

the jesuits in asia pacific 2014



a **faith** that does **justice**

It is true that in our dealings with the world,
we are told to **give reasons for our hope**,
but not as an enemy
who critiques and condemns.

We are told quite clearly: “do so
with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pet 3:15)

and “if possible, so far as it depends upon you,
live peaceably with all” (Rom 12:18).

We are also told to
overcome “evil with good” (Rom 12:21)
and to **“work for the good of all”** (Gal 6:10).

Far from trying to appear better than others,
we should “in humility
count others better” than ourselves.

– Evangelii Gaudium, #271



Scholastic João Paulo Mascarenhas Pinto Lobo with students in the Jesuit-run school in Railaco, Timor Leste

Looking back at 2013

"The Jesuit always thinks, again and again, looking toward the horizon towards which he must go, with Christ at the centre." - Pope Francis

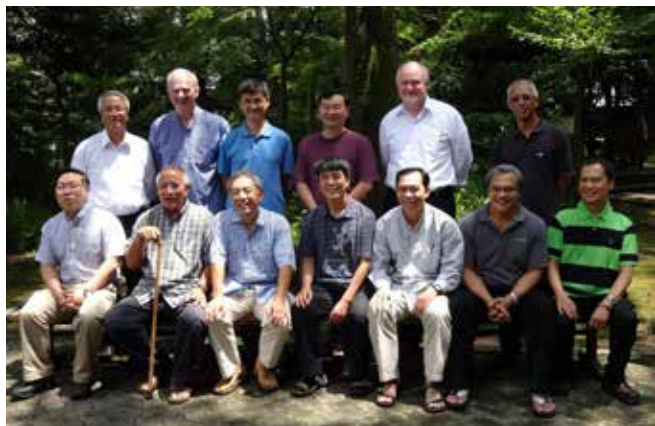
This statement by our first Jesuit Pope lies at the heart of what we in the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific endeavour to do in our service of the universal mission. The challenges to our mission today as stated in Decree 3 of the 35th General Congregation (GC) are very much a part of our reality. We have within our Conference the world's most populous Muslim country, several predominantly Buddhist countries, countries that are emerging from years of subjugation and oppression, and we have China. More and more we are called to the frontiers of culture and of religion, and we work towards strengthening and supporting those Jesuits and collaborators actively involved in the fourfold dialogue recommended by the Church¹, to listen carefully to all, and to build bridges linking individuals and communities of good will².

¹ GC34, Decree 5, n 4: dialogues of life, action, religious experience, and theological exchange

² GC35, Decree 3, n 22

Any bridge, but especially a big bridge, needs solid foundations on both banks of the river or bay that it spans. In our Jesuit formation, as also in our services, we face an inbuilt tension between the spirit and capacity to go anywhere according to the need, and the demand to "dig in" locally and become firmly rooted in service of our own community and people. But it is important that we learn from local cultures and religious experience. As Pope Francis who himself came to Rome "from the ends of the earth" said, the Jesuit "thinks and thinks again" (referring to the Ignatian practice of discernment); he thinks "toward the horizon ... with Christ at the centre".

Fr General Adolfo Nicolás SJ intimated as much when he requested that the whole Society review in 2014 not simply the past year, but the past 200 years since the Restoration of the Society in 1814. The anniversary is an occasion for spiritual and apostolic renewal, and in some provinces, such as the Philippines, this has offered an opportunity to develop the province roadmap. For newer regions such as Timor Leste, it has provided additional context in which to discern the mission of the Society in this young nation.



After spending some days reviewing their experiences as regents, scholastics in Timor Leste were expressing in their own words what the universal mission of the Society is for Timor Leste today. I share some of these here:

“Ours is a ministry of empowerment.” ... “We share our lives with others so that we can construct our common future.” ... “Through all means we are to bring the Church closer to people: more simple, loving, friendly and compassionate.” ... “Through various ministries we lift up every aspect of the lives of people in order to accomplish the global mission of the Church.”

In the midst of the two or three year regency period that breaks up their long course of studies, these Timorese scholastics are engaged as school teachers with pastoral ministry on weekends, in youth work, community development or social communications, and in vocations promotion.

