although in *The Sacraments*, Chauvet simplifies the scheme, it serves us to see the big picture of the scheme he uses for the structure of Christian identity.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 187. Curious that to do this Chauvet quotes precisely Mt 18:20, the same verse used in SC 7 as seen above.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 453. Chauvet elaborates on this argument throughout chapter twelve of the book.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 172.



Within the three principal manifestations of the Church (Scripture - level “knowledge,” sacraments - level “gratitude,” and ethics - level “action”),⁸⁰ the sacraments have a priority role in that they have an excellent place in the proclamation of the Church and the experience of faith. This theological scheme allows us to understand better faith and the relationship with the three symbolic elements of the Church that have a reciprocal relationship as we see in the scheme.

To explain the structure of Christian identity, Chauvet uses three fundamental texts: the appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35); the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40); the first account of Saul’s conversion (Acts 9:1-20).⁸¹ His discourse is quite structured so we will summarize it in the following outline:

	Luke 24:13-35	Acts 8:26-40	Acts 9:1-20
In the time of the Church	From Jerusalem to Emmaus	From Jerusalem to Gaza	From Jerusalem to Damascus
Initiatives of the Risen Christ	Their eyes were opened	He went on full of joy	He regained his sight

⁸⁰ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 31.

⁸¹ Ibid., 20–26.

The Church's mediation: Kerygma, Word proclaimed	Interpretation of all Scripture in light of Jesus "Christ"; "Stay with us"	Jesus, the Suffering Servant (Is 53); "What is to prevent my being baptized?"	"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"; "you will be told what you must do"
Sacrament, celebrated word	Breaking bread	Baptism	Laying on of hands; Baptism
Missionary Way	Mission	Joy of faith	Mission

Christ is the original sacrament, and the Church is the fundamental sacrament of the Risen One. The Church is the fundamental sacramental mediation through which faith can be attained.⁸² Its witness is articulated in a triple form: as Word proclaimed (Scriptures, which have a chronological priority), Word celebrated (sacraments, as the corporal inscription of the Word), and Word lived (ethics). At the heart of the proclamation and celebration of the sacraments is the paschal mystery of Jesus, the crucified one, whom God made "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).⁸³

Beyond the question of identity that we have just seen, which has a personal dimension, Chauvet considers that this identity only develops within an ecclesial pattern common to all Christians. According to the scheme we presented above, and because Christian identity begins with the confession of Jesus, one cannot be a Christian without belonging to the Church. "To believe in Christ is to be immediately gathered together by him who is confessed as "our" common Lord."⁸⁴ Chauvet starts from the paradigmatic example of baptism in which individual social, geographical, and gender barriers are broken down to form a single "body of Christ." What was once seen as a reason for estrangement and division, through baptism and consequent participation in the "body of Christ," comes to be seen as an enrichment for the community of believers.

⁸² Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Du symbolique au symbole: essai sur les sacrements*, Rites et symboles 9 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1979), 86–96.

⁸³ Ibid., 107.

⁸⁴ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 31–32.

The “we” created with baptism gains a clear expression in the Eucharist, where all prayers are said in the first person plural. What seems to be a detail is theologically essential since the celebration agent, according to Congar’s interpretation of Vatican II,⁸⁵ is the Church understood as an assembly. This vision has, according to Chauvet, concrete implications. It is precisely because Christ presides over the assembly that we must get used to looking at it as an organic body and not only looking at it but acting as such, even though we recognize that there are organs of the body with different roles and functions.

In affirming that the primary locus of the Church is the celebrating assembly, Chauvet makes the caveat that Christians do not belong less to the Church when they are not gathered in assembly. In this sense, he agrees with the early Church documents we saw in this chapter’s second section. Building on the reflection that we also made in the first section concerning the use of the plural in the New Testament to speak of the *ἐκκλησία*, Chauvet emphasizes three theologically essential points. (a) a church without an assembly would be a contradiction in terms; (b) Diversified Sunday assemblies are sacramentally exemplary of the nature of the Church; (c) each local assembly truly and fully realizes the Church of Christ.⁸⁶

(a) A church without an assembly would be a contradiction in terms. The word that the first Christians found to speak of the phenomenon that was happening was *ἐκκλησία*, which, as we have seen, can mean assembly or Church. We know the importance of the name in identifying the reality; we can once again realize the importance that the founding action of the gathering had in the early days of Christianity. The assembly is thus, in Chauvet’s thought, a “fundamental sacrament” of the risen Christ.

⁸⁵ Yves Congar, “L’*‘Ecclesia’* ou communauté chrétienne, sujet intégral de l’action liturgique,” in *La Liturgie d’après Vatican II: bilans, études, perspectives*, ed. Jean-Pierre Jossua and Yves Congar, Unam Sanctam 66 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 282.

⁸⁶ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 34–38.

(b) Diversified Sunday assemblies are sacramentally exemplary of the nature of the Church. Christians from very early on, we know it from Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 6:1-2 and from the account in Acts 20:7, gathered on the "first day of the week" as a memorial of the Easter event. Chauvet then concludes that we can speak of the sacramentality of the memorial day. In this way, Sunday is the memorial of the resurrection through the gathering of the assembly.⁸⁷ It is clear that the Eucharist occupies a central place in the Sunday assembly, but Chauvet states that the Eucharist is secondary since it is subordinate to the very act of gathering in memory of the resurrection. If to be a Christian is to belong to the Church, to belong to the Church is to participate in the Sunday assembly. If we take this subtlety seriously, we can draw pastoral consequences from this, requiring adequate catechesis. We think of people who, for some reason, cannot access the sacraments. We think of the situation of separated and remarried Christians and of the Christians of the Amazon. Unfortunately, we cannot go into depth on each of these topics, but we see here an open window for the education of communities in sacramentality.

As a sacramental manifestation, the Church must mirror the diversity of its members, the baptized. By showing this diversity in their constitution, the assemblies also show who they are in the world. We recall that the Church is not a closed circumference in Chauvet's scheme but is open. This openness is not only outward but also a manifestation that each liturgical assembly must have in order to welcome the different.

(c) Each local assembly truly and fully realizes the Church of Christ in the particularity of a specific time and place. Vatican II applies this idea of the local assembly to the eucharistic

⁸⁷ Ibid., 35.

assembly, emphasizing that every eucharistic assembly truly realizes the Church of God whenever it is celebrated in communion with the bishop and with all other communities.

However, there is a strong temptation to fixate on a more direct and immediate mediation with God in the life of the Christian and forget that mediation comes through the liturgical assembly. A good antidote to this is the development and living of a liturgical spirituality. We cannot forget that, with the Incarnation, the encounter with God comes through the encounter with others, and in our case, the local assembly is the privileged expression of this encounter.

Although *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* was written in 1997 and Chauvet was far from imagining that we would experience a pandemic, he ends the section of the book just discussed with the example of the TV Mass. He reminds us that the Eucharist is not a personal action that should favor our intimate relationship with God; it is first and foremost an action of the Church, of all the members of the “body of Christ” who are different and complementary to each other. “[T]he encounter of the living Christ which is possible only through the mediation of a church, indeed holy but composed of sinners, indeed body of Christ but made up of divided members, indeed temple of the Holy Spirit but so parsimoniously missionary.”⁸⁸

After Chauvet’s proposal to see and live the assembly sacramentally, we will now turn our attention to Jesuit schools and try to see how they can be seen as an assembly, recognizing already that they indeed have different characteristics from the liturgical assembly.

Although COVID-19 accelerated processes, the adverse effects of a social life increasingly embedded in the virtual world had long been felt. The health emergency we experienced helped us face more seriously what we were serenely witnessing, both at the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 38.

liturgical and teaching level. Lathrop reflecting on these issues tells us that during the pandemic, where gatherings of people were advised against or even forbidden, the assembly was deprived of many matters that make it church.

To aid our reflection, we do not want to overlook Lathrop's notion of assembly, which is based on his Lutheran tradition, but which substantially does not differ from that which Catholic Christians assume for themselves as well:

the assembly is a public gathering of people around the reading of Scripture, the singing of psalms and hymns, the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the remembrance or lively practice of baptism, the intercession for the needs of church and world, the collection for mission and for the wretched and poor of the world, the thanksgiving over bread and wine that the community has set out, the mutual receiving of the body and blood of Christ in these gifts, the in-person sending of the bread and cup to those who cannot be with us, and the final sending of this whole company to be servants and witnesses in the world.⁸⁹

Perhaps the deprivation of assembly will help us to reflect and return to what the assembly really is.

⁸⁹ Gordon W. Lathrop, "Thinking Again about Assembly in a Time of Pandemic," *Cross Accent* 28, no. 2 (2020): 11.

2 CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

All the goodness in Christianity and of the whole world depends on the proper education of the youths, who — since they are as soft as butter in their childhood — are more easily imprinted with any kind of teaching, for which there is a great lack of virtuosos and learned teachers who bring together example and doctrine.⁹⁰

After having deepened the theological meaning of the assembly, I will now look at Jesuit schools as an assembly with different characteristics. I will also try to see what the challenges are at present for Jesuit education. Knowing this is not a sociological study, I will characterize today's youth. This characterization will help frame the analysis of the documents of the Society of Jesus that concern education.

2.1 YOUTH TODAY

The recent study “Os jovens em Portugal, hoje” [Youth in Portugal today] aims to represent the 2.2 million young people who make up the Portuguese population between 15 and 34 years of age, now living in Portugal.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Petrus de Ribadeneyra, S.J., “Letter to King Philip II of Spain, 14 February 1556,” in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 91 §2.

⁹¹ Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, Laura Sagnier, and Alex Morell, *Os jovens em Portugal, hoje: Quem são, que hábitos têm, o que pensam e o que sentem* (Lisboa: Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, 2021), accessed February 22, 2023, <https://ffms.pt/sites/default/files/2022-07/os-jovens-em-portugal-hoje.pdf>.

This study has significant merit because, in a single publication, it condenses various analyses on different themes into one of the most extensive studies ever carried out on Portuguese youth. In some areas, namely labor, access to housing, emancipation, wages, school dropouts, and mental health, the conclusions confirm our empirical knowledge through partial statistics regarding the panorama of the new generations in Portugal.

Among the study's key findings are: young people with higher educational attainment have better opportunities in life⁹² but also face more pressure to succeed.⁹³ The most significant moments in young people's lives are at ages 20, 25, and 30, with age 25 being the most pivotal.⁹⁴ Young women face more pressure from society and are more vulnerable than young men.⁹⁵ Age and level of empowerment are the most important determining factors in young people's lives, with young men feeling more empowered than women.⁹⁶

The 2022 law “Plano Nacional para a Juventude”⁹⁷ [National Plan for Youth] lists five priorities that are aligned with international benchmarks. It intends to respond to the issues of emancipation and autonomy: education, training and science, citizenship and participation; healthy lifestyles; and culture. In the first axis, access to work, housing, and quality public services for the emancipation of young people stands out. The second is promoting the right to education, lifelong learning, and access to scientific knowledge. The third is for promoting active citizenship and civic participation of young people for sustainable development. The fourth is

⁹² Ibid., 47.

⁹³ Ibid., 48.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 49.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 58.

