



The Jesuits

IN ASIA PACIFIC **2020**

A faith that does justice



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FINDING OUR PATH WITH HOPE



In Fr General Arturo Sosa's message to the journalists on 04 December last year, he says: "We Jesuits are people of hope; we believe another world is possible." While we as a Conference are indeed grateful for blessings received last year, we continue to discern future possibilities for our world. We will never be content with the *status quo* for as long as God invites us to other possibilities. We are always confronted with the *magis* question: what more is God asking of us?

A big event for us last year was the release of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) on 19 February. The task of assimilating and implementing the UAPs in the next 10 years is another process that requires discernment and determination. We conducted various talks, recollections, retreats and spiritual conversations to make sense of the UAPs in our context. We also started to mainstream the UAPs in our conference plan which will be finalised hopefully this year. Indeed, the UAPs are a gamechanger in the way we deal with God, with the poor and outcasts, with the youth and with creation. They not only offer deeper possibilities in our encounter with God and the world out there, but they can also transform us in the way we live our lives and do God's mission.

The visit of Pope Francis to Thailand and Japan last November was a moment of grace for all of us. These were life-giving moments for these two local churches that struggle with evangelisation, interreligious dialogue and increasing secularisation. Complex issues can baffle us and our pursuit of another world can easily become uninspired and lacking in energy. In his message to the Jesuits in Thailand, Pope Francis says: "We Jesuits are asked to open our eyes to our reality, to stand before the Lord with that reality, to pray and find our little path." We need to find the little path that hopefully can enable us to imagine another world. This remains to be an invitation for us and our mission companions.

May God bless all of us and enable us to find our little path.

Tony Moreno SJ
 President
 Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific

FEBRUARY



5 The diocesan phase of the process of beatification and canonisation of Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ officially opens in the Diocese of Rome



19 Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ releases a letter on the four Universal Apostolic Preferences to guide and inspire the mission of the Society of Jesus in the next 10 years

JULY 18-31

Fr General Sosa visits the Chinese Jesuit Province, with stops in Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan



22-26

Hong Kong

Fr General Sosa joins the Major Superiors Assembly



MARCH 15

Students of St Aloysius' College in Sydney, Australia and Apu Palamguwan Cultural Education Center in Bukidnon, Philippines participate in the global school strike for climate action



JULY 15-17

Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ visits the Korean Jesuit Province



AUGUST

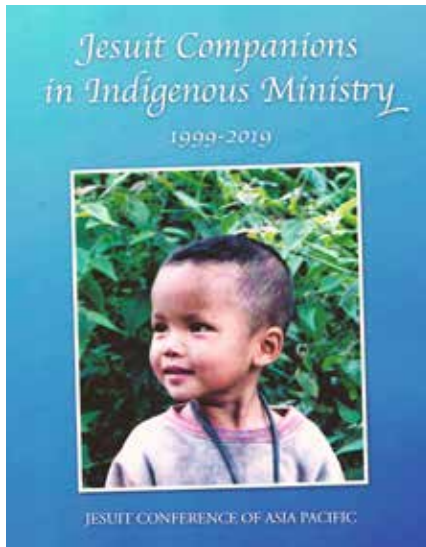
1-3 Fr General Sosa visits the Japan Jesuit Province



19-21

Yogyakarta, Indonesia
JCAP Provinces, Regions and social ministries, with regional and global networks, gather for a conference-wide celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES)

2019 AT A GLANCE



AUGUST 27

Taiwan

Jesuit Companions in Indigenous Ministry marks 20 years with a publication that highlights the experiences of the ministry in the last two decades



SEPTEMBER 6

Manila, Philippines

East Asian Pastoral Institute launches "Asian Pacific Mission Studies", an open-access online journal to promote knowledge and research related to the mission of the Church, in a way that bridges theology and ministry in the Asia Pacific context

NOVEMBER 20-23

Pope Francis visits Thailand; meets with the Jesuits in the Region



23-26

Pope Francis visits Japan; addresses community at Sophia University in Tokyo

14-15

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Jesuits Among Muslims in Asia holds first joint meeting with the Asian Muslim Action Network for possible collaborative projects



27

Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ announces the celebration of the Ignatian year to commemorate 500 years since the conversion of St Ignatius in 2021 and 400 years since the canonisation of St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier in 2022



OCTOBER 14-16

Manila, Philippines

JCAP holds its largest Extended Consult to discern the apostolic priorities of the Conference in the next five years

30

Kasait, Timor-Leste

The pioneer cohort of students of Instituto São João de Brito, the teacher education institute in Timor-Leste, complete their studies

December 20

Yangon, Myanmar

Myanmar Leadership Institute holds first graduation ceremony

December 26 - January 3

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Magis Asia Pacific holds its third conference-wide gathering