Regency is a time for our young Jesuits to develop pastoral and professional skills, get a taste of working with people and put their vocation to the test. They learn for themselves how God is at work in their own hearts and in the lives of people. They learn that we are not alone in what we call the Jesuit mission. Countless lay people and religious share our mission and give generously of their skills, energy, and material and spiritual resources. The greatest insight for Jesuits young and old is to know how to welcome this collaboration into our hearts and homes.

A third of the Jesuits in our Conference are still in formation. Our young Jesuits live in new cultures, learn languages, and make friends from diverse backgrounds, learning to live in local communities while having an eye to the horizon. Such has long been the practice of the Society. However, the great appeal the wisdom of Asia has for many across the world today presents us with an opportunity to offer Jesuits within and beyond our Conference a setting in which to enter more deeply into the ancient traditions and sources in Asia, and learn how to communicate with these contexts. Our global mission and vision need to be firmly rooted in local places, cultures and communities. This tension can be resolved, although not easily, by accompanying the local community faithfully, while at the same time bringing a broader vision, an eye to the horizon. To enable this, our new Delegate for Formation, Fr Norris Seenivasan (MAS), and Delegate for Studies, Fr Robin Koning (ASL), are working with the new President of Loyola School of Theology in Manila and a special team to develop the Asian Theology Programme with Arrupe International Residence serving as a Conference and increasingly also international house for the study of theology. The Conference also facilitates the sharing of facilities, professors and costs as Jesuit formation becomes more of a common responsibility.



TOP The Major Superiors of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific. Taken at the Major Superiors' Assembly in Tokyo in July.

BOTTOM The first Formation for Jesuit Formators seminar was held in August.



LEFT Fr Wilbert Mireh, the first Myanmar Jesuit priest, was ordained on May 1, 2013.

The vast and diverse challenges of Asia Pacific cannot be faced by a few individuals acting alone, and I am happy to be able to report that creative achievements of core teams and networks are evidenced in several areas. New education initiatives in recent years — in Australia, the Philippines, Myanmar, Timor Leste and Cambodia - receive support from the Coordinator for Basic and Secondary Education, Fr Christopher Gleeson (ASL) and his core team. Fr Benny Juliawan (IDO), who came on board in 2013 in the dual role of full-time Social Ministries secretary and Migration Network Coordinator, has begun mobilising local actions to accompany vulnerable migrants.

We have also seen considerable movement and growth in Reconciliation with Creation at the Conference level largely due to the passion and energy of its coordinator, Fr Pedro Walpole (PHI). In recent years, increasing emphasis has been placed on disaster risk management and reduction as natural disasters continue to occur in several Asia Pacific countries with alarming regularity. In 2013, Haiyan, known as Yolanda in the Philippines, was the deadliest natural disaster in the country's history and one of the most powerful typhoons ever recorded, killing more than 6,000 people and displacing 3.5 million persons. JCAP's role in such major crises lies in communicating to the international community, thereby freeing the affected province to focus on the immediate needs on the ground. The devastation underscored the need for better disaster risk management

and risk reduction measures. As rebuilding began in the affected areas, Fr Walpole voiced the need for a raft of measures to withstand future disasters.

The winds of change are blowing at gale force in Asia, making apostolic planning precarious and long-term projects tentative, especially in frontier missions. In Vietnam, Myanmar and China, for example, the forces shaping the future are capricious, buffeting and bruising. Our mission in such contexts compels us to accompany the ones most affected by the winds of change — those who are excluded from the economic progress, those on the peripheries of society, the urban poor without the security of land, indigenous peoples driven from their forests, and especially the young, since the future is theirs. All this requires us to “think and think again”, to be deeply rooted locally, trusting one another, firmly grounded in faith, planning with an eye to the horizon and with Christ at the centre.

To you, our friends, collaborators and fellow Jesuits in Asia Pacific and around the world, we offer this report on the past year with its insights and news about our service of the Society's universal mission in Asia Pacific. Thank you for your solidarity and encouragement.

Fr Mark Raper SJ, President



Learning from Asia in Asia

Dialogue with culture;
 Dialogue with the poor;
 Dialogue with other religions.