⁹⁷ Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, “Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 77/2022,” in *Diário da República* n.º 177/2022, *Série I de 2022-09-13* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional da Casa da Moeda, 2022), 10–102, accessed February 21, 2023, <https://dre.pt/dre/detalhe/resolucao-conselho-ministros/77-2022-200907658>.

adopting healthy lifestyles, including food literacy, physical activity, substance abuse prevention, and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights. Finally, in the fifth axis, young people promote access to cultural enjoyment. The document proposes to combine efforts and not duplicate objectives among the areas.

Concerning religion, the study mentioned above⁹⁸ states that there are more young people who belong to a religion or have some kind of belief than young people saying that they do not belong to any religion or have no kind of belief (58% versus 42%). The most common is for young people to declare themselves Catholic (50 %). Right after that, the most common is that young people are atheists (13%) or indifferent to religious questions (12%). Regarding the frequency with which young people participate in religious services, not counting special occasions or ceremonies, the most frequent are participating less than once a month or never. There is a big difference in the level of participation in religious services between Catholics and Evangelicals/Protestants: among the former, the most usual participation is less than once a month (52%); among the latter, participation is once a week or more (63%).

Supported by the thought of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, the Jesuit theologian Gabino Uríbarri argues that it is essential to realize that the religious sphere and the religiosity of young people are in a fluid state.⁹⁹ In fact, Bauman defines “liquid life” as “acceptance of disorientation, immunity to vertigo and adaptation to a state of dizziness, tolerance for an absence of itinerary and direction, and for an indefinite duration of travel.”¹⁰⁰ Vizcaíno Cruzado¹⁰¹ even talks about liquid spirituality. Based on the research of Vizcaíno Cruzado and

⁹⁸ Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, Sagnier, and Morell, *Os jovens em Portugal, hoje*, 78.

⁹⁹ Gabino Uríbarri Bilbao, *Jesucristo para jóvenes: claves pastorales para un mundo líquido*, Colección Presencia teológica 291 (Maliaño (Cantabria): Sal Terrae, 2022), 30.

¹⁰⁰ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Life* (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity, 2005), 4.

¹⁰¹ Eduardo Vizcaíno Cruzado, “Espiritualidad Líquida. Secularización y Transformación de La Religiosidad Juvenil,” *OBETS. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 10, no. 2 (December 1, 2015): 437–470.

González-Anleo, Gabino presents the general picture of this liquid spirituality based on Spanish reality. The first is the decline in young people's appreciation of the Church and its message. We can confirm the same for the Portuguese situation in Eduardo Duque's recent study.¹⁰² Secondly, note the observation that Catholicism is no longer the base on which to build personal conceptions in the religious sphere. The theologian notes that when we think about young people, more than religion, religiosity or rites, we should think about spirituality(ies) in a fluid way. Gabino recognizes that Touraine's observation that "the subject has to constitute himself as a constructor of his own beliefs from a new personalized, relativistic, syncretic, pragmatic, experiential and emotional style";¹⁰³ this presents well the challenges for a youth spirituality.

Based on Vizcaíno's study, "we show a renewed religiosity, without institutions, rites or dogmas to sustain it and with a vague (post-metaphysical) image of Transcendence."¹⁰⁴ Young people have a fuzzy conception of transcendence; they simply claim to believe in "something." The object of belief is shaped by themselves, not received by a normative revelation that is imposed with divine authority. Basically, it is a narcissistic spirituality centered on self-satisfaction. God, or the "something" that today's young person believes in, is a god who serves their own happiness. In this sense, spirituality is consistently and increasingly de-institutionalized. Although it continues to have some religious references, these are increasingly empty of content. It is much more emotional than rational, more mystical than moral.

If we look at the American reality, significant contributions come from the research of Christian Smith. He has studied religion and spirituality in adolescents in the United States, and

¹⁰² Eduardo Duque, *Valores e religiosidade em Portugal. Comportamentos e atitudes geracionais* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 2022), 96.

¹⁰³ Uríbarri Bilbao, *Jesucristo para jóvenes*, 33.

¹⁰⁴ Vizcaíno Cruzado, "Espiritualidad Líquida. Secularización y Transformación de La Religiosidad Juvenil," 439.

suggests that the dominant religion among that group is what he calls “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism”¹⁰⁵ (MTD). Smith summarizes this religion with five articles of a possible creed.

1. A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other.
3. the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.¹⁰⁶

The sociologist claims that MTD is quietly infiltrating many historical religious traditions and converting the faithful to its alternative vision of divinely supported personal happiness.¹⁰⁷ This religion seems to be becoming the preferred religion of most young Americans, regardless of the official teachings of their particular religions.¹⁰⁸

While aware that this is not an exhaustive analysis, nevertheless it gives us a basis to know who are the young people we want to educate. Bearing in mind that in the third chapter we want to put in dialogue the theology of the assembly seen in the first chapter with sacramental practice in Jesuit schools, we will then explore the documents that the government of the Society of Jesus has published on education, with special focus on the last forty years.

¹⁰⁵ Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 118–171.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 162–163.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁰⁸ Christian Smith, Bridget Ritz, and Michael Rotolo, *Religious Parenting: Transmitting Faith and Values in Contemporary America* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2020), 266.

2.2 THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND EDUCATION

From the foundation of the first Jesuit school in 1548 in Messina (Italy)¹⁰⁹ until today, the Society of Jesus counts 475 years of service to education. The Jesuit pedagogical experience shows that tradition and updating are not mutually exclusive but complement, articulate, and enrich each other. It is crucial to have as a starting point that, besides the *Spiritual Exercises*,¹¹⁰ it is undoubtedly in *Part IV of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*¹¹¹ that we find the spiritual and pedagogical core that is the backbone of the educational regulations in the Society.¹¹² And logically, it is also the axis of the final synthesis expressed in the official document of the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599.¹¹³

Faced with the positive elements experienced in substituting face-to-face education with remote, virtual, online education during the social isolation imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, some educators raise the question about the meaning and purposes of school again in today's world. Jesuit education assumes that the school is an instrument of apostolate to develop the mission of the Church¹¹⁴ and of the Society of Jesus. Its goal today is to promote

¹⁰⁹ John W. O'Malley, "The Schools," in *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 201. Due to the nature of this study we cannot go deeply into the history of the decisions that led to the early Jesuits' involvement in education, but Chapter 6 of *The First Jesuits* by Jesuit historian John W. O'Malley can be a great resource for this framework.

¹¹⁰ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, ed. George E. Ganss, Series I: Jesuit primary sources in English translations 9 (St. Louis, Mo.: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992).

¹¹¹ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms: A Complete English Translation of the Official Latin Texts.*, ed. John W. Padberg, S.J., Series I - Jesuit primary sources, in English translations 15 (Saint Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 131–192.

¹¹² Carlos Vázquez Posada, "La Ratio: Sus Inicios, Desarrollo y Proyección," *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 55, no. 3 (1999): 235.239.

¹¹³ Jesuits, *The Ratio Studiorum: The Official Plan for Jesuit Education*, Jesuit primary sources in English translation 22 (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2005).

¹¹⁴ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., "Our Secondary Schools: Today and Tomorrow, 1980," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 265 §6/4. When citing a document compiled in the edition just indicated, the first number

reconciliation and justice through discernment in common and collaboration with others. Here the schools put into practice the triad proposed by Fr. Pedro Arrupe, then Superior General of the Jesuits (1965-1983): teaching, education, and evangelization.¹¹⁵ It is about forming persons of service to others according to the Gospel, to new human beings transformed by the message of Christ and open to their time and to the future – in other words, well balanced individuals.¹¹⁶

For Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach (1983-2008), Fr. Arrupe's successor, the goal of the school is to form people with the "4 Cs": 1) *Conscious* of society and the surrounding reality, 2) Academically *competent* and profound, 3) *Compassionate* to take on the suffering of others, and 4) *Committed* to the transformation of unjust social structures.¹¹⁷ The current Superior General, Fr. Arturo Sosa (2016-present), adds that the Jesuit educational service aims to form citizens with a socially critical capacity, living their original identity and disposition for intercultural dialogue.¹¹⁸ More recently, in Boston, he stated that it is proper to our educational institutions to form discerning people, with a life full of meaning, capable of dialogue with the secularized world. Besides the interculturality he presented earlier, he also challenges intergenerationality.

refers to the paragraph in the edition, and the second number to the eventual numbering of the original document. In this way we can compare it with the document in another edition.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 268 §15/9.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 269–272 §17/11-24/14.

¹¹⁷ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 371 §14. These 4 Cs were first formulated by Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach in a talk given at Villa Cavalletti on April 29, 1993, Ibid., 406 §124. Fr. Adolfo Nicolás (2008-2016) explained them a little more in 2013, Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., "Jesuit Alumni and Their Social Responsibility: The Quest for a Better Future for Humanity. What Does It Mean to Be a Believer Today? Eighth Congress World Union of Jesuit Alumni, Medellín 2013.," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 159–160 §19-20. The following year the International Seminar on Ignatian Pedagogy and Spirituality (SIPEI) in Maresa dealt in depth with each of these four aspects. The vision statement can be found at International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "International Seminar on Ignatian Pedagogy and Spirituality (SIPEI)," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 573–577.

¹¹⁸ Arturo Sosa, S.J., "Encuentro del Padre General con educadores: «La educación jesuita hoy», La Paz (Bolivia)," in *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, ed. Curiam Praepositi Generalis, vol. XXVII-I–2018 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 2019), 232.

For the Superior General, a Jesuit school must also take into account the political dimensions, global citizenship, reconciliation and peace.¹¹⁹

The Jesuit school is a place for the formation of service leaders, of men and women of action for others, of multiplying agents who seek an excellent personal improvement and a solidary relationship with God, with other human beings, with society, and with the environment.

The educational tradition of the Jesuits is recorded in the official documents of the Society, in the General Congregations and Superiors General guidelines, and in the proposals, agreements, and commitments of the Ignatian associations and/or delegates of education.¹²⁰ The four most recent fundamental educational documents are now presented chronologically to their promulgation. Other shorter programmatic documents follow, like “flight plans” or “navigation maps” for schools to offer a quality educational service.

2.2.1 Our Secondary Schools: Today and Tomorrow, 1980

In 1980, Fr. Arrupe delivered a speech entitled “Our Secondary Schools: Today and Tomorrow,”¹²¹ which became a landmark in the recent Jesuit pedagogical tradition. This document was the first comprehensive statement by the Jesuits’ central government since the restoration of the Society of Jesus in 1814 and can be considered the refounding of Jesuit schools.

¹¹⁹ Arturo Sosa, S.J., “Discerning the Present to Prepare the Future of the University Education of the Society of Jesus” (Assembly of the International Association of Jesuit Universities (IAJU), August 4, 2022), accessed April 5, 2023, <https://iaju.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2022/Fr%20General%27s%20talk%20-%20August%204%20-%20IAJU%20%20%28English%29.pdf>.

¹²⁰ Most of these documents (up to 2017) can be found in the aforementioned volume edited by Fr. José Mesa, S.J., Secretary for Education of the Society of Jesus. José Mesa, S.J., ed., *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017).

¹²¹ Arrupe, S.J., “Our Secondary Schools.”