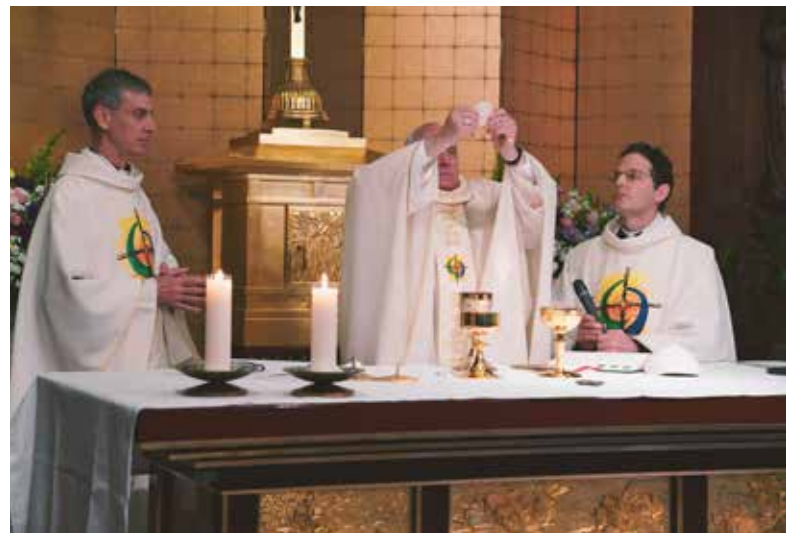
PAPAL VISIT



MOMENTS OF GRACE: POPE FRANCIS IN THAILAND AND JAPAN

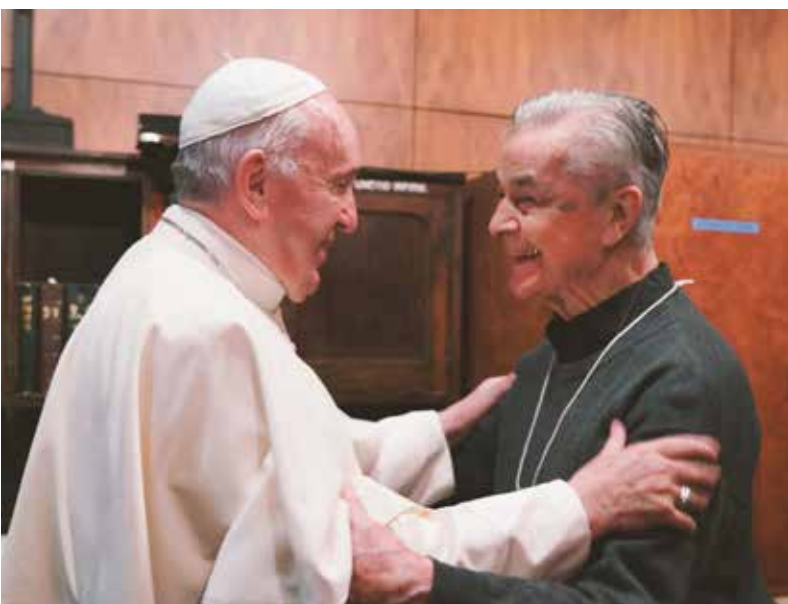
Pope Francis made his 32nd foreign Apostolic Journey to two Asian countries, Thailand and Japan, in November 2019. He landed in Bangkok on November 20, welcomed with sunshine, a 21-gun salute, representatives from the Royal Council and the Thai government, and 11 children from the different dioceses of Thailand. (The Vatican established the Apostolic Vicariate of Siam in 1669; the 350th anniversary was marked by the Pope's visit.) In Bangkok, Pope Francis received a state welcome from the Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-och. He also met with the Supreme Buddhist Patriarch, Somdej Phra Maha Muneewong, at the Wat Ratchabophit Sathit Maha Simaram Temple where he dutifully removed his black shoes before entering. The visit to King Rama X was private; later a crowd of 50,000 turned up at the Supachalasai National Stadium for the Mass. Young people chanted "Viva Il Papa" as Pope Francis drove by in the designated Popemobile: a locally made white Nissan pickup truck. The Pope was accompanied everywhere by his translator Sr Ana Rosa Sivori, a Salesian missionary who had long been living in Thailand, also his second cousin.

On November 22, in between visits and speeches, Pope Francis met with the Jesuits working in Thailand. The interaction was informal: he shook hands and answered questions for over half an hour. It was an intimate gathering for a small group with few cameras allowed. The warmth and rapport between Pope Francis and his brother Jesuits are palpable in the few images collected here.



By November 24, Pope Francis had arrived in Japan where as a young Jesuit, he had dreamed of going as a missionary. On a rainy day in Nagasaki, the sun came out for the Mass. "I have very much looked forward to this moment," said Pope Francis during his greeting on Nishizaka Hill, where he remembered the 26 Japanese martyr saints. "For here the light of the Gospel shone forth in the love that triumphed over persecution and the sword." In Hiroshima, the city decimated by the atomic bomb during World War II, Pope Francis visited the Peace Memorial, where his message called for peace and non-violence: "A true peace can only be an unarmed peace." In the fast paced city of Tokyo, his schedule was packed. Pope Francis met with disaster survivors, called on Emperor Naruhito at the Imperial Palace, met the youth at St Mary's Cathedral, celebrated Mass at the Tokyo Dome with 55,000 people, visited the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and addressed authorities and diplomats.

Finally, on his last day in Tokyo, Pope Francis visited Sophia University established in 1913 by the Jesuits. The Pope celebrated Mass at the Jesuit House with two Argentine Jesuits concelebrating, Japan Jesuit Provincial Fr Renzo de Luca SJ and Rector Fr Juan Haidar SJ. He spent time with the sick and elderly Jesuits, including former Jesuit Superior General Fr Adolfo Nicolás SJ, and had breakfast with the community--who thoughtfully prepared *dulce de leche*--a traditional Argentine treat for Pope Francis. Before returning to Rome, Pope Francis met with Sophia University students, and said, "This university should be a centre not only of intellectual formation but also a place where a better society and more hope-filled future can be shaped." The audience that day was mostly non-Catholic--much like the population of Japan--but as his apostolic journey progressed it was evident that even non-Catholics were touched by the presence of Pope Francis, consoled by his message of mercy, peace and hope.



