Humbled by Grace
Ordained to the Priesthood
Dear friends in the Lord,

In May, the provincials of Canada and the U.S. had the grace of meeting with our Superior General, Fr. Arturo Sosa. With all his responsibilities, one cannot miss the exuberance he brings to his ministry. He challenged us to ensure that the Society of Jesus and its apostolates respond to the needs of the world and the Church, serving the mission of reconciliation entrusted to the Church.

In this issue of *Jesuits* magazine, you will see that the Lord continues to bless us with young men eager to embrace the service of the Lord. The Church will ordain five gifted Jesuits, four in St. Louis, one in San Juan. Seven young men will pronounce first vows in August.

Sometimes our service to the Church takes creative forms. The Helzberg School of Management of Rockhurst University has partnered with the Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph to train young priests in skills needed to lead contemporary parishes. The initial results have delighted all involved, a great form of collaboration.

Father Sosa also placed before us the twin realities of racism and migration in our world. You will see the tragic story of our history of slaveholding; as we deal with the legacy of racism that flows from slavery in our country, we need to know our part in that history. Then we can continue the brave work of many Jesuits who labored to end discrimination by race. You will see, too, how Fr. Rafael García in El Paso, working with the Jesuit Social Research Institute, has pioneered a way of immersing people in the reality of migration to the U.S.

As Fr. Sosa noted, the challenges before us are many, but so are the gifts of God. No gift is greater than you who share in our many ministries that help serve the mission of the Church today. Thank you for your generous support in prayers, time and financial support. May God bless you with a joyous and relaxing summer.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Ronald A. Mercier, SJ
Provincial, USA Central and Southern Province

Queridos amigos en el Señor,

En mayo, los provinciales del Canadá y los Estados Unidos tuvieron la gracia de reunirnos con nuestro Superior General, P. Arturo Sosa. Con todas sus responsabilidades, no se puede ignorar la exuberancia que trae a su ministerio. Él nos ha propuesto el reto de asegurar que la Compañía de Jesús y sus apostolados respondan a las necesidades del mundo y de la Iglesia, sirviendo la misión de reconciliación encargada a la Iglesia.

En esta edición de la revista *Jesuits*, van a ver que el Señor nos continúa bendiciendo con jóvenes deseados por abrazar el servicio del Señor. La Iglesia ordenará a cinco jesuitas talentosos, cuatro en San Luis, uno en San Juan. Siete jóvenes pronunciarán sus primeros votos en agosto.

A veces nuestro servicio a la Iglesia toma formas creativas. La *Helzberg School of Management of Rockhurst University* se ha asociado con la diócesis de Kansas City–St. Joseph para entrenar a sacerdotes jóvenes en habilidades necesarias para dirigir las parroquias contemporáneas. Los resultados iniciales han deleitado a todos involucrados, una gran forma de colaboración.

Padre Sosa ha colocado ante nosotros la doble realidad del racismo y la migración de nuestro mundo. Van a ver la historia trágica de nuestro pasado de esclavitud; mientras nos ocupamos del legado de racismo que deriva de esclavitud en nuestro país, necesitamos conocer nuestra parte en esa historia. Entonces podremos continuar el trabajo valiente de muchos jesuitas que laboraron para acabar con la discriminación racial. Van a ver, también, cómo P. Rafael García en El Paso, trabajando con el *Jesuit Social Research Institute*, ha liderado un programa de inmersión para entrar en la realidad migratoria de los EE.UU.

Como el P. Sosa notó, los desafíos ante nosotros son muchos, pero también son muchos los regalos de Dios. Ningún regalo es más grande que el de ustedes que comparten en nuestros muchos ministerios que ayudan a servir la misión de la Iglesia hoy. Gracias por su apoyo generoso por medio de oraciones, tiempo y ayuda financiera. Que Dios les bendiga con un jubiloso y relajante verano.

Sinceramente suyo en el Señor,

Ronald A. Mercier, SJ
Provincial, Provincia USA Central y Meridional
4 | Jesuit News

10 | Slavery, History, Memory & Reconciliation

12 | Toward Racial Reconciliation
Mourning and Healing

16 | Celebrating Ordinations

20 | Border Immersion Experience
The Grace of Encounter

24 | Providing Earthly Tools
Rockhurst University Trains Priests

28 | At Work:
William Hutchison, SJ

29 | Man in Formation:
Matthew Baugh, SJ

30 | In Memoriam

Cover: Father Anthony Wieck, SJ, blesses Michael Wegenka, SJ, during the sacred Rite of Ordination at St. Francis Xavier College Church in St. Louis on June 9. (Photo by Michael Burks)
Jesuit High School, Tampa, Blesses New Hall

The Jesuit High School community in Tampa, Fla., this spring celebrated the blessing and dedication of Gonzmart Hall, a new 32,000-square foot administration and student center on Himes Avenue. Named for 1971 alumnus Richard Gonzmart, the new center will serve the school and the wider community. It is just one of the improvements to the campus that the school’s $40 million For Greater Glory capital campaign will accomplish. At the dedication, Jesuit High community members sealed a time capsule in the building, to be open in the year 2118.