In the speech, Fr. Arrupe highlighted the main criteria for opening Jesuit schools: discernment, economic non-discrimination, academic excellence, quality of students trained, and “Ignatianity.” He explained that this term is not arrogant or snobbish, but rather logical, reflecting how Jesuits operate based on their charism and core choices.¹²²

For the first time, the Jesuit school was presented as an educational community composed of five segments: the Jesuit community, lay collaborators, families, students, and alumni. Fr. Arrupe emphasized the importance of each segment and encouraged everyone’s participation and collaboration. The *Jesuit community* is the inspiring core of the Jesuit school, depositary of the apostolic mission, and responsible for stimulating it through the Ignatian vision and the witness of unity, life, and work.¹²³ *Lay collaborators* are presented as essential agents and co-responsible for the mission of the Jesuit school. It is important to assure them of adequate remuneration, appropriate formation, and access to positions of responsibility in the leadership of the school.¹²⁴ The students’ *families* are expected to have contact, participation, and collaboration in the life of the Jesuit school. The school can and should act as a catalyst for the union of parents and children and as a place where interests meet and converge for the good of one’s child.¹²⁵ The *former students* are inserted into the educational community, recognizing that the Jesuits still have a great responsibility to help them in their ongoing permanent formation.¹²⁶ The educational community has the *students* as its central and main segment. The adults are encouraged to realize

¹²² Ibid., 266–269 §11/6-16/10.

¹²³ Ibid., 272–273 §27/16-28.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 276 §35/20-36/21.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 278 §42/22.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 279 §43/23.

how much the students can teach them from their expectations and contact with civilization. Educating always requires presence and a life-giving relationship with the students' lives.¹²⁷

Fr. Arrupe encouraged Jesuit schools to maintain contact with the Province, the Church, other schools, and apostolic works to ensure the mission's effectiveness and ecclesial belonging. He emphasized the importance of learning and collaboration, pointing out that it would be irresponsible to plan exclusively on one's own without considering the need to join with other religious or even lay schools.¹²⁸

2.2.2 The Characteristics of Jesuit Education, 1986

The originality and strength of Fr. Arrupe's vision for Jesuit schools suggested the creation in 1980 of the International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education (ICAJE) to develop a reference text for the renewal of the educational work of the schools.¹²⁹ The Commission, with nine members from all continents, led by the then Jesuit Secretary of Education, Fr. James Sauv  , began its work in 1982, convinced that schools could only face the questioning of their validity if they remained faithful to the Jesuit tradition. Four years of work followed, with meetings and consultations in the schools, following the manner of reviewing the *Ratio Studiorum* in 1599.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Ibid. §44/24.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 280–281 §45/25-48.

¹²⁹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. Jos   Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 292 §1.

¹³⁰ This article can be important for a deeper understanding of the process of composing the *Ratio Studiorum*. John W. O'Malley, "The *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599: A Basic Overview," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. Jos   Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 128–136.

On December 8, 1986, the 4th centennial of promulgating the first version of the *Ratio Studiorum*, the then Superior General, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, approved the document *Characteristics of the Education of the Society of Jesus*. He clarified that it is not a new *Ratio*, but a statement of the shared vision of the educational goals of the Jesuits, an instrument for discerning about renewal, and a benchmark for its evaluation. The document seeks to offer a vision or inspiration to make the daily struggle more meaningful and fruitful.¹³¹ It was to be widely disseminated in all parts of the educational community and adapted and applied in universities and high schools, and in other types of apostolates such as parishes, retreats, and social works.

The document's introduction clarifies that "characteristic" does not mean "unique," but the pedagogical way of proceeding of the Jesuit schools, arising from the Ignatian spirit that drives them. It also clarifies some confusion between the concepts "Jesuit" and "Ignatian": Even when centers are commonly called "Jesuit centers" or "Society centers," the "vision" should more appropriately be called "Ignatian" and is never limited to Jesuits.¹³²

The document contains 9 sections, with 28 characteristics and two appendices. The first appendix presents the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the history of the Jesuits in the educational apostolate, and the development of the *Ratio Studiorum*. The second appendix presents a schematic relationship between the Ignatian spiritual vision and the characteristics of Jesuit education. Appendix 1 of this thesis presents a list of Characteristics of Jesuit Education.

¹³¹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 297 §22/17.

¹³² Ibid., 295 §15/10.

The first section of *Characteristics*¹³³ is a panoramic view of the educational process, describing the main elements that configure it. The vision of God as creator and worker in creation, of the person as the place where God especially reveals Godself, and of the world impregnated with God's goodness are the basis for the educational process. It aims to stimulate a reading of creation to recognize God at work and a willingness to collaborate with God's grace. An integral formation through various disciplines fosters critical thinking and the exercise of imagination, affectivity, and creativity.

In the second section,¹³⁴ the document deals with the centrality of the students in the educational process and the mentoring to be given to them. Being the center of the curriculum, it is up to the students to assume, with autonomy, freedom, and responsibility, the gradual maturation according to the rhythm appropriate to their capacity and personality. They strive to participate actively in personal study, always seeking joy and the desire to learn. It is up to the teacher to exercise personal care of the students, a fundamental characteristic of Jesuit education. The teacher's role as an academic advisor expands to that of guiding the integral formation of the students, starting from involvement in their lives, from sharing life experiences, and examples.

The third section¹³⁵ *Characteristics*, addresses education in values that help the student to follow God with conscience and freedom. The school dynamic encourages the exercise of self-discipline, the formation of character and will, the discernment of values, and the critical judgment of obstacles to freedom such as prejudices and restrictive views. To this end, students are helped to be in touch with the world, to know and evaluate it critically, convinced that people and structures can change and that they can be change-agents within it.

¹³³ Ibid., 229–304 §26/21-44/39.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 305–307 §45/40-53/48.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 308–310 §54/49-66/58.

According to the fourth section,¹³⁶ pastoral care is offered to the entire educational community. Jesus Christ, for all human life, even for those who do not confess the same religion, is a model and inspiration of detachment, commitment, love, forgiveness, and solidarity. The Jesuit school helps the student to develop a personal friendship with Jesus Christ, to respond to his call through the *Spiritual Exercises*, learning personal prayer and worship, and service to others. The educational community, understood as a community of faith, is encouraged to participate in the celebrations and to give witness to the school's aims.

The fifth section¹³⁷ discusses the central orientation of the Jesuit school: education for evangelical justice, informed and strengthened by charity. It takes up Fr. Arrupe's teaching on the approach to justice as central to the goal of Jesuit education, as a result of the General Congregation 32,¹³⁸ which is to help students develop their talents, not for selfish enjoyment but for the good of society, giving priority to service to the poor. These form the context of Jesuit education; this means that educational planning must be done based on the poor, from the perspective of the poor.¹³⁹ Students, alumni, and other educational community members are encouraged to commit themselves to the gestation of a new kind of person, of a society of peace, of love, and of a more human world. Education for justice must be embedded in the curriculum, in all subjects, lines of action, and school programs, and be recognized by concrete works. To this end, opportunities are provided for students to come into contact with the problems of injustice and become aware of the school's influence. Therefore, Jesuit schools must be

¹³⁶ Ibid., 311–313 §67/59-78/70.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 314–319 §79/71-98/90.

¹³⁸ Jesuits Congregatio Generalis, "General Congregation 32, Decree 4: Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice," in *Jesuit Life & Mission Today: The Decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, ed. John W. Padberg, Series I: Jesuit Primary Sources in English translations 25 (St. Louis, Mo.: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 298–316.

¹³⁹ This expression is by Gabriel Codina, S.J., as attested in note 51. International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 363.

accessible to all, as Fr. Arrupe advocated, and join with other people and institutions to promote universalizing the right to education.

As part of the Church's apostolic mission, Jesuit schools, as stated in the sixth section,¹⁴⁰ offer students various means for knowing God, responding to God's call, belonging to the Church, and ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. The school's relationship of fidelity and collaboration with the Church and the local bishop is emphasized. This ideal implies the careful selection of leaders and educators to be witnesses and collaborators - even if they profess another religious faith - in the education of Christian values. Following Jesuit tradition, students are encouraged to participate in Christian Life Communities (CLC).

The seventh section¹⁴¹ explains that the horizon of the educational work is the "magis." This recurring concept in the writings of St. Ignatius means the best response that one who has experienced the predilection of divine love can offer to God. The concept "magis" does not mean comparison or competition but the fullest possible development of all the potentialities of the person and the institution, through the use of the most appropriate means, according to the circumstances of time, place, and person. Since they seek to form leaders of service, Jesuit schools strive to create a climate of excellence. The witness of the teachers and the partnership with other educational institutions are indispensable for this.

The constitution and structure of the Educational Community is the subject of the eighth section,¹⁴² the longest of the *Characteristics*. The five categories that Fr Arrupe had described in his address,¹⁴³ plus the benefactors, are integral members. Jesuits are encouraged to witness the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 320–323 §99/91-112/104.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 324–326 §113/105-123/115.

¹⁴² Ibid., 327–334 §124/116-150/142.

¹⁴³ For Fr. Arrupe, the Educational Community is made up of five segments: the Jesuit community, lay collaborators, families, students, and alumni.

unity of spirit, hearts, vision, and work. Frequent communication, formation in the Ignatian charism and in the school's proposal, spaces for dialogue and participation, and community living are to be provided for the managers, educators, employees, students, parents, former students, and benefactors. According to the common Ignatian vision, those who share the school's responsibility constitute a management team whose decisions are made through consultations and various commissions.

The ninth section¹⁴⁴ lists three conditions for the Jesuit school to be situated on the horizon of the "magis:" namely, adaptation, exchange, and ongoing formation. Through discernment, schools constantly analyze the challenges of reality to define the changes to be made in the various elements of school organization (lines of action, structures, methods, pedagogies, etc.). As the first Jesuit schools in the 16th century shared their pedagogical experiences, today's educators continue this exchange based on a shared vision and goals. The last condition is the permanent formation of Jesuits and lay people in Ignatian spirituality, pedagogy, and professional specialty.

Following the nine sections, the *Characteristics* document shows the correspondence of some elements of St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* with the methodological principles of the Jesuit school. These are the correlation of the guide/exercitant in the Exercises with the teacher/student partnership, the active work of the exerciser with that of the student, the flexibility and adaptation of means and ends, the gradual unfolding and progression of the exercises, the introduction of the material to be studied, the repetition of what has been worked, the application of imagination and creativity.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 335–338 §151/143-161/153.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 338–341 §162/154-174/163.