MULTIPLYING LOAVES AND FISHES: THE JCAP IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY NETWORK AND UAP # 1



When the Society of Jesus announced its four Universal Apostolic Preferences for the next decade in February 2019, you might expect that the members of the JCAP Ignatian Spirituality Network (ISN) were pleased that the first Universal Apostolic Preference (UAP) involved the Spiritual Exercises. You'd be right. Yet, we're still just identifying the "hungers" of our contemporaries. We're still determining what difference our few "loaves and fishes" might be able to make. What's instructive already is that the development of our new network has itself been an exercise in Ignatian discernment.

The UAPs are not about programmes or even networks but about the values and dispositions that programmes and networks embody. As Superior General Fr Arturo Sosa SJ has pointed out, the Spiritual Exercises are not the goal of the first UAP. "Showing the way to God" is the goal. Ignatian spirituality and discernment are the particular means the Society can contribute to that end.

That said, ISN is obviously well situated to begin "feeding" JCAP as it engages UAP #1 in concert with the other three UAPs. ISN was launched formally only recently (2017). Our initial step was to foster mutual awareness of the spiritual ministries in Asia Pacific, to take inventory of our "loaves and fishes". At our gathering in Chiang Mai, Thailand (May 2018), we shared the programmes and best practices of the various retreat houses and spirituality centres. Then we imagined together what "added value" a network of spirituality ministries could provide. What would God accomplish, given our slim resources and the vast needs in our vast part of the world?

We began our discernment by identifying both the needs of each JCAP Province or Region and what each Province or Region could contribute to others in JCAP. We conducted that conversation with two goals in mind: (1) to promote Ignatian spirituality in the Asia Pacific context and (2) to deepen the Ignatian character of all our ministries. JCAP President Fr Tony Moreno SJ participated in those discussions and highlighted the most promising potential contributions ISN could make to JCAP.

Through Fr Sosa, the major superiors, General Congregation 36 and even Pope Francis's call for a "more discerning" Church, God appears to be prompting the Society of Jesus and its collaborators in our time not to limit ourselves to individual discernment but to become more open to – and more skilled at -- "discernment in common". In preparation for Chiang Mai, each JCAP provincial or regional superior had appointed a representative to ISN, creating a group of 13 co-discerners. Collectively, we have had no trouble identifying the spiritual needs of various populations in Asia Pacific (cradle Catholics, the unchurched, youth, migrants, non-Christians, etc). The needs are many, of course, and resources quite limited. How can we even begin to "feed the crowd"?

In trying to answer that question, we have been trying to practise the sort of spiritual conversation that was employed in the Society-wide discernment of the UAPs from 2017-2019. At our meeting in Changhua, Taiwan (May 2019), we made an examen of our own way of proceeding under the guidance of facilitator Fr Elton Fernandes of the Chinese Province. The openness and sheer goodwill of ISN representatives gathered there made it a consoling experience. One member of the group noted that our prayer and spiritual conversation yielded a "growing clarity" and enthusiasm. We experienced a shared sense of accepting a mission to share our "loaves and fishes", before we turned to the details of apostolic planning.

In July 2018, having heard a number of our suggestions, the major superiors had helped us zero in on two particular projects they believed would have maximum impact around the Conference, especially in the "younger" units. Then in Changhua, we determined that we had enough collective confidence to push ahead on the first project, building on the momentum of the UAP discernment process. In the months since that meeting, the major superiors have missioned nearly 40 participants to ISN's first major undertaking: a weeklong workshop on "discernment in common and apostolic planning" (DICAP) to be held in Taiwan this spring.

Every JCAP Province and Region will be represented, and the coordinating team will bring together resources from the Roman Curia, the European Conference, and JCAP. The programme will consist of input, experiential learning, prayer, and spiritual conversation. Once formed in this way, these disciples will be asked to carry their "loaves and fishes" to the multitude gathered on hillsides back home. That is, they will become discernment guides for communities and ministries in their home units in the future, building a culture of discernment in the Church of Asia Pacific.

The second undertaking encouraged by the major superiors was a programme to train spiritual directors and supervisors. This will be a more in-depth effort, so we agreed to move more slowly on it. In order to serve well the "younger" JCAP units, we will have to assemble resources from existing

programmes and complement them with attention to special questions, e.g., best practices in working with collaborators of other faith traditions. Our tentative plan is to sponsor a three-year training programme beginning in 2021.

Sometimes it doesn't feel like 13 of us can have an impact on a population of over 1 billion in Asia Pacific. However, we have learned already that we are not alone on the hillside, listening to the Lord. We find ourselves growing as a network, reaching out both within and beyond JCAP. We've begun the process of appointing mutual liaisons with several of the other networks and secretariats that have expressed interest in deepening their own articulation of Ignatian mission. We've also been asked to join the Basic Education and Youth Ministry sectors for a joint conference on ministry to youth and young adults late in 2020.

Where are we going, and whom are we feeding with our few "loaves and fishes"? In just three years, we have moved from brainstorming to discerning to apostolic planning, though the discernment will always have to be ongoing in order to keep the planning grounded in the Gospel. For now, our immediate hope lies in capacity building for men and women grounded in the Exercises, so that they can lead others in the same spirit.