This “triple dialogue” was articulated by the Asian Bishops as the direction for the Church in Asia, which is marked with great cultural diversity, extreme poverty in many countries, and minority Christian presence in most countries amidst much larger and ancient religions.

Fr General emphasised the importance of Asia for the Church and for theology in a recent interview in Timor Leste. Drawing on Jesus’ claim to be ‘the way, the truth, and the life’, Fr Adolfo Nicolás pointed out that this sense of religion as a ‘way’ showing us ‘how to’ – “how to be united with God, how to reach harmony, how to build justice” – is of special significance in Asia, as distinct from European Christianity’s attention to truth, and the African and Latin American concern for life. He concluded that “the Church can learn from Asia very much about the way”. Theology in this context will engage with the many sages of Asia (Buddha, Confucius, Mencius, Lao Tzu, etc) who were

“the builders of an Asian mentality”. Asian theology will be “a door to this kind of wisdom which the Society and the Church need to take to heart.

The Jesuits in formation in our region need to engage with this Asian mentality so that they can serve the mission of the Society. “A Profile of the Formed Jesuit for Asia Pacific” refers to the need for such engagement in its fourth dynamic, “Critical Thinking”, which notes the importance of studies that consider deeply:

- “Christianity and the diverse religious traditions of Asia and the Pacific”,
- “the diverse cultural, social and political traditions of Asia and the Pacific”.

Such studies are important for Jesuits studying at any of our theologates within JCAP. A number of international intensive programs are available to support the local programs of study: the East Asia Theological Encounter Programme (EATEP), focussed on dialogue with Buddhism; Asia Pacific Theological Encounter Program (APTEP), focussed on dialogue with Islam; and Asia Pacific Contextual Theology for

Engagement Project (ACOTEP), focussed on dialogue with Indigenous peoples.



Loyola School of Theology (LST) has been given a particular role in JCAP in developing a program where students can engage with Asian contexts. The aim is to enhance LST's role as an important resource for those in formation who do not have theologates in their own province or region, and for those from other parts of JCAP and other parts of the world who are sent to do theology in an Asian context. It has distinct advantages as an international centre:

- an English language program,
- few visa issues for those coming for theology studies,
- the provision of Pontifical degrees.

In some ways, though, LST may seem a strange choice for such a program. The Philippines is predominantly Catholic and so is not historically situated for the dialogue with other religions in the way other nations in East Asia are. Yet it is as well-placed as any other theologate for the dialogues with the poor and with cultures. And in terms of the third important dialogue, with other religions, LST has embraced JCAP's request for it to develop an Asian Theology Program. This program involves:

- a growing internationalization of the faculty, seeking both long-term and visiting professors conversant with a range of religious and cultural contexts;
- a restructured curriculum for Jesuit students to ensure a focus on contextual theology and Asian religions, as called for by the "A Profile of the Formed Jesuit";
- a move towards a pedagogy that encourages Jesuit students to ground their theological reflection in their own experience in different contexts so that the diverse student body becomes part of the learning environment.

A special committee at LST works closely with the LST Dean and is supported by the LST President. It reports to the JCAP Delegate for Studies and the JCAP Theology Cooperation Working Group, which includes representatives from all the theologates in the region.



This Asian theology learning environment embraces also the communal life for international Jesuit students. Arrupe International Residence (AIR), a key JCAP work, is principally a house of studies for students in theology and in special studies. It is able to offer places to Jesuits from JCAP and from other parts of the world, particularly those who are interested in studies in the vibrant Asian context. Renovations are in process to provide accommodation for visiting professors for the Asian Theology Program. The residential and formation experience of living in AIR complements the Asian Theology Program at LST to help prepare Jesuits in Asia Pacific, and those from elsewhere, for service, within their own contexts, of the universal mission of the Society.

Fr Robin Koning SJ, JCAP Delegate for Studies



Accompanying People on the Move

On January 19, 2014 some 5,000 people took to the streets of Hong Kong and gathered outside the police headquarters to demand justice for Erwiana, an Indonesian maid abused by her Hong Kong employer. They were members of Indonesian and Filipino migrant worker unions as well as representatives of various human rights groups in the country.