2.2.3 Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach, 1993

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education elicited an enthusiastic reception in the Jesuit educational world, to the point that educators asked the Superior General for support in implementing the renewed pedagogical vision. The new International Education Commission was entrusted with elaborating a document using the traditional method of consultation with all the world's regions. After three years of work, the document was completed. Still, before its promulgation it was the subject of a three-day training session in Rome for educators from 26 countries. Finally, on July 31, 1993, Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach made its promulgation.¹⁴⁶

The document consists of brief introductory texts, a reminder of the educational goals and foundations of the Society of Jesus, a description of the dynamics, applicability of the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm* (IPP), possible objections to its practice, and at the end, three appendices.¹⁴⁷

In Introductory Notes,¹⁴⁸ it is made clear that the paradigm deals only with some aspects of pedagogy since a universal curriculum like that of the *Ratio Studiorum* is impossible today. The IPP is faith-based and has personalized attention to the student. Its formulation is eclectic, as is the Society's tradition, which various pedagogical contributions have inspired. The document does not require creating a specific course but rather inserting the IPP into the existing

¹⁴⁶ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach S.J., "De Ignatiana Paedagogia: Letter from Fr General to All Major Superiors Accompanying the Document «Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach»,” in *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, vol. XX–VI (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta della Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1994), 911–913.

¹⁴⁷ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach.”

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 367–370 §1-10.

curriculum with its didactic style and processes. The first addressees are the teachers, who will be offered training events to familiarize themselves with the new dynamics.

The justification for the new document is based on the Society's mission to serve the faith and promote justice.¹⁴⁹ The educational process is about fostering students' freedom, how they see themselves and others, and radically changing how they understand life. Consequently, it is desired that students be people who serve others (Fr. Arrupe), beginning with the poorest; they are distinguished as men and women of the 4 Cs (Fr. Kolvenbach). Let them be people of action who will competently and courageously influence the transformation of social, political, and economic life, fostering and preserving our shared humanity.¹⁵⁰

Since this educational ideal has to be realized in a post-modern world, amidst so many antagonistic forces, where a utilitarian and economistic vision of education prevails, the Society found a practical and applicable model in the classroom: the experience-reflection-action script that the 33rd General Congregation proposed¹⁵¹ for Jesuits to evaluate their ministries. This triad was enriched by context and evaluation and gave birth to the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm*, the IPP, to illuminate the teaching/learning dynamic and the teacher/student relationship.

The IPP has its reason for existence in the *Spiritual Exercises*,¹⁵² where St. Ignatius proposes to the exercitant, as a fundamental point, a careful reflection on the meaning of the prayer experience - in this case, the study - that he is going through, to detect the implications for

¹⁴⁹ Jesuits Congregatio Generalis, "General Congregation 32, Decree 4: Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice."

¹⁵⁰ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 372–373 §17.

¹⁵¹ Jesuits Congregatio Generalis, *Jesuit Life & Mission Today: The Decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, ed. John W. Padberg, Series I: Jesuit Primary Sources in English translations 25 (St. Louis, Mo.: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 451 §43/40.

¹⁵² International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 375–376 §23-26.

the action he proposes to carry out in his life. Following the example of the guide in the *Spiritual Exercises*, the teacher is an essential help to the student to construct knowledge in search of truth. Without imposing or indoctrinating, the teacher suggests that the students select and work with elements from their own experience, stimulating them to reflect on the meaning of what they are studying.

The first dimension of the IPP, the beginning of the teaching/learning process, is the *Context*,¹⁵³ as it is at the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises*. No learning occurs in a vacuum, detached from circumstances, but is always affected by positive or negative contextual factors. Therefore, the teacher exercises personal care for the students, trying to know their life scenario, personal and family situation, the socioeconomic, political, and cultural context in which they move, the institutional environment of the school, and the baggage that the student brings with them from pre-knowledge and previous learning.

Once contextualized, the student becomes integrally involved (mind, heart, and will) in *Experience*,¹⁵⁴ in contact with the object of knowledge (facts, concepts, and principles) in a direct, face-to-face, immediate way, or an indirect way through simulations, representations, and support material. Faced with knowledge, the student simultaneously experiences a cognitive approach and an affective resonance. The affective dimensions, explains the document, must be as implicated as the cognitive ones because if the inner feeling is not allied to intellectual knowledge, learning will not move anyone to *action*,¹⁵⁵ which is the goal of Jesuit education.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 380–382 §35-43.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 383–386 §44-48.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 383–384 §44.

*Reflection*¹⁵⁶ is the serious and thoughtful reconsideration of a given theme, experience, idea, purpose, or spontaneous reaction, to grasp its more profound meaning given to the consequent action. Through *Reflection*, inseparable from *Experience*, the students ask about the truth of their studies and reflect upon the causes of their feelings or reactions. The students delve into the implications of what they have discovered in their study. They become convinced about facts, judgments, and truths. They gain a better understanding of themselves and others. It is up to the teacher to increase the student's sensitivity, respect their freedom, ever resisting the temptation to impose their opinion on them. Promoting a shared reflection between students and teachers is desirable to support the *action* that is intended to be taken.

Once persuaded of the meaning and implications of their study, the students are more disposed to *Action*¹⁵⁷ and commitment. The IPP distinguishes between “interiorized options,” which are the inner growth in convictions, in values, in a life project, and “exteriorized options,” in attitudes, procedures, visible acts.

The search for the “magis,” for excellence, justifies the periodic *Evaluation*¹⁵⁸ of the students, not only of their mastery of the subjects but of their integral maturing, priorities, attitudes, and service to others. The evaluation is done by appropriate methods and is facilitated by the teacher's relationship of trust and respect with the students.

After explaining the five elements of the IPP, the document considers the importance of its application in the face of restrictive and *ad hoc* approaches to education, such as pragmatism, academicism, fundamentalism, and secularism. The document, on the contrary, highlights the advantages of the appropriate use of the IPP to stimulate healthy learning habits, to improve the

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 386–388 §49-60.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 389–390 §61-66.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 390–391 §67-71.

student's relationship with the teacher and the subject of study, to sharpen the attention to reality and educational purposes, to favor exchange and cooperation, and overall to enrich the teachers' work. The IPP applies to any educational process, formal or informal, school or extracurricular, of theoretical or practical subjects, without requiring the creation of a specific course. In fact, it is to run through all courses.

2.2.4 Jesuit Schools: A Living Tradition in the 21st Century - An Ongoing Exercise of Discernment, 2019

Continuing the Jesuit educational tradition, on November 5, 2019 Fr. General, Arturo Sosa, promulgated *Jesuit Schools: A Living Tradition in the 21st Century - An Ongoing Exercise of Discernment*, the fruit of eight years of work by the ICAJE (International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education), under the coordination of the Secretary of Jesuit Education, Fr. José Alberto Mesa.

The document consolidates the recent Jesuit pedagogical tradition and wants to help discern the challenges and opportunities that the changing world offers for the Jesuit educational apostolate to remain in constant renewal, innovation, and re-imagination. In the letter of promulgation, Fr. General explains that “*Jesuit Schools: A Living Tradition*” completes the triad of essential educational documents, joining with “*Characteristics of the Education of the Society of Jesus*” and “*Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Proposal*”, and all three should be considered together as the current framework of Jesuit education.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *Jesuit Schools: A Living Tradition in the 21st Century - An Ongoing Exercise of Discernment* (Rome: Society of Jesus, Secretariat for Education, 2019), 5.

Since Jesuit education is a living tradition, the Commission was keen to present an unfinished, non-static document so that it could inspire and motivate dialogue and discernment. Fr. Sosa says that the best tribute we can pay to our long tradition in education is to explore new models and creative and imaginative ways to offer our spiritual vision, educational experience and pedagogy to our students and their families.

The Introduction¹⁶⁰ presents the various elements that justify the new frame of reference. The Jesuit educational apostolate has a response to offer to this globalized world. In the extensive network of schools, the certainty of God's active presence in all cultures is deepened, and the formation of young leaders and agents of change to promote reconciliation and justice is sought.

All those involved in the educational process in the schools are invited to discern and dialogue about the 28 exercises of discernment that the document offers for an effective response to the current historical context, repeating the colloquy of the *Spiritual Exercises*: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?"¹⁶¹

The document is composed of three parts. The first is a review of recent foundational documents; then an analysis of the new reality of the world under five headings: socio-political reality, education, changes in religious practice, changes in the Catholic Church, changes in the Society of Jesus; and the last section presents ten *Global Identifiers* that should make the updating of Jesuit schools more visible. Each section suggests a roadmap of questions for personal and common discernment. The Appendix is an adaptation of Appendix II of the *Characteristics* document.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 11–12 §1-6.

¹⁶¹ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 42 §53,2. International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 16.

Thus:

Jesuit schools should be: 1. Catholic, committed to in-depth faith formation in dialogue with other religions and worldviews; 2. Committed to creating a safe and healthy school environment for all; 3. Committed to global citizenship; 4. Committed to the care of all creation; 5. Committed to justice; 6. Committed to be accessible for all; 7. Committed to interculturality; 8. Committed to being a global network at the service of the mission; 9. Committed to human excellence; 10. Committed to life-long learning.¹⁶²

The tradition of the Jesuit pedagogical patrimony continues not only through the documents mentioned but also through other documents of a more programmatic nature, which are presented below. They are rooted in the previous documents and offer clues for schools to discern the direction of their mission in the present world situation.

2.2.5 Directors' Colloquium, 2012

From July 29 to August 2, 2012, more than 450 participants from all the Jesuit regions of the world gathered in Boston for the first time for the International Colloquium on Jesuit Secondary Education to reinvigorate networking and reflect on the changes in the way of proceeding that demand the “signs of the times.” It was the first of three events in the cycle “Discovering our Apostolic Potential,”¹⁶³ organized by Jesuit Education Secretary Fr. José Alberto Mesa and titled “The World is Our Home.”

The participants determined to provide the best service of faith and justice in the care of the common home and in strengthening Jesuit-Ignatian communities. Ultimately, they made five commitments: (1) to develop a unique global community and network, respecting both regional and universal identities and missions; (2) to work with established local and regional networks

¹⁶² International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 18 §24.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11.

while fostering global relationships within Jesuit and other high school networks; (3) to use technology to create and foster global relationships and overcome physical distance; (4) to provide students with experiences, such as twinning relationships, outreach service programs, and virtual classroom experiences, that prepare them to become leaders in transforming the world; (5) to provide a safe educational environment, free from all forms of abuse and conducive to learning, growth, and development.¹⁶⁴

2.2.6 International Seminar on Ignatian Pedagogy and Spirituality (SIPEI), 2014

The second event of the previously mentioned cycle was the International Seminar on Ignatian Pedagogy and Spirituality (SIPEI) held from November 3 to 8, 2014, in Manresa (Spain). The approximately 80 participants from the six regions of the Society analyzed the problems that affected humanity. They asked themselves about the conditions of possibility of education, in this world, people who are conscious, competent, compassionate, and committed. They felt strengthened by the words of Jesus in the Gospel: “do not fear” and concluded the need for a deep and systemic change in all areas of the Jesuit schools.¹⁶⁵

From the presentations, the debates, and the discernment, SIPEI formulated its understanding of the 4 Cs: (1) A person *conscious* of distinguishing good and evil, so as to contribute to the well-being of the person and of society and to the transformation of the world. (2) A person *competent* to invest his or her abilities in formulating a human project of life. (3) A *compassionate* person who, recognizing human dignity, mobilizes themselves in actions of

¹⁶⁴ International Colloquium on Jesuit Secondary Education, “Jesuit Education - Our Commitment to Global Networking, 2012,” in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 571 §4.