UAP #1 has affirmed what ISN was already about. It also identifies our efforts as contributions to the *missio Dei* and unites them to the ministries associated with the other three UAPs. In short, we continue to discern what God is leading the Society of Jesus and its collaborators in JCAP to do – in order to "multiply" the spiritual legacy of St Ignatius in Asia Pacific.

Thomas Benz SJ
Ignatian Spirituality Network Coordinator



BANTEAY PRIEB: A PLACE OF HOPE & HEALING



In 2019, Banteay Prieb reached a crossroad. The authorities in Cambodia want to use the land as a National Rehabilitation Center, a one-stop-shop where many organisations and services will be located. The planned buildings are very different from the community-style homes we built to promote friendship, reconciliation and life skills. How did it all begin?

Banteay Prieb was set up in 1991 by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) as a place where people who had lost their legs or arms to landmines and other people with disability could find a place of healing for hearts and minds while learning a skill that could help them have a job or income-generating opportunity.

It grew out of a discernment process in the refugee camps where, in 1989, JRS reflected and took decisions on how best to promote peace and reconciliation among Cambodians. For nine years, they had served in the refugee camps, but the war continued between the camp residents located in Thailand and their compatriots living in Cambodia. Some claimed JRS presence in the camps was promoting peace, not war. The discernment question was: Should JRS withdraw from the camps? Our response was three-fold:

1. Some members of JRS would remain in the camps, faithful to the refugees there until repatriation, but no new volunteers would join.

2. Some would work with the Buddhist monks in promoting peace talks and reconciliation.
3. A small group would enter Cambodia and find ways to promote friendship, peace and reconciliation inside.

Jub Phokthavi (now Father), Sr Ath Long (RIP), Br Noel Oliver SJ and I arrived by stages in 1990 and began three initiatives:

- i. Banteay Prieb, a vocational training centre for people with disabilities;
- ii. a rural development programme in villages near Banteay Prieb and
- iii. creative reconciliation activities in Phnom Penh.

Prior to their arrival, Scholastic Kike Figaredo SJ (now Bishop) and Br Oliver had made visits to assess possibilities and make friends. Fr Mark Raper SJ had visited even before this to know first-hand the situation inside Cambodia.

When the team arrived, the government granted us land to use temporarily. The place by the villagers was remembered as a killing field during the Khmer Rouge period, a prison in the next era, an old-arms dump in the Long Nol era and a place affected with landmines and cluster bombs. Carrier pigeons also lived there. The locals called it Banteay Prieb – the place of the dove.

The first students arrived on 24 September 1991, after buildings had been renovated and student houses had been built. On-site too was the office of the Rural Development Programme for the Ang Snuol area, headed by Sr Ath. Students lived in community houses of 12, as they learned basic technical skills of welding, electricity machine repair and carpentry. Production and fulfilling orders for welded and wooden furniture was part of the training. Phaiphon, Anucha (RIP) and Kmol, three Thai technical teachers, joined the team along with Cambodian counterparts, Vudtha, Phal, Phat and Top Tith.

Malcolm Ramsay and Rob Allsop introduced agriculture and environmental awareness. Sculpture began with Chay Saron. Fr Jean Marie Birsens SJ attended to pastoral care.

Memories come floating back:

- graduation ceremonies with students dancing for joy;
- welding students making the first hooks to help remove landmines;
- the setting up of the wheelchair shop with Motivation in 1993;
- the production of tables and chairs, and electrical repairs;
- the letter from Tun Channareth, Hem Phang, Klieng Vann and Suon Chreuk launching the Cambodian Campaign Against Landmines;
- female students joining classes in sculpture, tailoring and electricity in 1996;
- the tragic deaths of Scholastic Richie Fernando SJ (RIP) and Soun Lavi (RIP);
- the visits of three Father Generals, Fr Kolvenbach, Fr Nicolás and Fr Sosa;
- the beginning of classes for the intellectually-challenged; and
- technological innovations leading to classes in phone repair and computer.

Graduates and past staff, wheelchairs and production workers are now spread far-wide, some highly successful, some still struggling. Many are involved in helping other people with disability, some in the school itself, some in remote village outreach or distributing wheelchairs. A total of 2,800 students have learned at the training center. More than 25,000 wheelchairs have been produced. The outreach workers accompany and offer



livelihood support in all Cambodia's 25 provinces.

Jesuit Directors have included Fr Joaquin Salord, Fr In-don Oh, Fr Greg Priyadi, Fr Oh-chang Kwon, Fr Rudy Chandra and Jub (before he was a Jesuit). Bishop Figaredo inspired the wheelchair shop and Fr Totet Banayanal SJ, as a scholastic, promoted the outreach programme. The lives of many scholastics and volunteers were transformed during their Regency at Banteay Prieb. Eucharist on Tuesday nights for the whole team inspired action, built community, and deepened reflection

and prayer.