Milestones

Brian J. Christopher, SJ, professed final vows on March 11, 2018, at St. Martin de Porres Parish in Belize City, Belize, where he is assigned as minister and apostolic planning assistant.

Jeff Putthoff, SJ, will be the next president of Trinity Catholic High School in St. Louis County, Mo., effective July 1, 2018.

John Arnold, SJ, retired from the province treasury office in May 2018.
An Unexpected Audience

St. Louis University High School band members had an unexpected audience when they played in St. Peter’s Square March 14 as part of a spring break experience in Rome. They performed for and met with Pope Francis! The Pope stopped and listened as the band played *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*. The tour guide said it was the first time in his nine years that a pope has stopped and watched an entire song. The Jr. Bills had a spontaneous personal audience with the pope before meeting with Greg Burke (SLUH ’78), director of the Holy See Press Office.

Three Weeks a Jesuit

The Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province sponsored a vocation-discernment program this summer. Three Weeks a Jesuit took place in New Orleans June 1-24. Designed to provide time for young men to learn what life as a Jesuit is like, participants stayed at the rectory of Immaculate Conception Church in downtown New Orleans and spent time working at various Jesuit and community ministries in the city.

Loyola University New Orleans Names Tania Tetlow as Next President

Tania Tetlow, J.D., has been selected by the Loyola University New Orleans Board of Trustees to serve as the institution’s 17th president.

A New Orleans resident with deep Jesuit roots, Tetlow will be the first lay person and first woman president of Loyola since the university’s founding in 1912. She is the fourth woman president and the youngest woman president to lead one of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States.

“The Jesuits are thrilled that our first lay president has such a strong Catholic faith and Jesuit background,” Trustee Fr. Billy Huete, SJ, said. “Though we were definitely looking for these attributes in all the possible candidates, it would be hard to find a qualified layperson who has a greater understanding and appreciation of what the Society of Jesus tries to be and do in our contemporary world.”

Tetlow currently serves as senior vice president and chief of staff and the Felder-Fayard Professor of Law at Tulane University in New Orleans.

Tetlow’s parents, Elisabeth and the late Louis Mulry Tetlow, both taught at Loyola University. Her uncle, Fr. Joseph Tetlow, SJ, served as the dean of Loyola’s College of Arts and Sciences. The Tetlow family are 40-year members of the Ignatius Chapel community at Loyola.

She begins her work with Loyola in September.
As I peered outside the campus gates from behind a building, I could not believe what was unfolding. It looked like urban warfare. Students with bandanas masking their faces were pulling apart the stone streets to erect barricades while police in full riot gear were launching tear gas and firing rubber bullets at them. My heart was racing, and I turned to Fr. Everardo Víctor, SJ, who stood calmly at my side. “Have you ever seen something like this before?” I asked. He gave me a puzzled look, smiled, and said, “Yes, Brian. Too many times.”

Our Jesuit brothers in Central America know violence and civil war too well, having lived through the wars that raged in the 1980s and the drug and gang violence that continues to plague these countries today.

So when violence broke out in Nicaragua on April 18, it was not unfamiliar. The government had announced reforms to social security that were going to increase taxes on workers and their employers and decrease the amount given to retirees. Students gathered outside the University of Central America (UCA) in Managua to protest these reforms. Supporters of the ruling Sandinista party came to shout back at the student protesters, and things quickly escalated. Both groups threw rocks and bottles. This was only the beginning.

By the next day, student protesters had encamped in a couple of universities where they erected barricades and gathered stones and homemade mortars. Police in riot gear and armed members of the Sandinista Youth confronted the students. The conflict lasted four intense days. Many were killed, and hundreds were injured, either by rubber bullets fired at close range or by live ammunition.

Álvaro Conrado, a 15-year-old student at the Jesuit Loyola Institute, was the youngest victim of this senseless violence against peaceful protesters. He was shot in the throat while carrying bottles of water to student protesters.

During those four days of violence, the demands of protesters changed. The focus shifted from revoking the social security reform to ending the corruption of the acting government led by President Daniel Ortega and his wife and vice president, Rosario Murillo.

As protests and marches – and violence – spread to other cities across the country, negotiations were eventually organized. José Alberto “Chepe,” Idiaquez, SJ, rector of the UCA, was a representative of the universities.

In the weeks afterwards, the Villa Carmen Jesuit community at the UCA became a center of information and analysis. I spent many hours gathered with brother Jesuits in our dining room as Fr. Chepe discussed the latest round of negotiations and others offered their own insights and perspectives. When the Catholic Church organized a prayerful pilgrimage, we took to the streets as a community and marched with our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters.

On Mother’s Day, a march was organized in solidarity with all the mothers who had lost sons during the protests. I dressed in black and walked with members of the Loyola Institute community as we mourned Álvaro. When violence broke out at the end of the march, the gates of UCA were opened to allow people to take refuge from the flying bullets.