¹⁶⁵ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “SIPEI,” 574.

solidarity. (4) A person *committed* to discern temporal needs and to act for socio-environmental reconciliation.¹⁶⁶

In the Final Declaration, the participants made seven commitments:¹⁶⁷ (1) Deepening transformation and change to respond to the challenges of the 21st century in the spirit of constantly seeking the “*magis*.” (2) Connecting the goals of the formation of the Ignatian individual (4 Cs) with the challenges of the century: globalization, diversity, inclusion, personal autonomy, and networking. (3) Continuing to examine and seek to understand the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the new pedagogy needed for educational centers in fresh and vibrant ways. (4) Not allowing fear to deter or put obstacles in the way of meaningful and needed change. (5) Promoting actions for the growth of students, families, and educators in spirituality. (6) Strengthening commitment to justice through actions in solidarity with the unfortunate. (7) Taking determined action to collaborate as a global network of Jesuit schools.

In addition to these agreements, the SIPEI participants recommended four actions to drive pedagogical renewal:¹⁶⁸ (1) To animate a process of diagnosis and reflection to drive profound and global changes in teaching and learning scenarios; (2) To incorporate a social action program focused on solidarity with others; (3) To support the *Educate Magis*¹⁶⁹ community to connect our global network of schools; (4) To continue the SIPEI initiatives with new global events.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 575–576 §10-13.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 576–577 §16-22.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 577 §24-27.

¹⁶⁹ The Mission of *Educate Magis* is to nurture a vibrant online community connecting educators from our Jesuit Global Network of Schools. International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “Jesuit Global Network of Schools,” *Educate Magis*, accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.educatemagis.org/>.

2.2.7 Congress of Education Delegates - JESEDU, 2017

From October 15-20, 2017, in Rio de Janeiro, the cycle of events mentioned above concluded with the 1st International Congress of Jesuit Education Delegates to study how to carry out the educational apostolate as a network. Fr. General, Arturo Sosa, delivered a conference, where he encouraged the participants to reimagine Jesuit Education.¹⁷⁰ Fr. Sosa launched six challenges for today's education that look to the future.¹⁷¹ (1) Schools must be spaces of pedagogical research and laboratories of didactic innovation. It is necessary to explore what others do and learn from them, to be aware of anthropological and cultural change, and to educate in a new way. (2) Schools should continue advancing in education for justice with closeness to the poor and marginalized, forming a critical conscience in front of unjust processes, with a constructive and dialogical attitude to find solutions. (3) Schools should form the ecological dimension of reconciliation, joining forces for a sustainable economy for the preserving of creation, and manifest this care in the practices and physical structure of the schools. (4) They should strive to create a culture of protecting minors and the vulnerable, acting to present abuses immediately, effectively, and transparently. (5) Religious formation should include the transcendent dimension to transform personal and social life, and communicate Ignatian spirituality, the "Jesuit virus" for new generations to desire to love and serve in everything. (6) Schools should educate creatively for to global citizenship; there should be formation programs for an intercultural vision of the world, to act locally and globally without dichotomies, without losing the Christian and Ignatian identity.

¹⁷⁰ Arturo Sosa, S.J., "Conferencia Impartida Por El Padre General Arturo Sosa, S.I. Congreso Internacional de Delegados de Educación de La Compañía de Jesus Jesedu - Rio 2017," in *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, vol. XXVI-II,2 (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta della Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2018), 883.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 883–886.

From this challenge was born a response in thirteen final agreements, presented in four blocks: (1) Experience of God, (2) Tradition and innovation, (3) Caring for our Common Home, and (4) Sent to a global network.¹⁷²

From the set of thirteen agreements, the participants selected eight priorities requiring quick responses from all the delegates and colleges to become a universal body with a universal mission. The eight priority agreements are numbers 1, 2, 4, 8, and 10 to 13 (marked in bold in the text for evidence).

Experience of God: **(1)** Promote the Examination of Conscience in every school to help students listen to the inner voice and learn the path of interiority. **(2)** Introduce a module of interreligious education for students to know and respect other expressions of faith. (3) Study the adaptation of the *Spiritual Exercises* to the school context.

Tradition and Innovation: **(4)** Ignatian discernment process leading to a plan for innovation and periodic review for each school according to its context.; (5) Verify organizational structures and functions with attention to gender stereotypes and inequalities; (6) Improve the invitation to parents of students to participate in education and formation; (7) Reflect on the holistic nature of human excellence (the 4 Cs) to accurately understand academic success.

Caring for our common home: reconciliation with God, humanity, and creation: **(8)** This refers to Environmental and social policy in each college and curriculum integration of justice, faith, and environmental care; as well as (9) quality education program for marginalized students and building bridges with other people and communities.

¹⁷² International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *JESEDU-Rio 2017 Action Statement* (Rio de Janeiro: Educate Magis, 2017), accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.educatemagis.org/documents/jesedu-rio-2017-action-statement/>.

Sent to a Global Network: **(10)** Assess and animate cooperation with regional and global networks. **(11)** Raise awareness of teachers and support staff about their membership in, and animation of the global network. **(12)** Train teachers and support staff on global citizenship to help form students in this dimension. **(13)** Make the *Educate Magis* platform a school resource to help animate their global dimension.

2.2.8 Universal Apostolic Preferences, 2019

The 36th General Congregation (2016) determined the drafting of the Universal Apostolic Preferences, adding that they should be the fruit of the broadest consultation of Jesuits and communities.¹⁷³ The discernment process lasted two years, and Fr. Sosa promulgated the document on February 19, 2019. In the letter of promulgation, Fr. General says that the Preferences are the best way for [the Society of Jesus] to collaborate in the Lord's mission, the one that best suits the service of the Church at this time, the one we can best accomplish with what we are and have, seeking to do that which is of greatest service and universal good.¹⁷⁴

The first Preference identifies as: "To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment."¹⁷⁵ It is about overcoming both secularism and nostalgia for cultural expressions of the past and collaborating with the Church to renew its presence in human history. Therefore, it is about offering three vital contributions of Ignatian spirituality: the *Spiritual*

¹⁷³ Jesuits Congregatio Generalis, "36th General Congregation: Documents," in *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, vol. XXVI-II,1 (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta della Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2017), 242–243 D.2, n. 14.

¹⁷⁴ Arturo Sosa, S.J., "Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019-2029," in *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, vol. XXVII–II (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta della Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2020), 411.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 412.

Exercises in multiple modalities, the practice of discernment as a habitual way of making life decisions, and the regular use of spiritual conversation.

The second Preference proposes: “To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.”¹⁷⁶ The Society makes a firm resolution to walk together with these categories of people, caring for them, defending their interests, and putting policies in place to safeguard the vulnerable, particularly children.

The third Preference pledges “To accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future.”¹⁷⁷ The goal is to promote cultural diversity against the homogeneity imposed by globalization and to enable young people to develop their potential. This requires a conversion of adults and institutions to learn to identify God’s presence in ordinary life.

The last Preference states, “To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.”¹⁷⁸ This is about associating with others in respecting creation and establishing alternative, healthy living conditions, and habits. This requires study and reflection on the causes of ecological imbalance and discernment in order to take remedial action and promote sustainable development.

These are “preferences” are not “priorities” because they suggest a broad consideration of reality, a perspective, a horizon, in view of apostolic discernment. They are orientations that have to do not only with doing but also with being.¹⁷⁹ They are orientations to improve the apostolic action of the whole Society of Jesus, including the educational field, in 2019-2029.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 413.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 414.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 416.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 419.

In the next chapter, we intend to integrate the work done up to this point and see what are the consequences of sacramentally thinking about the school community.

3 THINKING SACRAMENTALLY ABOUT THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Our traditional emphasis in academic excellence should not be neglected. It allows our schools to fulfill one of its fundamental social roles and allows them to enter in dialogue with the larger society about the meaning of quality education. Yet, in our schools this endeavor must be framed within this context of human excellence.¹⁸⁰

After having delved into the theology of the liturgical assembly and the challenges that the Society of Jesus faces in education, in this third chapter, we will reflect on the consequences of thinking sacramentally about the school community. The school and the Christian community that meets as an assembly are undoubtedly different, but they have links that we will explore. Next, we will develop the possibility of thinking sacramentally about the school. Finally, we will reflect on some challenges to thinking about a Jesuit school sacramentally, following the steps of the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm*.

3.1 SCHOOL AS ASSEMBLY

The real presence of Christ in the Church declared in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* §7 and explained in the magisterial documents that followed, as set forth above in section 1.3, leads us to affirm that a Catholic school, and specifically a Jesuit school, is also an assembly of faith.

¹⁸⁰ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 82 §272.

Recall that at the center of SC 7 is Matt. 18:20 “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” As we saw above, we can extend our understanding of the real presence of Christ to include moments that are not strictly sacramental but to all moments when the assembly gathers. As Janowiak points out, being present in the community in the presence of God, singing and moving in tune with Trinitarian life is the form of worship in which participants are willing to be involved, blessed, shaped, and shared by the life of the world as a whole.¹⁸¹

From the time of the *Ratio Studiorum*, the purpose of studies¹⁸² in Jesuit schools, both in classes and outside them (when the occasion presents itself), the particular intention of the teacher should be to lead their students to the greater service and love of God and to the love of all those virtues by which we should be pleasing to God; the teacher should, therefore, see to it that all the studies contribute to this end.¹⁸³ Thus, each class should begin with a short prayer, or failing that, at least with the sign of the Cross,¹⁸⁴ placing ourselves in God’s presence and helping us to see and feel as part of the Body of Christ. In this sense, we pick up Janowiak where he proposes a liturgical spirituality embedded in the deep call to worship that roots us as a community of believers in the very life of God, in whose name we say we gather to pray and, I would also add, study: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God*, 34.

¹⁸² Here we understand purpose in the sense of the Principle and Foundation of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius [23]. Recalling that the education of the Society of Jesus always follows the spiritual intuition of that founding text. Jesuits, *Ratio studiorum da Companhia de Jesus (1599): regime escolar e curriculum de estudos*, ed. José Manuel Martins Lopes and Margarida Miranda (Braga: Axioma - Publicações da Faculdade de Filosofia, 2018), 94–95.

¹⁸³ Jesuits, *The Ratio Studiorum*, 48 [H4] Common Rules for All the Professors of the Higher Faculties, §129/1.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. §130/2.

¹⁸⁵ Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God*, 12.

As Thomas H. Groome argues, the environment of Catholic schools should be that of a community. And he goes further, stating that they should always represent to young people that the most life-giving way to live is as people in community and within a community of people.¹⁸⁶ The documents of the Society, revisited in the second chapter, are peremptory in affirming that it is not necessary to be Catholic in order to teach or study in a Jesuit school, but everyone should be invited to understand the ecclesial identity of the school and to be enriched by that identity to the extent that is appropriate for each one.¹⁸⁷

Since Fr. Arrupe's document *Our Secondary Schools: Today and Tomorrow*, we can no longer look at the school assembly as just the teachers and students, but with its five axes: the Jesuit community, lay collaborators, families, students, and alumni,¹⁸⁸ to which *The Characteristics* added the benefactors.¹⁸⁹ The relationship between teachers and students, as well as all members of the school community, should be marked by praise, reverence, and service.¹⁹⁰ Ideally, Jesuit schools should be places where people are accredited, honored, and cared for, recognizing and celebrating people's natural talents and creative abilities. It is essential to appreciate individual contributions and achievements, treat everyone fairly, and make a shared sacrifice for the economically poor, and for the socially and educationally disadvantaged. In such a school environment, each person should find the challenge, encouragement, and support necessary to reach their personal potential for excellence. It is crucial to help each other and

¹⁸⁶ Thomas H. Groome, *What Makes Education Catholic: Spiritual Foundations* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2021), 137–138.