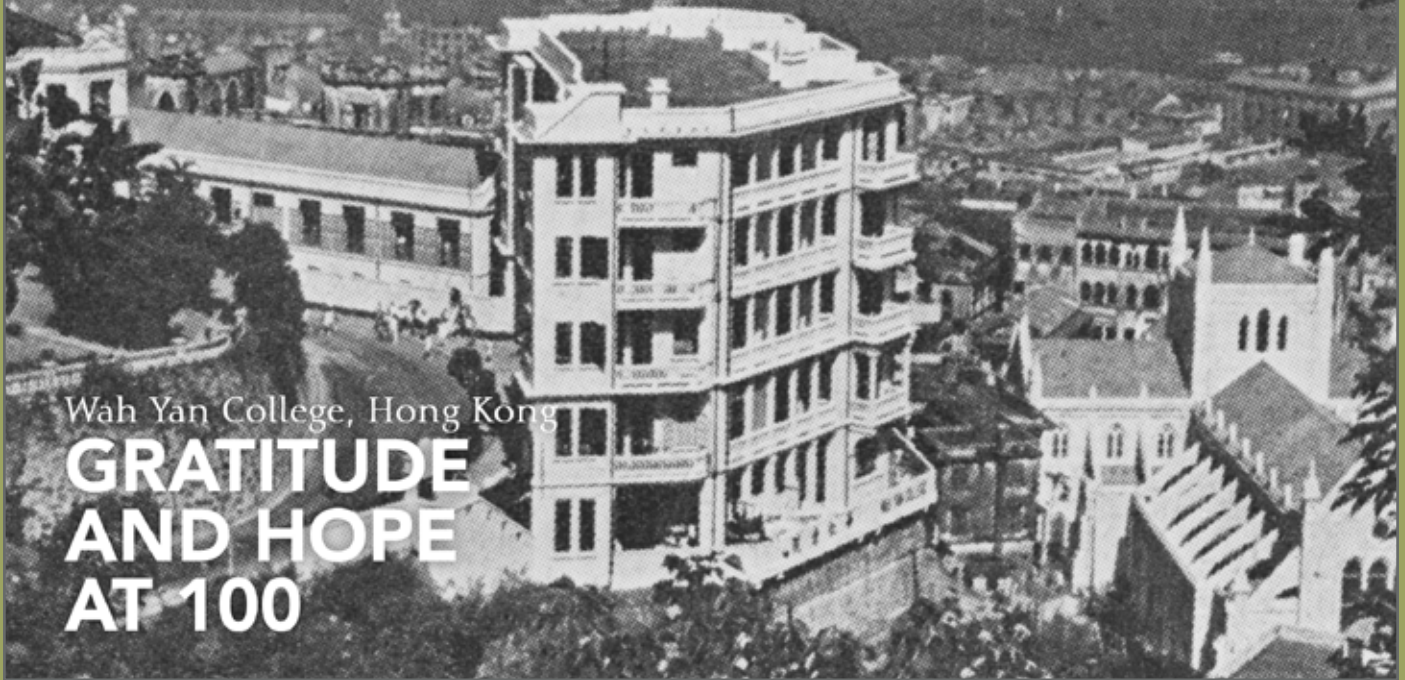
Alongside the training centre, the Rural Development Programme led by Sr Ath, Yan Sat and Nong Sophal reached out to thousands of villagers, with rice-banks, cow-banks, food for work infrastructure, toilets, housing, wells and income-generation. In the district of Ang Snuol, 28 schools were built and thousands of poor children received schooling assistance. JRS / Jesuit Service was known by the authorities and villagers as "Ankar Yeng", our NGO.

Perhaps, the time has come when Banteay Prieb will no longer be a training centre or even a hub for rural development. Our desire is that whatever it becomes it will continue to serve the poor and excluded members of society. It can still be a place where the government of Cambodia shows it has a heart for the vulnerable and the commitment to promoting their rights and quality of life.

We hope the last 30 years will be remembered as a place of healing, hope and advocacy for people with disability, a place where reconciliation, justice and compassion flourished. For many in the Jesuit Mission in Cambodia, it has been a place of conversion, a place where we received so much from the resilient spirits of people injured in body or poor in material goods. May the spirit of peace prevail!

Sr Denise Coghlan RSM
JRS Cambodia Director





Wah Yan College, Hong Kong

GRATITUDE AND HOPE AT 100

Wah Yan College, Hong Kong, the oldest Jesuit school in the Chinese Jesuit Province, is celebrating its centenary in 2019/20. It was founded by Mr Peter Tsui on December 16, 1919 to provide English education to Chinese boys. Starting with only four students, the school expanded steadily and by 1928, the student population had reached 800, the largest in the British Colony then.



FROM PLANTING TO GATHERING

In December 1932, Mr Tsui transferred the school to the care of the Jesuits. The Jesuits gave it the name, "College of Christ the King". Interestingly, the name was never officially adopted, and "Wah Yan College, Hong Kong" continues to be used until this day. It shows respect for the founder as well as the Chinese culture. The word "Wah"¹ is generally taken to mean "Chinese" in our culture. The word "Yan"² means "benevolence", the highest virtue in Confucianism³. Although the word "Wah" is said to have come from the name of the founder's hometown "Ng Wah", and the word "Yan" from his Chinese name "Tsui Yan Sau".

In the years since its founding, during which the world and the region have undergone tremendous changes, the school remained a place within which students learn, grow and develop in relative calm while striking lifelong bonds with schoolmates. To date, over 10,000 "Wahyanites" have benefitted from the nurturing care of Jesuits and lay teachers. Many of them have gone on to make important contributions to Hong Kong and the world. While the public more often recognises those who became prominent leaders or even pioneers in the academe, medicine, law, government, politics, commerce, entertainment and other fields, we are no less proud of those who are not so famous but who nonetheless contribute in small yet vital ways by faithfully performing their roles in society and family. I will never forget a senior alumnus who came over to me in the 50th anniversary reunion of the Class of 1963 and said: "I was not a brilliant student back then, but Fr Barrett (the principal then) told me that it's OK. Just be a good man. I am glad to tell you that I have done it! I have been a good man throughout my life!"