Erwiana had been found covered in cuts and burns a week earlier at the airport, just before her flight out of Hong Kong. Barely able to walk, she had been left alone in the departure hall by her employer and agent in the early hours of the morning to avoid the airport crowds. Despite her condition, the police and immigration officers who saw her did not raise a finger to help, let alone investigate.

It was another Indonesian worker on her way home who saw her and approached her. Upon hearing Erwiana's story, she contacted her friends in the union and the news spread quickly, drawing a huge response from many corners.

This crime was committed allegedly by a local, and the victim was Indonesian. Her recruitment and placement agency had representatives in both countries. The case drew the attention of other Indonesians in Hong Kong, Filipino migrant groups, as well as a number of local activists and expatriates. A few days after the protest, the Hong Kong authorities arrested Erwiana's employer at the airport, as she tried to flee to Bangkok. Sadly, Erwiana's story is not an uncommon tale in the 21st Century as more and more people are driven to work abroad in order to earn a living and feed their families back home.

In 2010, the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific decided to make migration a common priority in social actions. It identified the phenomenon as a defining feature of our age that is characterised by the ease of travel and promises of prosperity, but also by failings and dangers. However, even including the Jesuit Refugee Service, which serves refugees and asylum seekers, there is much work ahead before we can respond to this challenge in a meaningful way across the Conference.



effective, but with the language barriers and many cultural and legal differences in Asia Pacific, how do we organise concerted advocacy that will further the universal mission?

A more ambitious objective is to start new institutions in several provinces that are deeply affected by migration. Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia are three countries where the flow of migrants is problematic at the best of times. Thailand and Malaysia host a large number of migrants but human rights violations against migrants are common. Personnel and finances remain the main barriers but hopefully the renewed commitment to migration will get us through them.

At the national/province level, there are only five very different institutions that work directly on migrant issues: Tokyo Migrants' Desk, Yiutsari in Seoul, UGAT Foundation in Manila, Rerum Novarum Centre in Taipei and Sahabat Insan in Jakarta. They are small local institutions and offer specific services to specific groups of migrants be they migrant workers, vulnerable foreign spouses or undocumented migrants.

However, despite their size, they are the real building blocks of our commitment to serve migrants. The first effort, therefore, is to encourage them to work more closely together, and in this area, JCAP has begun to see some progress from our annual social ministries workshop. The directors of these institutions have identified several areas of cooperation. Exchanges of information and collective advocacy are two obvious examples. This exercise in networking will hopefully create a new sense of collaboration and in turn a new capacity. Related to this, the second effort is to improve their capacity. The age of networking requires new skills and awareness to make our services more

Ultimately though, the issues faced by migrants, especially unskilled or low-skilled migrants, are issues that we are all called to address. Just as Jesuit schools aim to form men and women for others, so do we all – Jesuits and lay collaborators working in all sectors – need to be men and women for others. For example, a campaign of awareness in parishes and schools will see our homes and workplaces become more friendly and welcoming to strangers or vulnerable people on the move. After all at some point in time we were all part of the migrating population. Ignatius and the first companions were constantly moving from one place to another, relying on the generosity of so many people. “A wandering Aramean was my ancestor” (Deuteronomy 26:5). We are all children of migrants who at some point would have had to rely on the generosity of others. The least we can do is welcome the migrants of today with a similar spirit of generosity.

Fr Benny Juliawan SJ, JCAP Coordinator for Migration and Secretary for Social Ministries



Reconciliation with Creation in Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

There were 187 natural disasters in 2013. Approximately 30,000 people died as a result of these, and millions were injured or displaced. The levels of suffering, however, are beyond anything that numbers can portray, and our compassion needs to go beyond emergency relief to ensuring that we do not continue to contribute to such disasters.

There is a wonderful synergy between science and creation today, and we urgently need to understand our relationship with and impact on creation in terms of climate change and exploitation of resources. No longer do we have simply “natural disasters”. The reality is that the greater number of disasters has happened by design. Design because having large, generally poor populations living in substandard housing in areas of known potential for flood, landslide, storm surge, tsunami, earthquake or volcanic action is a design for disaster. Our preparedness and response to such disasters is part of the reconciliation needed with creation today.

We are only truly able to thank God for creation when we learn to work with creation and respect its limits, recognising that our actions are potentially destructive of all living things.