¹⁸⁷ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 61 §171.

¹⁸⁸ Arrupe, S.J., "Our Secondary Schools," 272 §26/15.

¹⁸⁹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 332 §144/136.

¹⁹⁰ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 32 §23.

work together with enthusiasm and generosity, trying to model the ideals we hold for our students and ourselves in words and actions.¹⁹¹

In this sense, the Jesuit school community is not much different from the assembly that gathers for worship. We reaffirm what has been said before, applying it now to the school. We cannot forget that, with the Incarnation, the encounter with God comes through the encounter with others. If, on the one hand, the local assembly is the privileged expression of this encounter, the school can be seen as an extension of it.

Students who graduate from Jesuit schools should acquire a way of life that is a proclamation of the charity of Christ, the faith that comes from Him, and the justice that He announced, in proportion to their age and maturity. We must propose the values that are part of our Ignatian heritage and make every effort to transmit them even to those who do not share our faith in Christ. This can be done by translating these values into ethical and human values of moral uprightness and solidarity, which also come from God. According to Fr. Arrupe, the goal is to form new people, transformed by Christ's message, who will witness his death and resurrection in their own lives.¹⁹²

Of all the documents seen in the previous chapter, it is in *The Characteristics* that this question of the assembly and the school community in the Jesuit school appears most evident. The 14th characteristic reads, "Jesuit Education Celebrates Faith in Personal and Community Prayer, Worship, and Service."¹⁹³ This occurs under section 4: Christ the model of humanity,

¹⁹¹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 381–382 §39.

¹⁹² Arrupe, S.J., "Our Secondary Schools," 270 §19/12.

¹⁹³ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 313 §75/67-78/70.

reaffirming that Ignatius of Loyola's worldview is centered on the person of Jesus, and that is the model of person the Jesuit school wants to form.

In school, as we saw in the early Church documents, prayer is an expression of faith and an effective way to establish a personal relationship with God, leading to a commitment to serve others. Everyone is encouraged to praise and thank God in prayer, to pray for one another within the school community, and to ask for God's help in meeting the needs of the human community at large. The faith relationship with God is both communal and personal, and the educational community in a Jesuit school is bound together by spiritual bonds that go beyond the merely human. Although in the next section we will talk about a sacramental way of living and being in the school, Catholic members of the educational community are encouraged to participate in the sacraments themselves such as the Eucharist and Reconciliation as a way of strengthening their faith and reconnecting with God. These sacraments on the one hand nourish the community that comes together to worship, on the other hand they are nourished by what the people who come together bring to share. As Groome states that the liturgy is also a source of ongoing nourishment and conversion for the faith life of a Christian community.¹⁹⁴

Although the entire Section Eight of *The Characteristics* is devoted to community, we want to highlight "Characteristic 25: Jesuit Education Takes Place within a Structure that Promotes Community."¹⁹⁵ Here it is stated that each member is invited to engage actively, responsibly, and freely in the growth of the whole community.¹⁹⁶ We can apply here, *mutatis mutandis*, what Chauvet emphasizes at the theological level and what we stated above: (a) a

¹⁹⁴ Thomas H. Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry: The Way of Shared Praxis*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 337.

¹⁹⁵ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "The Characteristics of Jesuit Education," 332–334 §145/137-150/142.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 334 §150/142.

school without a community would be a contradiction in terms; (b) diverse school communities exemplify the diverse nature of the school; (c) each school truly and fully realizes the mission of the Society.

First, a school without a community would be a contradiction in terms. Today we cannot think of education, and consequently of the school, in isolation, as being composed of only students and teachers. As we have seen in the various documents of the Society on education, the educational community is much broader, and each agent has a fundamental role in the student's growth as the center of the whole system. Pope Francis, in line with the educational tradition of the Society, has been a serious advocate of the fact that several actors are involved in this area of education. In addition to an entire chapter devoted to education in *Amoris Laetitia*,¹⁹⁷ and another in *Laudato si'*,¹⁹⁸ the Pope goes further by creating the *Global Compact on Education*¹⁹⁹ to renew "our passion for a more open and inclusive education, including patient listening, constructive dialogue, and better mutual understanding."²⁰⁰

Secondly, diverse school communities exemplify the diverse nature of the school. Like the Church in Chauvet's scheme, the school is not a closed circumference but is open. This openness is not only external but also a manifestation that each school community must have to welcome different people. This, too, has been a concern of the Society from the beginning, and

¹⁹⁷ Francis, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family Amoris Laetitia* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2016), accessed March 10, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia.html §259-290.

¹⁹⁸ Francis, *Encyclical Letter on Care for Our Common Home Laudato Si'* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 2015), accessed March 10, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html §202-245.

¹⁹⁹ All information about the initiative at: Congregation for Catholic Education, "Global Compact on Education," accessed March 11, 2023, <https://www.educationglobalcompact.org/en/>.

²⁰⁰ Francis, *Message for the Launch of the Global Compact on Education* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2019), accessed March 11, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2019/documents/papa-francesco_20190912_messaggio-patto-educativo.html.

as we have seen is well mirrored in all the most recent documents we revisited in the previous chapter. The only reason why the Society of Jesus continues to commit itself to the educational apostolate is the conviction that schools continue to be spaces *par excellence* to fulfill our mission of reconciliation and justice according to the *Universal Apostolic Preferences*.²⁰¹ In that case, there has been a great effort to integrate diversity both within each particular school community and at the global level of forming a worldwide network of education, the aforementioned *Educate Magis*.

Finally, each school truly and fully carries out the mission of the Society. If we take seriously all that has been discussed in recent years about education in the Society, we realize that each school can no longer see itself alone, with its own local network. Each Jesuit school carries with it a pedagogical and spiritual heritage of almost five centuries and must today more than ever be linked to all the Jesuit schools of various kinds spread over the five continents. Knowing itself linked to a network, a Jesuit school is integrated into an organic body, and whatever its specificity, it does not fail to fulfill fully the mission that the whole Society entrusts to that particular parcel.

Another important aspect is what we saw when we explored the documents of the early Church, namely the *Didache*. It was clear to those who gathered that the very act of gathering had consequences for the Kingdom of God. In fact, that is what the Jesuit school, as a community wants to accomplish. Hence the importance given from *General Congregation 32* of the Society of Jesus, to the service of faith and the promotion of justice.²⁰²

²⁰¹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 9.

²⁰² Jesuits Congregatio Generalis, “General Congregation 32, Decree 4: Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice.”

After seeing how the school can be understood as a community and how this vision runs through all the Society's documents on education, we are taken to the next section, where we will reflect on how to think sacramentally about the school.

3. 2 THINKING THE SCHOOL SACRAMENTALLY

“For Ignatius the response to the call of Christ is in and through the Roman Catholic Church, the instrument through which Christ is sacramentally present in the world.”²⁰³ We can see this clearly in the “Rules for Thinking, Judging, and Feeling with the Church”²⁰⁴ of the *Spiritual Exercises*. A Jesuit school, we have already stated, cannot be understood as something on the margin of the Church; in *A Living Tradition*, the school must be understood “as an apostolic body in the Church.”²⁰⁵ So it seems clear to us that, as part of the Church, the Jesuit school is a space where a sacramental consciousness can and should be developed.

Let us return to Chauvet and his thesis that the true original sacrament is Jesus Christ,²⁰⁶ the real symbol that leads to the Father and that the Church is the subject that receives the Word of God. According to this author, the sacraments can be understood only if inserted in the sacramentality that characterizes the whole Christian existence. In fact, he defines sacramentality in these terms: “By sacramentality, I mean one of the constitutive dimensions of the faith or of Christian existence, a dimension that is manifested and crystallized in the sacraments. This

²⁰³ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “The Characteristics of Jesuit Education,” 320 §99/91.

²⁰⁴ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 133–137 §352-370.

²⁰⁵ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 59 §159.

²⁰⁶ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 53–54. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 172.

sacramentality goes beyond the particular sector of the sacraments where it is epiphanized; it covers all that is expressive mediation of God's gift."²⁰⁷ In this regard, let us recall Ignatius of Loyola's invitation to see God in all things. Living out this proposal in a Jesuit school has laid the roots for developing a sacramental awareness concerning everyday experiences.

As we saw in Section 1.4, Chauvet offers a theology of the "sacramental" more than a theology of the sacrament in the sense that it allows a sacramental re-reading of the whole of Christian existence from the angle of sacramentality. Therefore, according to him, sacramentality is the constitutive element of the Christian life. To speak of sacramentality means, therefore, to speak of the fundamental dimension of faith. Sacramentality is not a particular sector of ecclesial activity but a constitutive dimension of the Church and its faith.²⁰⁸

The concept of sacramentality can be understood as being attentive and receptive to the suggestions of a loving God who invites us into a transforming relationship. Through the sacramental perspective, it is possible to see the world as a place where God manifests Godself to us and where we have the opportunity to respond to that manifestation.²⁰⁹ Thus, the principle of sacramentality is much broader than the seven sacraments and reflects a vision of life imbued with God's love and presence, inviting us to recognize and respond to the divine presence in our daily lives. This sacramental perspective can help satisfy our search for meaning and purpose in our lives.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ Our translation of: Louis-Marie Chauvet, "L'avenir du sacramentel," *Recherche de Science Religieuse* 75/2 (1987): 241.

²⁰⁸ Chauvet, *Du symbolique au symbole*, 109.

²⁰⁹ Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly*, 16.

²¹⁰ Thomas H. Groome, *Faith for the Heart: A Catholic Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 2019), 213.

Let's remember that the sacraments are linked to creation and the history of salvation, and one dimension cannot be thought of without the other.²¹¹ God desires to act out of love, which defines God's very being, and this desire is generative. God remains faithful to love, simply loving, and desires to share this "God-ness" with creation, delighting in what has been created.²¹² In Chauvet's words, "the confession of creation is itself charged with sacramentality."²¹³ The Incarnation constitutes with creation the cornerstone of the Catholic understanding of the value of sacramentality. The sacraments are always sacraments of the Incarnate Word and are to be appreciated as prolongations of the sanctified humanity of Christ.²¹⁴

Society's guidelines for education, as we have seen, are not intended to define a strict curriculum. However, the ten key identifiers that should be present in all Jesuit schools²¹⁵ open us all to the possibility of looking at the world in a sacramental way. It will be up to the whole educational community to collaborate so that this vision is first of all lived, so that it can be witnessed to the students. Although not explicitly, this idea is present in the discussions of the three events of the cycle "Discovering our Apostolic Potential,"²¹⁶ presented in Chapter Two.