¹ Pronounced "hua" in Putonghua and written as 華 in Chinese.

² Pronounced "ren" in Putonghua and written as 仁 in Chinese.

³ In fact, the Chinese character for "Yan"/ "ren" is made up of two characters: "two" (二) and "people" (人). Matteo Ricci, the 16th Century Jesuit who tried to spread Christianity in China, observed that the Confucian virtue of "Yan"/ "ren" was very close to the Christian virtue of "love" and saw in this an important link between the two cultures.

⁴ The first lay principal since the Jesuits' take over was appointed in 1996, though Jesuits remain as School Supervisor.

Since the Jesuits' takeover, the faculty comprises both Jesuits and lay teachers. For example, in the 1980s, there were around 10 Jesuits and 30 teachers. However, since then the number of Jesuits gradually fell⁴. In response, the school stepped up its formation of lay teachers on Ignatian pedagogy, including participation in Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific workshops and formation program for new staff members of the school. The characteristics and values of Jesuit education were also made more explicit to teachers, students and parents through official documents and the curriculum. Networking with Jesuit schools in other parts of the world also increased. Moving forward, we see it as vital to continue sustaining and developing our Jesuit characteristics by enhancing the system and method of forming lay teachers. The newly established "Centre for Jesuit Education" would be helpful in this respect.

"FREEDOM"

Alumni have shown their deep gratitude towards the school through their strong support. What do they usually say about their *alma mater*? One word they utter, regardless of generation, is "freedom". By this, they may each be referring to some aspect(s) of the Wah Yan education they experienced:

For example, they may be referring to the undogmatic approach, especially of the Jesuits, so that what is taught is not simply "imposed" from an authority above. Students learn not just the "what" but also the "why". Coupled with a discovery method in which students actually experience the process of knowledge construction, the approach helps them to find learning more meaningful and authentic. There is more likelihood that this learning will be assimilated as their own and applied years after graduation.

Or they may be referring to the autonomy given to the Student Association, clubs and other student bodies on how they organise their activities and manage their affairs. We encourage them to be engaged in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The rich multifarious experience will contribute to the development of the whole person – attitudes, generic skills, hidden talents – that mere classroom learning will miss.

Or they may be referring to the open-mindedness of the school administration, such as in welcoming students' ideas and dialogues on school rules. We want students to learn to think independently, be both critical and constructive, and not



to take things for granted, even if they are from the authorities.

Or they may be referring to the fact that the school does not shy away from controversial social and political issues and often organise talks, debates or discussion forums. We see controversies that touch students' hearts as learning opportunities. Learning is to be understood in its widest sense, not confined to the formal curriculum. We also want to inculcate in students one of our core values: "unity in diversity". As societies and nations are increasingly being torn apart by extremism, what this core value can engender: respect, inclusiveness, humility, dialogue, sense of community have become ever more important.

While the above is hardly a complete picture of Jesuit education at Wah Yan, it may provide a glimpse of some salient features of students' learning experience here.

MOVING FORWARD IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD

Just as we are preparing to celebrate our centenary, Hong Kong is embroiled in deep political controversy and social unrest. Young people, including many university and senior secondary students, are among the most active in the movement as they feel, perhaps for the first time in their young lives, that they are participating in something they find deeply meaningful.

To respond to the situation, the school reflected on our vision, tradition and

core values, and formulated a stance. On the one the hand, we acknowledge that our school is a place of learning, not a political organisation, and we should do our utmost to protect this mission. Thus, political activities, including propaganda from all sides, are inappropriate. On the other hand, we should be open to, even welcome, explorations and discussions of opposing views. The school is not an ivory tower; we are preparing our students for the real world. Despite huge challenges, the school managed, on the whole, to hold on to its mission.

On reflection, the incident actually confirms the relevance of the Jesuit vision and approach to education at Wah Yan as shared in this article. At the same time, it accentuates the challenges of this approach. For example, how can we walk with our youth without necessarily siding with them? How can we tread the fine line between objectively discussing emotionally and politically charged issues and inadvertently exerting undue influence? And how can we help our students find genuine hope in the midst of really tough circumstances? These are not easy questions, but as Ignatian educators, we are called to do that which is meaningful, not that which is easy. With renewed vigour, the school is ready to take on the next 100 years, confident that we have something unique and valuable to offer to generations of young people to come, even in the most difficult of times.

*Dr So Ying-lun
Wah Yan College, Hong Kong alumnus,
former Principal, Director of the Centre for
Jesuit Education of the Chinese Jesuit Province*

JCAP-RwC: MOVING THE UAPs IN ASIA PACIFIC



Promoting Reconciliation with Creation (RwC) as a shared value and priority in JCAP ministries and with its partners is a continuing narrative greatly re-affirmed by the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) issued early last year by Father General.

Caring for our common home has never been more critical as global temperatures reached another record high in 2019, despite the warnings of the *2018 Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR15)* by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to deeply reduce global net human-caused CO₂ emissions by about 45 per cent from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero by 2045.