The 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus asks us to respond to the challenges of reconciling with creation with depth of focus and simplicity of living. We in Asia Pacific have embraced this because we have the highest occurrence of natural disasters in the world. For the last three years, the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific has sought to learn, network and engage in disaster risk reduction as part of its commitment to seeking reconciliation with creation.

Much of Asia Pacific is susceptible to natural hazards such as floods, landslides, and drought, and with climate change, these are happening more often and with greater intensity. We now realize that we are in the middle of any disaster. Even if we are not the trigger, as in an earthquake, where and how we build houses and cities make us part of it.

We need to have more respect for where and how we build. However, longer-term efforts to reduce the impact of disasters tend to protect development and business investments. Effective risk reduction requires deeper understanding and effective communication to a wider audience of the changes in the natural environment that cause disasters.

There is much we can learn from the Typhoon Haiyan experience. It showed how people care and the changes in how the world responds to such disasters. The Jesuits are part of this response and a protocol is being developed as a guide for collaborative response and action for disaster risk reduction and management.

At the international level, there are a number of guiding frameworks for action on disaster. Notable among these is the Hyogo Framework for Action, which sets forth the following principles:

- Making disaster risk reduction a priority,
- Improving risk information and early warning,
- Building a culture of safety and resilience,
- Reducing the risks in key sectors,
- Strengthening preparedness for response.

An initial protocol that JCAP developed provides a useful guide to how Jesuit institutions can respond to disasters, particularly in terms of fostering greater responsibility, transparency and accountability in the management of donations for disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts.

The further development of this protocol will ensure that this Jesuit effort is aligned with international and national frameworks, while being used as a guide for action at the local level. This is not intended to replace other frameworks but to give greater detail and provide practitioners with the tools, such as manuals and primers, to implement the necessary actions for effective disaster risk reduction and management. In this way compassion comes together with an action that builds back better a world more open to reconciliation.





In the light of Haiyan, numerous stakeholders, both public and private, are actively seeking opportunities to respond to the needs. Given the number of recent disasters, people are also beginning to look beyond disaster response and relief towards a long-term program of activities. And often people do not know where to begin, where their assistance is most critical, who else is taking action, and whether their actions will have long-term and sustainable effects.

The JCAP disaster risk reduction and management protocol will address these questions. It has five major phases – preparedness and mitigation; disaster event; response; recovery and rehabilitation; and rehabilitation and reconstruction. Because disaster management is a cycle, some steps in the process are necessarily repeated, as experiences from disasters inform preparedness and mitigation strategies. It is our hope that this protocol will be completed within the year and will be embraced by Jesuits across the world as we, as a Society, continue to seek reconciliation with creation.

Fr Pedro Walpole SJ, JCAP Coordinator for Reconciliation with Creation

7 Points to Developing Disaster Risk Reduction

The disaster discourse is expanded with 7 points that highlight *doables* that can be undertaken at the barangay level and that stress the urgency of action before any disaster occurs.



1 Implement watershed management and its integration in land use planning and decision making



2 Upgrade the classification of extreme weather events to include rainfall volume



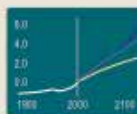
3 Rethink the role of forests to understand better the processes of floods, landslides and debris floods



4 Install better early warning methods and communications for communities in far-flung and remote areas



5 Review and assess the vulnerability of relocation sites and demand accountability from responsible agencies



6 Understand the impact of temperature rise, increase of droughts, and sea level change



7 Anticipate event recurrence



To the frontiers: Jesuits of the Philippines before and after the Restoration

1 768. For the Jesuits in the Philippines, the end came five years before Pope Clement XIV issued *Dominus ac Redemptor* on July 21, 1773, suppressing the Society of Jesus worldwide.

As the Philippines was under Spanish hegemony, when Spain's Carlos III ordered the expulsion of Jesuits from his realm in 1767, this meant in the Philippines as well. But the Jesuits in the Philippines were spared another year because it took that length of time for the royal decree to arrive in Manila. On Thursday, May 19, 1768, as soon as the decree was read to the Jesuits assembled at Colegio de San Ignacio in Manila, the systematic expulsion of the Jesuits began.