In a further step, Kenan B. Osborne makes it explicit that sacramentality is not a human thing or action but rather an action of God that is responded to by human beings. There is no sacrament that is a created thing and no human action that can be considered a sacrament. The words "God's action" and "human response" are generalizing and abstract God's blessing, which

²¹¹ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 553.

²¹² Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God*, 21.

²¹³ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 551.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20–21.

²¹⁵ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 18.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

occurs at a specific time for specific human beings. God's blessing is completely existential and cannot be formulated in an abstract or generalized way. To lose sight of this action of God and the subsequent response of human beings is to lose its meaning.²¹⁷

The relationship that can be created, and is expected to be created, between the elements of the educational community in a Jesuit school has much of this sacramental dimension. The dynamic of growth in a sacramental awareness in a school environment, since it is not automatic, requires intentional attention on our part.²¹⁸

Thinking sacramentally about school encourages us to look at everything within the context of the kingdom of God, which is realized by divine grace, operating through humanity and throughout history. Thus, sacramental awareness inspires us to look for ways to put our faith into practice in all situations and circumstances. As Thomas H. Groome²¹⁹ reminds us, this sacramental awareness is based on confidence in our faith and, especially in times of difficulty, reminds us that, as Julian of Norwich said, "all manner of things shall be well."²²⁰ Or to quote a Portuguese poet in the poem "Diário" [Diary], *Seja o que for // Será bom. // É tudo.*²²¹ [Whatever it is // It will be good. // That's all.] A challenge for sacramental awareness is to be attentive to the small signs of divine love that are manifested in our daily lives, even on seemingly ordinary and monotonous days, such as those often experienced at school. We must (re)learn to open our eyes and be taught by the pedagogy of Jesus.²²²

²¹⁷ Kenan B. Osborne, *Christian Sacraments in a Postmodern World: A Theology for the Third Millennium* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 70.

²¹⁸ Groome, *Faith for the Heart*, 216.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love (Short Text and Long Text)*, Penguin classics (London; New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 85.

²²¹ Daniel Faria, *Poesia*, ed. Vera Vouga (Porto: Assírio Alvim, 2012), 442.

²²² José Tolentino Mendonça, *A Mística Do Instante: O Tempo e a Promessa* (São Paulo: Paulinas, 2016), 140–142.

Groome also reminds us that a sacramental conscienciousness should make us deeply aware of our sins and recognize social and cultural injustices. This means we must be mindful of our failings as disciples of Jesus and resist all political structures and cultural ideologies that cause oppression and injustice. If we are unaware of this, our perspective will not be of God.²²³

Also, in school, a sacramental conscience requires a critical approach to all aspects of our lives in the world. Instead of putting God first and then the needy, we must recognize and respond to the needs of the people around us, just as God desires.²²⁴ This is a muscle that, as a Jesuit school, we want to exercise in all educational community members.

For Groome, “a key function of Catholic education is to encourage in students a sacramental consciousness in their daily lives.”²²⁵ A sacramental consciousness places the primary accent on identifying what is right in the world — the indications of divine benevolence at work — and invites us to collaborate. Critical and sacramental awareness are two complementary perspectives. Like critical awareness, a sacramental approach can confront and comfort, question and affirm, give and always demand our loyalty in response.

Imagination plays a vital role in sacramental awareness. With a sacramental imagination, we are continually faced with the sacredness of the everyday, the divine presence in the ordinary and how we are to respond.²²⁶ This is a presence that is learned in the celebration of the liturgy and also in the school environment. Let us remember that for Chauvet, the liturgy is the powerful pedagogy where we learn to consent to the presence of the absence of God.²²⁷

²²³ Groome, *Faith for the Heart*, 217.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 218.

²²⁵ Groome, *What Makes Education Catholic*, 141.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 142.

²²⁷ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 265.

In one of his most important speeches on education, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás reminded us that the Ignatian imagination is a creative process that recreates reality. Still, it should not be confused with fantasy, which is an escape from reality. Imagination grasps reality and involves a deep engagement with what is real, dismembering it in favor of integration around what is deeper: God, Christ, and the Gospel. The starting point is always what is real and material, the world as we find it, a world of suffering and need. Ignatius guides us, and the students of Jesuit schools, to enter the depths of this reality, to see God's hidden presence and action — this encounter with the deepest changes the person.²²⁸

The sacramental imagination cannot do without the liturgical and sacramental rites since the Christian faith cannot live without them.²²⁹ The rituals remind us that the sacraments are of a practical order²³⁰ and that we should do what we say in the sacrament and not just say what we do.²³¹ Thus, thinking sacramentally about the school cannot in any way dispense with the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation. Interpreting Chauvet, I can say that we become fully members of the educational community as we become Eucharistic persons. As the theologian makes clear, this grace brings a task not to remain in comfort, but to go out in witness to the double commandment of love for God and our brothers and sisters.²³²

I agree with Groome when he states that the liturgy can have a great impact in informing, forming, and transforming the Christian community that participates in it, as long as it is adequate to allow them to express their faith in God and experience the life of God through the

²²⁸ Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., "Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today," in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 539–540 §19-20.

²²⁹ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 336.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 324.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 326.

²³² *Ibid.*, 314–315.

love they receive toward the world.²³³ In other words, if the liturgy is sacramentally adequate, the school community can live their faith more fully and transformatively. “Every member of the community has a part to play in its sacramentality, enabling it to be an effective agent of what it teaches and claims to believe.”²³⁴

Having delved into the possibility that we can think sacramentally about the school, we must now consider the practical consequences for our school communities. What challenges lie ahead and how can we put into practice what we have laid out so far are; these are the questions that lead us to the next section.

3. 3 CHALLENGES

Although the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm*²³⁵ (IPP) is 30 years old this year, it is not obsolete. This is confirmed by the fact that the most recent working paper on education proposes it as a flexible approach to be used in schools.²³⁶ Fr. Arturo Sosa, in promulgating *A Living Tradition*, said that this document updates the previous ones in a continuous exercise of discernment, challenging educators to enrich it with their reflections.²³⁷

Before going on, it is important to mention another dimension of Ignatian spirituality that continually challenges us, and therefore also in the sacramental vision of the school: *cura*

²³³ Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 355.

²³⁴ Thomas H. Groome, *Will There Be Faith?: A New Vision for Educating and Growing Disciples* (New York, NY: HarperOne, an imprint of HarperCollins, 2011), 109.

²³⁵ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach.”

²³⁶ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, *A Living Tradition*, 22 §30.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

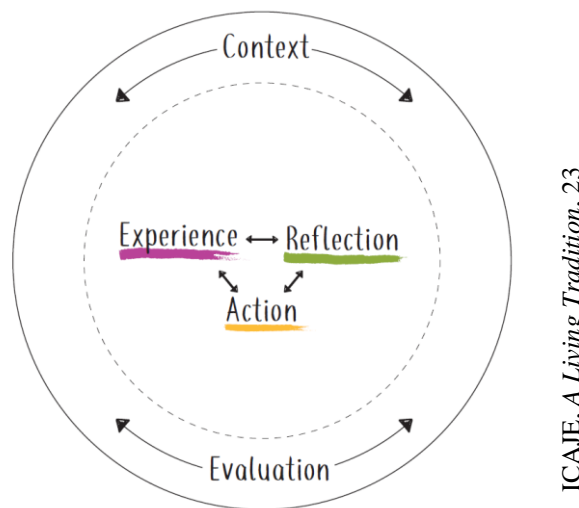
personalis.²³⁸ In broad terms, *cura personalis* means personal care, interest in each student, and the accompanying journey that the educator takes with students in the process of their personal growth. Fr. Kolvenbach reminded us that St. Ignatius was very sensitive to the diversity of people and that this personal care was essential to encourage the Creator to communicate Himself with the person who wants to be faithful to Him. Kolvenbach, then General of the Society, stated, “‘cura personalis’ is simply help, from person to person, so that God and person may really meet.”²³⁹ It seems that *cura personalis* can serve us as a sacramental lens to look at the IPP in each phase.

In this exercise of discernment, in line with *A Living Tradition*, I propose we next look at each IPP process in a sacramental way. If the Pedagogical Paradigm should guide the Society’s action in the school environment, we will try to elaborate on how we can revisit its steps in a sacramental key.

The image below shows the fruit of the constant interpretation of the 1993 document presented now in *A Living Tradition*. The core experience ↔ reflection ↔ action is surrounded by continuously looking at context and the possibility/need for evaluation. These last dimensions, previously in the documents as a starting point and a point of relaunching the process, are now graphically presented as transversal to the process.

²³⁸ The expression “cura personalis” does not come from Ignatius of Loyola or from the first writings of the Society, but it is an attitude that is characteristic of Ignatius and the Society. It refers to prudence adapted to places and people, to people’s circumstances and to the diversity of people and natures. The expression was first mentioned in General Vladimir Ledóchowski’s Instruction on the Universities and Colleges of the American Assistancy on August 15, 1934 and was later revised by General John Baptist Janssens on September 27, 1948. Gabriel Codina, S.J., “‘Our Way of Proceeding’ in Education: The Ratio Studiorum,” in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 126–127.

²³⁹ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach S.J., “Cura Personalis,” *Review of Ignatian Spirituality* XXXVII, no. 114 (2007): 15.



ICAJE, *A Living Tradition*, 23

If, as we said earlier, thinking sacramentally about the school encourages us to look at everything within the context of the kingdom of God, which is accomplished by divine grace, operating through humanity and throughout history, then it makes sense that this *context*²⁴⁰ should embrace the entire process, and not just be present at the beginning. As Fr. Nicolás said about imagination, the starting point is always the real.²⁴¹ The reality of each educational agent and the world must serve as the basis for living in the school with a sacramental awareness. “Thus *alumnorum cura personalis*, i.e., a genuine love and personal care for each of our students, is essential for an environment that fosters the proposed Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm.”²⁴² The more the educational community is aware of the context, the more effective can be the sacramental gaze on the entire school complex.

²⁴⁰ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach,” 380–382 §35-43.

²⁴¹ Nicolás, S.J., “Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today,” 539 §20.

²⁴² International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, “Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach,” 383 §42.

Ignatian pedagogy seeks the person's integral formation, valuing both the academic and the human aspects (*virtus et litterae*²⁴³). *Evaluation*²⁴⁴ is an essential tool for the student's progress in both aspects. While tests can easily measure academic assessment, assessing human progress in attitudes, priorities, and actions is more challenging and requires sensitivity on the part of educators. Methods such as personal dialogue, student self-assessment, the review of leisure time activities, volunteer service, and sports can be used to assess human progress. The important thing is for educators to be attentive and sensitive to help the student grow along the path of "*magis*." The watchful eye that enables the assessment of human progress must also be sacramental. It is not a segregated judgment of others but always fundamental opportunities to become like Jesus, the original sacrament.

Context and evaluation are, therefore, two elements that should be omnipresent in the entire growth and maturation process of students and other members of the educational community. They are a kind of dynamic pattern that frames the triad experience ↔ reflection ↔ action.

For the Ignatian tradition, the educational *experience*²⁴⁵ is more than just intellectual understanding; it involves feelings, imagination, understanding, and affectivity. The educational experience seeks to involve the whole person, not just the mind and heart. Ignatius believed that for the truth to become alive and effective, the person must feel and experience internally, not just cognitively.²⁴⁶ The *cura personalis* in the Ignatian educational experience involves helping students become aware that learning involves the whole person, not just cognition. This is a

²⁴³ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 164 §392.