This year, the region experienced the worst bushfires in southeastern Australia in decades, burning more than 10 million hectares of forests and lands, more than the forest fires in the Amazon, and an estimated half a billion animal deaths. Aggravated by temperatures that soared to more than 40 degrees Celsius and an extended drought, firefighters have been trying to manage the fires and hoping for a cooler climate and rainfall. There have been 25 deaths reported and more than a thousand homes destroyed, but official reports have yet to be provided as the fires continue in January 2020.

A high-pressure system over Japan kept extreme heat over 24 of its prefectures in late July to early August, and this heatwave led to 57 deaths from heat-related issues and 18,000 hospitalised. The 2019 typhoon season in the Pacific is reported as above annual average with 29 named storms, 17 typhoons, four super typhoons, and 52 depressions. Extreme and prolonged rainfall caused massive flooding in major parts of Jakarta in April and by year-end.

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, such as Taal Volcano in the Philippines in January 2020, are part of the hazards in many countries in the region (in the Pacific Ring of Fire) and the deaths, evacuations, and damage to homes and livelihoods take a massive toll especially on the poor and vulnerable.

In the *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2019* prepared by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly linked to the “relentless sequence of disasters” that hit the region. Damage is greatest where the poorest are: indigenous communities, rural uplands, coastal communities and in the urban margins of rapidly expanding cities. A useful framework that can be used in focusing critical action is its identification of key hotspots where fragile environments merge with critical socio-economic vulnerabilities: transboundary river basins (such as the Mekong), ring of fire, Pacific small island developing states, sand and dust storm risk corridors.

The need for urgency, depth and more active response to JCAP’s identified priorities on ecology and migration, as well as the engagements with indigenous communities and the youth through the various ministries is affirmed with the UAPs, setting the direction of our work journeys for the next 10 years.

JCAP-RwC is focused on the development of an Ecoteam with initial active members from the Provinces/Regions of Australia, Indonesia, Chinese Province, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Micronesia, Korea, and communications with interested participants from Cambodia. Discernment on the contribution and inputs to the JCAP Apostolic Plan 2020-2024 continues, with the UAPs as a major foundation and inspiration. Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Action are emerging as primary focuses, inspired in part by the youth.

Participation in key JCAP meetings such as the expanded Major Superiors Assembly in Hong Kong in July with Fr General Arturo Sosa, the JCAP Social Apostolate meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in August with Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES) Secretary Fr Xavier Jeyaraj SJ, and the Extended Consult in Manila, Philippines in October helped in the networking and opportunities for collaboration with other ministries. For the 50th anniversary (Golden Jubilee Congress) of SJES, four identified processes emerged during the Congress and offered as horizons for the future work of the Social Apostolate: transformation, collaboration, synodality and the creation of new narratives. A moving letter to the martyrs shared at the close of the Congress provided inspiration and hope in deepening commitment with sustained discussions of the UAPs, as well as the shared history of the Social Apostolate since Fr Pedro Arrupe's time.

Engaging with Arrupe scholastics through the Culture, Youth and Laudato si' Spirituality Workshop and with Jesuit novices as part of their mission trials with Ecojesuit Coordinator Fr Pedro Walpole SJ facilitating are recurrent offered activities at Balay Laudato si' in Bendum, Bukidnon, Philippines. The JCAP-RwC Spirituality for Action workshop is also an annual activity for JCAP ministries undertaking ecology activities, as well as development workers, religious, seminarians, scientists, students, teachers and young professionals.

Reconciliation with Creation as a JCAP priority aligns with many people-based movements that seek greater action and response. Active participation with and contribution to global processes, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030; the global UN climate change conferences, such as the forthcoming COP25, facilitated through the global Ecojesuit network (through the Jesuit conferences); and other communities of practice need to be supported and strengthened.

In a region with so much diversity in languages and cultures, there is a need for more effective translation and re-interpretation of the UAPs in our ministries, and thus generate better collaboration and integration of the social apostolate and its priorities. As a working example, the

creation of Reconciliation with Creation advisory groups in each Province/Region/Mission is one path by which varying levels of collaboration can be undertaken.

Joining and supporting the RwC Advisory Group in the Australian Province and initial talks with the Justice in Mining network in Asia Pacific continue. There is a deep collaboration with Ecojesuit, the global ecology network of Jesuits and partners, with active participation in regular webinars and support for Asia Pacific initiatives with the local church in Asia Pacific and Oceania on Laudato si' and integral ecology. School strikes for climate were also actively supported and will be a continuing activity as students and other youth sustain the calls for change and demands for climate action. Support was also provided in the ongoing global dialogue process that the Philippine Commission on Human Rights (CHR) undertook through the National Inquiry on Climate Change. The recommendations in the final report was presented by CHR Commissioner Roberto Cadiz during COP25 Chile in Madrid, Spain in December. The effort is to explore the nexus of human rights and climate justice in national human rights institutions in Asia Pacific, building up climate litigation in the process.

In the Philippines, JCAP-RwC was an active partner in the development of the *Culture and Integrity from the Ground: A Local Forum*, in March, where over 40 participants joined UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz. Young people, government employees and indigenous people gathered to gain a better understanding of the relationships between culture, community and land.

Communication through social media and regular write-ups for online media platforms, along with the production of brief videos are undertaken in the creation of new narratives for change.

While the discernment process by which the UAPs were identified involved a bottom-up approach, there is a need to bring these preferences back to their re-interpretation in our work and in our communities, and the new energy and strength that these bring.