Gathered in Manila for the trip back to Spain, 121 Jesuits were sent back in four groups. Another 19 Jesuits, who government physicians had certified as aged and infirm and not able to withstand the rigors of travel, were put on house arrest under the custody of other religious houses.

The Jesuits had been in the Philippines for 187 years, from 1581, when Fr Antonio Sedeño, a veteran of the Florida mission, arrived with two other Jesuits. In 1595, Fr General Claudio Acquaviva raised the mission to a vice-province under Mexico, and in 1605, made it a province. By 1768, the Jesuits had established seven colleges in Manila and Cavite, the Visayas and Mindanao, and numerous parishes and mission stations organized under central residences: two in Luzon, six in the Visayas, two in Mindanao. Each residence had between four and seven dependent parishes. The two missions were in Marinduque and Negros. The Marianas was a vice-province under the Philippines with one college and four parishes.

But the Jesuit contribution to the Christianization of the Philippines before the Suppression was more than these apostolates.

The Jesuits had established reductions, of which there are no physical remnants because the indigenous people lived



in dwellings of wood, bamboo and thatch more suitable for an archipelago in the Pacific “ring of fire”. However, the reductions did leave massive churches, three of which were damaged in 2013, in the earthquake of October 15 and by Typhoon Haiyan on November 8.

More importantly, the Jesuits had left a strategy of evangelization. While the schools educated the elite, the missions and parishes reached out to the frontiers. In the villages, a routine of prayer, study and work had been introduced, and agriculture and livelihood improved by the introduction of new methods of agriculture and useful plants, by the raising of cattle and by the building of brick factories.

The Jesuits had prepared for mission work by learning the vernaculars, and compiling grammars and dictionaries, and preparing and distributing books and pamphlets in these languages. Seeing the value of the printing press as a means of mass communication, a press was established in Colegio de San Ignacio, which produced, for example, a vernacular translation of St Robert Bellarmine’s catechism.

ABOVE Completed in 1727, the Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception in Baclayon, Bohol, was one of the best-preserved Jesuit-built churches in the region. The bell tower was damaged and the front facade of the church collapsed during the earthquake of October 15, 2013.



LEFT Pulpit of Indang Church in Cavite, built ca. 1707. The Jesuit monogram is surmounted by the image of the Christ Child.



So deep was the Jesuit impact on people's lives that when the people of Samar in Leyte heard that the Jesuits were being expelled, they were ready to defend them and even take up arms.

It was almost a century before the Jesuits returned, in 1859. Although Pope Pius VII restored the Society on August 7, 1814, in Spain the Jesuits experienced a number of suppressions until mid-century. When things had settled down, Jesuits were sent to the missions in Mindanao.

They returned to Manila but could not lay claim to any property owned before the expulsion. They had to start again financially with a government subsidy and gifts from benefactors in Spain and Manila as their only sources of income. Although it was not part of their mandate, Fr José Fernández Cuevas, the mission superior, agreed to the City of Manila's request for the Jesuits to take charge of a public elementary school, the Escuela Pia. This was the seed that would become the Ateneo de Manila University. Until the 20th Century, it was the only Jesuit school in the country.

Most of the Jesuits were sent to the Mindanao frontier where they used strategies that their predecessors had found effective, such as learning and preaching in the native

language, working closely with the people, organizing them into orderly settlements, and uplifting their livelihood.

Today, the Philippine Province has nine schools, including five universities throughout the country. Apart from being intellectual centres, these institutions are places where much social and cultural work is done, providing local and national leadership on issues that affect the Church and the wider society. There are no more reductions in the 21st Century, but Filipino Jesuits are serving in frontier territories such as Bukidnon in Mindanao, and in other parts of Asia Pacific such as Cambodia and Timor Leste. There is a lively communication ministry operating at the national level, and pastoral centres serve groups as diverse as inmates at the national penitentiary, ethnic Chinese Catholics, and patients in government hospitals.

What was the secret of Jesuit resilience? What helped to rebuild the Jesuit presence in the Philippines? If there was one important factor, it was the men – unafraid to go to the frontier, to leave the past behind and look forward to the future, seeking only the lost sheep, and working only "Ad majorem Dei gloriam".

Fr Rene Javellana SJ, Fine Arts Program, Ateneo de Manila University



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