²⁴⁴ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 390–391 §67-71.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 383–386 §44-48.

²⁴⁶ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 22 §2,5.

significant challenge, especially when curricula are increasingly filled with content. The sacramental view of school can easily be masked by a lot of content that often has to do exclusively with cognition and not enough with formation.

*Reflection*²⁴⁷ is crucial in a formative and liberating process that structures students' consciousness and leads them to action. Reflection allows one to grasp the meaning and essential value of what is being studied, and to relate and appreciate its implications in the search for truth and freedom. The *cura personalis* is understood here as a challenge for educators to formulate questions that dilate the sensitivity of students and lead them to consider the points of view of others, especially the poor, to awaken students' sensitivity to the human implications of what they study, helping them to grow in human quality, always with respect for the freedom of the other. Reflection is the point of IPP that most clearly helps develop a sacramental awareness of reality in students.

According to St. Ignatius, the crucial test of love is seen in actions and not just in words.²⁴⁸ The *Spiritual Exercises* were created to help people to know God's will and follow it freely. The early Jesuits were concerned with teaching their students to have attitudes, values, and ideals that would help them make wise decisions in various situations. Reflection should never end in emotional reactions alone but should lead to positive transformation through decision and commitment to *action*.²⁴⁹ The role of educators is to accompany students and create the necessary conditions for them to move towards growth and maturation, which requires continuous effort towards *magis*.

²⁴⁷ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 386–388 §49-60.

²⁴⁸ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 94 §230.

²⁴⁹ International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education, "Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach," 389–390 §61-66.

Using IPP can lead to the acquisition of lasting learning habits that promote attention to experience, reflective understanding, and responsible action. These effects are necessary to form responsible citizens with a sacramental worldview. The IPP personalizes teaching, making students dynamic actors in the learning process and creating responsible citizens through active participation in building a more humane and dialogical world. The educational community as a whole must help students prepare to make value-based decisions.

The principle of *cura personalis* is one of the fundamental pillars of education in the Society of Jesus and is based on God's oblation love for each individual. This means that each person is unique and unrepeatable and deserves personalized accompaniment that leads to personal growth. For educators, this implies a responsibility to help students discover and develop their abilities and uniqueness. *Cura personalis* emphasizes that love is the basis of learning, as well as the importance of serving and suffering together. Ultimately, *cura personalis* is a pedagogy of sacramentality.

A sacramental vision of the Jesuit school certainly requires the formation and co-responsibility of the various elements of the educational community to institutionalize a culture of respect for the dignity of all persons, the poor and marginalized, children and the vulnerable, women, differences in race, culture, and sexual orientation, mentioned in the various documents in chapter 2.

Walking together with the poor and accompanying young people is only possible through personal and institutional conversion. Jesuit schools are laboratories that allow space for young people's creativity, solidarity, and camaraderie. This ideal requires coherence of life, spiritual

depth, and openness to share life-mission, as stated by the letter of promulgation of the *Apostolic Preferences*.²⁵⁰

Knowing and acknowledging that not all students in Jesuit schools are Catholic but that the Jesuit school is, as we have seen, an assembly where we want all members to develop a sacramental look at reality, it seems to us that the liturgy can be a link between all these elements. When the liturgy is “sacramentally adequate,” it is also a source of nourishment and ongoing conversion for the faith life of a Christian community.²⁵¹ We cannot forget that the liturgy is always the initiative of God’s grace and, at the same time, the culminating expression of the sacramentality of life. An essential aspect of this discourse is symbols. All the symbols and actions that constitute a liturgical event must work together to mediate a historical experience of the encounter between divine and human praxis.²⁵²

In a school setting, we must be clear that the liturgy is not to be “used” to educate - in a didactic sense. Its primary purpose is to worship God. However, because it is symbolic, it inevitably educates. In other words, the liturgy informs and forms its participants in the faith and hopefully transforms them toward living faith.²⁵³ There is a mystagogy proper to the liturgy that can be transposed to education in and by faith, the mystagogy that enables us to become what we celebrate.

Being a Catholic school, the Jesuit School must offer the community the Eucharist, but this should not exclude that liturgical actions can be organized to arouse in the whole community, even without proselytizing, the desire to know, love and follow Jesus Christ, the

²⁵⁰ Sosa, S.J., “UAP,” 416.

²⁵¹ Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 337.

²⁵² Ibid., 342.

²⁵³ Ibid.

model of the person that these schools want to form. In this sense, and recalling Lathrop's definition of an assembly that we presented at the end of the first chapter,²⁵⁴ it will be important that there be time dedicated to the reading of Scripture, intercession for the needs of the school, the Church and the world, that there be the possibility of a collection of goods to distribute among the neediest in the community, and the sending of participants to be witnesses in the world with works of compassion and justice.

The care for the symbols in these liturgies plays a key role. It would be important that the community members be involved in preparing these moments of celebration together. Only in this way is the liturgy the expression of a community celebrating a living faith and not the performance of simple rites. As we saw in the *Didache*, the "Gather together frequently" guarantees the community members' perseverance to the end.²⁵⁵

These celebratory moments in assembly can help create questions in the educational community that do not arise in the classroom, which can then be deepened at different times in the liturgical actions. The liturgy in a school context can be the moment when the members of the educational community, especially the students, first confront the challenges of their vocation as baptized people or, for non-Christians, the meaning of their life in the world. As Boselli said about the *Apostolic Tradition*, in the gathering of the members, the gathering of the gifts of the Spirit takes place.²⁵⁶ We must be permeable to what the Spirit has to say to the Church through the gathering of students in schools, whether Catholic or from other or no faith tradition.

Feeling that one is part of a community, that the Jesuit school is not just a place where one goes to take classes, but a place where one grows as a unified whole, where care for others

²⁵⁴ Lathrop, "Thinking Again about Assembly in a Time of Pandemic," 11.

²⁵⁵ "Didache," 16:2.

²⁵⁶ Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 126–130.

and creation is a constant, can only create in people of the 4 Cs a look at reality as the place where God manifests himself, and the desire to respond to this manifestation. We can then affirm that the Jesuit school is a laboratory for a sacramental look at reality.

CONCLUSION

A solid theology of the assembly helps us realize that the Jesuit school is a laboratory that allows us to see the world with sacramental eyes.

Throughout its history, the Society of Jesus has shown that the driving force of its educational mission is an idea of the person that finds in the values of the Gospel and in the Person of Jesus Christ, its exclusive Model, its only source of inspiration. In this sense, Fr. Kolvenbach insisted that the real criterion for evaluating an educational institution depends on what the students become on a human, moral, and spiritual level, and not only on an intellectual or professional level.²⁵⁷ We can interpret these words of Fr. Kolvenbach as saying that a Jesuit school fulfills its function if it forms people with a sacramental vision of reality. Men and women for others who are competent, conscious, compassionate, and committed. And this derives from the way the educational community sees and feels as an assembly.

Having had the privilege of entering deeply into the documents of the Society of Jesus on education, we share the desire expressed by Fr. Sosa in *A Living Tradition*, that the presence of the Society in education be a continuous process of discernment that involves the whole community. A discernment that should not only aim at didactic and pedagogical dimensions but

²⁵⁷ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach S.J., “The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education,” in *Ignatian Pedagogy: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Jesuit Education from St. Ignatius to Today*, ed. José Mesa, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017), 487–88 §39-40.

that can look at the whole person. A discernment that helps the universal network of schools of the Society, within the specificity proper to each one, to create an ever more sacramental vision of the world and to draw practical consequences from it.

As a suggestion for future work, I conclude with the challenge of being able to collaborate with others in dreaming up programs and activities that can put into practice the ideals proposed at the meetings of the cycle “Discovering our Apostolic Potential.” A second post-pandemic cycle is planned: “Walking as a Global Network at the Service of the Mission.” It might be important to bring this theme of sacramentality up for discussion at some point in that cycle of meetings.

For my future ministry in a Jesuit school, this study and research was essential. I now feel more prepared to think of and to experience the school as a community, to accompany the students and the whole school community in building a hope-filled future. A future that does not forget the mission of reconciliation and justice, nor the care for our common home.

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APPENDIX 1 - THE CHARACTERISTICS OF JESUIT EDUCATION, 1986

SECTION 1: GOD

Characteristic 1: Jesuit Education Is World-Affirming.

Characteristic 2: Jesuit Education Assists in the Total Formation of Each Individual within Community.

Characteristic 3: Jesuit Education Includes a Religious Dimension that Permeates the Entire Education.

Characteristic 4: Jesuit Education Is an Apostolic Instrument.

Characteristic 5: Jesuit Education Promotes Dialogue Between Faith and Culture.

SECTION 2: HUMAN FREEDOM

Characteristic 6: Jesuit Education Insists on Care and Concern for Each Person.

Characteristic 7: Jesuit Education Emphasizes the Activity of Students in the Learning Process.

Characteristic 8: Jesuit Education Encourages Life-Long Openness to Growth.

SECTION 3: QUEST FOR FREEDOM

Characteristic 9: Jesuit Education Is Value-Oriented

Characteristic 10: Jesuit Education Encourages a Realistic Knowledge, Love, and Acceptance of Self.

Characteristic 11: Jesuit Education Provides a Realistic Knowledge of the World.

SECTION 4: CHRIST THE MODEL OF HUMANITY

Characteristic 12: Jesuit Education Proposes Christ as the Model of Human Life.

Characteristic 13: Jesuit Education Provides Adequate Pastoral Care.

Characteristic 14: Jesuit Education Celebrates Faith in Personal and Community Prayer, Worship, and Service.

SECTION 5: ACTION

Characteristic 15: Jesuit Education Is Preparation for Active Life Commitment.

Characteristic 16: Jesuit Education Serves the Faith that Does Justice.

Characteristic 17: Jesuit Education Seeks to Form “Men and Women for Others.”

Characteristic 18: A Jesuit Education Manifests a Particular Concern for the Poor.

SECTION 6: IN THE CHURCH

Characteristic 19: Jesuit Education Is an Apostolic Instrument in Service of the Church as It Serves Human Society.

Characteristic 20: Jesuit Education Prepares Students for Active Participation in the Church and the Local Community for the Service of Others.

SECTION 7: MAGIS

Characteristic 21: Jesuit Education Pursues Excellence in Its Work of Formation.

Characteristic 22: Jesuit Education Witnesses to Excellence

SECTION 8: THE COMMUNITY

Characteristic 23: A Jesuit Education Stresses Lay-Jesuit Collaboration.

Characteristic 24: A Jesuit Education Relies on a Spirit of Community.

Characteristic 25: Jesuit Education Takes Place within a Structure that Promotes Community.

SECTION 9: DISCERNMENT

Characteristic 26: A Jesuit Education Adapts Means and Methods in Order to Achieve its Purposes Most Effectively.

Characteristic 27: Jesuit Education Is a “System” of Schools with a Common Vision and Common Goals.

Characteristic 28: Jesuit Education Assists in Providing the Professional Training and Ongoing Formation that Is Needed, Especially for Teachers.