

# JustSouth Monthly

JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS



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## Four for the Future: New Jesuit Universal Preferences

By Fred Kammer, SJ, JD

### JSRI Future Activities

#### April 28-30

Fr. Fred Kammer will direct a workshop on Jesuit justice for the second year Jesuit novices.

#### May 6

Fr. Kammer will participate in a board meeting of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Baltimore.

#### May 9

Fr. Kammer will deliver the homily at the Baccalaureate Mass of the Loyola College of Law.

### JSRI Recent Activities

#### March 28

Dr. Sue Weishar helped organize a Teach-In on Immigration at the Historic St. James AME Church in New Orleans which featured the personal testimonies of members of the Congress of Day Laborers.

#### March 29

Dr. Weishar participated in the monthly meeting of the Baton Rouge Immigrant Rights Coalition and agreed to draft an advocacy document for the group.

#### April 2

Dr. Weishar was the guest speaker at the LSU School of Public Health's Global Concerns Group monthly meeting where she discussed the history of immigration to Louisiana and present challenges.

#### April 5-6

The JSRI Advisory Board met on campus.

#### April 10

Dr. Weishar participated in a Biloxi meeting of the Board of Directors of El Pueblo, which serves vulnerable immigrants living in south Mississippi.

#### April 12

Dr. Dennis Kalob was quoted in [an article on proposed parental leave laws](#). The article was circulated by Catholic News Service and picked up by a number of newspapers.

#### April 12

Dr. Kalob attended the New Orleans launch of Unleash Local, a campaign to repeal state preemption of local efforts to increase the minimum wage. There was a rally at city hall followed by a "second line" downtown.

#### April 24

Dr. Nicholas Mitchell appeared on LPB's Louisiana Public Square to discuss the death penalty in Louisiana.

Early last year, the Jesuit Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, invited Jesuits and our colleagues worldwide to provide input in developing what are called "universal apostolic preferences." These are to guide all Jesuit ministries for the next ten years. Here in Loyola's Ignatius Chapel, on a Saturday in April of 2018, Jesuits and colleagues from Loyola University, Jesuit High School, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Immaculate Conception Parish, and Manresa Retreat House gathered to respond to this invitation. Our recommendations were melded with others from across the Central and Southern Jesuit Province, distilled with others nationally, and then joined to worldwide themes by Father Sosa and his team in Rome meeting with regional Jesuit representatives.



St. Ignatius statue at Loyola University New Orleans

On February 19th, two months ago, Father General wrote:

At the end of the sixteen months that the process lasted at the various levels of the Society, I presented to the Holy Father four universal apostolic preferences:

- A. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment;
- B. To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice;
- C. To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;
- D. To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.[1]

Pope Francis then endorsed these four preferences. A few weeks ago, Father Sosa explained the choice of the word "preferences" instead of "priorities":

We confirmed that preferences is really what we need and what we want to have. Not priorities, in the sense that priorities exclude: when you prioritize something you exclude something else. This is not a 'choosing' between schools, universities, or parishes. Preferences are vital orientations for focusing ALL of our apostolates in the next ten years.[2]

These preferences combine traditional and newer themes. Emphasizing the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* and spiritual discernment is vital to the Jesuit way of proceeding, but the stress here is on widely sharing these treasures and on their incorporation by all ministry leaders—Jesuit or lay.

The call to walk with those who are vulnerable, excluded, marginalized, and impoverished—including immigrants, refugees, and survivors of sexual abuse—and to challenge the structures of injustice is rooted in the Scriptures and in the renewed emphasis on the faith-that-does-justice going back over fifty years to the Second Vatican Council.

The emphasis upon young people and their aspirations to "insert themselves into society, seek to give meaning to their existence, and realize their dreams" builds upon our centuries-old history of working with youth. This preference recognizes, however, that we are in a time of epochal change "from which will emerge a new humanity and a new way of structuring human life in its personal and social dimensions." [3]

Lastly, the call to care for our common home, inspired by Pope Francis,[4] cries out from the environmental destruction caused by the dominant economic system which affects the poor and vulnerable most acutely and inflicts intergenerational damage that "conditions and jeopardizes the life of future generations." [5] For all of us, this awareness demands significant lifestyle changes and collaboration with others in the "construction of alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet." [6]

[1] Arturo Sosa, SJ, [Letter to the Whole Society](#), February 19, 2019, emphasis in original. Resource materials available at: <https://jesuits.global/en/uaq>

[2] Sosa, Remarks at a conference on leadership and discernment at a retreat house outside of Rome, on April 3, 2019. Video of his remarks is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qk7wiOPXMWM>

[3] Sosa, Letter, op. cit.

[4] Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': Care for Our Common Home*, 2015.

[5] Sosa, Letter, op. cit.

[6] *Ibid.*

Monthly articles reflect the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of Loyola University New Orleans.

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