The UAPs are a timely and critical reminder of the most pressing human development concerns in our world today, manifested starkly in the Asia Pacific region where many of the world's poorest and most vulnerable, with a huge youth population, can be found. Climate justice and climate action are integral concerns in ensuring quality human development.

Sylvia Miclat
JCAP Reconciliation with Creation Coordinator



FATHER GENERAL'S VISIT

TRAVELING THE LONG ROAD TO PEACE AND RECONCILIATION



“The past,” Faulkner warned “is never dead”, nor is it really past. Until we break down the barrier of division and fear that goes back many generations, no new bridges of hope can be built. Ever since General Congregations 35 and 36, the Society of Jesus has made reconciliation a key message. It is the theme that brought Fr General Arturo Sosa to Asia in July and August of 2019.

The Jesuit Superior General made the long journey to Korea, Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan as part of his second official visit to the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific. In these places, reconciliation resonates within the broader historical, political and religious contexts. The 200-year history of the Catholic Church in Korea, which was the first country Fr General visited on this trip, is not without bloodshed. When Fr Sosa visited the Korean Catholic Martyrs’ Museum, a place known as Jeoldusan or “beheading mountain”, he saw the site where thousands of believers perished during the persecutions of 1866, as well as the many items on display from that sad period in history. In the museum’s church where the remains of 28 saints are entombed, Fr General spent a moment of prayer.

Korea is a country divided into two nations, a consequence of the Cold War. The Korean Demilitarised Zone in Panmunjom stands as a symbol of conflict and separation between North and South Korea. During his visit, Fr General saw the ways that the Korean Jesuits have been supporting the mission of peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula, discerning the drivers of reconciliation and peace towards the reunification of the two nations. In a press briefing when Fr Sosa was asked about the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, the Superior General was clear that reconciliation is not achieved by a passive attitude but through positive action. He responded that disarmament is needed to solve the problems that result from poverty, violence and arms. Jesus on the cross, he said, symbolises the attitude that Christians should have: to want to give their life for others and the world.

Throughout his trip, Fr Sosa did not shy away from confronting issues of violence and conflict. While in Hong Kong, where political and social tensions were (and still are) high, he addressed the school community of Wah Yan College Kowloon and Hong Kong about an important dimension of the identity of Jesuit schools as places for reflection, dialogue and reconciliation. “Our schools can be neutral spaces for dialogue, for open and fraternal listening, for respectful acceptance and even for eventual reconciliation at some point in the future,” he said to a mixed crowd of parents, teachers and students.

Old and young generations have a way of viewing things from different perspectives. This is no truer than when applied to the current situation in Hong Kong. As young people express their desire for greater democracy, their parents or grandparents see the transition from British territory to China as a historic gain. The tension between human formation and what young people want to achieve – whether in the classroom focussed on their studies or out on the streets

fighting for a just society – is very important. “A Christian orientation includes social and political responsibility,” Fr Sosa said. “The question is how to discern what it means to get involved.” For the Superior General, Jesuit schools can do a great service to society by offering a space for reflection and discernment where there is openness to talk “without prejudice, without judgment, without taking only one position”. Even to say, “We made a mistake.”

The real meaning of good political participation, said Fr General, is possessing a sense of citizenship that thinks of the common good. This consciousness of the common good was the message he gave to young people everywhere he went. At Colegio Mateus Ricci in Macau where he graced the graduation ceremonies of primary and secondary students, he told them: “You are still so young, but you carry in you the future of this world... I invite you to think about how you can help others in new ways that you have not yet tried before.” He prayed for the children to have “the strength to be daring and hopeful, not for yourselves, but for the world, and for the future”. Likewise, in his meeting with the Magis youth in the Tien Educational Center in Taiwan, Fr Sosa encouraged them not to be afraid to face the world, even to change it, to keep walking ahead because God would always be there as a beacon to guide them.

Young people, really everyone, have Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ, now Servant of God, to turn to for inspiration. In Japan, where Fr General concluded his Asian sojourn, Fr Arrupe came face-to-face with human suffering. Nearly half a million people died from the atomic bombs that were dropped by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. The Jesuit novitiate in Hiroshima became a makeshift hospital crowded with so many of the injured. Years later, Fr Arrupe would credit the true source of his apostolic energy to the Heart of Jesus, crucified and risen, waiting for humanity to take part in the work of rebuilding.

Japan’s dramatic history, however, dilates far beyond the atrocities of the atomic bombings. Centuries before Fr Arrupe landed in Japan, a small community of beleaguered Catholic converts in Nagasaki went deep underground and practised their faith in secret during centuries of oppression. Descendants of the so-called “Hidden Christians” resurfaced in the 19th century with their faith intact. They built their long-dreamed-of cathedral in 1914, to be destroyed by the atomic bomb in 1945. So far, peace is still an issue that looms large in Japan. Many bomb survivors, including “Hidden Christian” descendants, advocate for a ban on nuclear weapons, but Japan has up to this time refused to sign the UN nuclear-ban treaty.

Seventy years or so have passed since the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the ceasefire armistice on the Korean peninsula was signed and Faulkner wrote those famous lines. There is still a great distance to peace and reconciliation, but just as the risen Christ accompanied the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Fr General Arturo Sosa assures us, “The Lord is on the path with us”. In Asia, his message finds people – old and young – ready to listen and to believe.



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