Tragically, violence is all too common in Central America. But in the face of it, there exists a tremendous amount of solidarity and social action. The Jesuit community and the works of the Society continue to stand with the Nicaraguan people and struggle alongside them in the search for peace and justice.

By Brian Strassburger, SJ

Brian Strassburger, SJ, is a Jesuit of this province who has served for two and a half years at the Asociación Roncalli-Juan XXIII in Managua, Nicaragua as his regency assignment. He begins theology studies at Boston College this fall.
**Province Staff Changes**

Ronald Rebore will become the next director of school support for secondary and pre-secondary education for the Jesuits USA Central and Southern (UCS) Province. He replaces Pete Musso, who served admirably in the role for the past four years.

Rebore brings 20 years of experience in Jesuit education, having served in various roles at De Smet Jesuit High School in St. Louis County, including history teacher, professional development coordinator, interim principal and assistant principal for staff development. He is an alumnus of De Smet Jesuit and Saint Louis University and formerly served as a teacher and mentor in the Alum Service Corps.

Musso leaves the province staff to serve at De Smet Jesuit High School as assistant principal for curriculum and instruction. During his four years in the secondary and pre-secondary education office, he helped create several new programs, all aimed at helping faculty and staff deepen their experience of Ignatian spirituality while also honing their skills in their roles as teachers and administrators.

Rebore will begin his new role on July 2.

**Vicki Simon** will retire from her position as director of the St. Louis Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) on Aug. 31. She brought to her work extensive ministry experience, a strong background in human resources and a great passion for accompanying the poor and marginalized. Vicki’s joy, compassion and talents have enriched IVC and the many people and organizations it serves.

**Novitiate Staff Changes**

Father Mark Thibodeaux, SJ, has served as novice director for the former Missouri and New Orleans Provinces and now the USA Central and Southern Province since 2008. After 11 years of dedicated service on the novitiate staff, Fr. Thibodeaux will transition out of the position and Fr. Andrew Kirschman, SJ, currently serving as executive assistant to the novice director, will take on the responsibility of guiding and supporting novices during their first two years of formation. Fathers Thibodeaux and Kirschman have collaborated closely over the past year. Beginning this ministry Aug. 12, Fr. Kirschman will bring to his new position experience, prayerfulness and zeal.

Father Thibodeaux will take a sabbatical before beginning a new ministry at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in New Orleans.

Brother Lawrence Huck, SJ, who has served many years at Jesuit High School, New Orleans, will also join the novitiate staff as socius to the novice director. A skilled spiritual director and experienced administrator, Br. Huck previously served as president of Good Shepherd School in New Orleans. He is a delegate to the Jesuit Brothers Committee of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States.
In his first official visit to Canada as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Arturo Sosa spent 12 days visiting apostolates, making a pilgrimage to a Jesuit historical site, and meeting with Jesuits and colleagues, including the provincials of Canada and the United States.

This visit comes as the English and French Canada provinces prepare to become one, and unity in diversity was a common theme. Father Sosa celebrated Mass at the Shrine of the North American Martyrs on Pentecost Sunday, saying, “Together, we will better serve and proclaim the Gospel in ways that many, in the incredible diversity of our contemporary world, will better understand and accept.”

Father General Sosa’s conversation with the provincials focused in large part on the ongoing discernment of apostolic preferences for the international Society of Jesus. This discernment is going on in all Jesuit provinces and will help shape ministerial decisions in the coming years.

Father General Sosa also visited with 40 Jesuits in formation at Regis College in Ontario, and met with indigenous elders and students at Mother Teresa Middle School in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Father General Sosa was interviewed by Fr. Thomas Rosica for Salt & Light Catholic Media Foundation TV. The 30-minute interview covered a broad range of topics, including Fr. Sosa’s thoughts on the future of the Society.

A link to the video interview is available on the homepage of our website at jesuitscentralsouthern.org.
The new Jesuit Archives & Research Center (JARC) in St. Louis officially opened to researchers on April 25. The state-of-the-art facility is the central repository for the collective historical resources of Jesuits in the United States.

“The Society of Jesus has a rich story to tell, not just about the Jesuits, but about the history of the Church and the United States,” said David Miros, archivist and director of the new facility. “The archives serves as the means for communicating that story.”

Treasures abound in the newest building in midtown St. Louis, where a precious 150-year-old golden ordination chalice and Pope Pius XII’s zucchetos (skullcaps) reside alongside historic hand-drawn maps, cross stitch samplers, relics, journals, institutional records and more.

Printed materials from the Jesuit Mission to the Osage Nation tell not only the story of the mission, but also capture an irreplaceable heritage as some of the only extant documents in the Osage language.

A simple cardboard suitcase, used by the Jesuit Mission Band to hold flyers, tracts and holy cards as the band traveled to tiny churches throughout the country, tells the story of the missionaries’ vital role in helping form the growing American Church.

House journals from a Jesuit community in Louisiana provide a first-hand account of what life was like during the years leading up to and during the Civil War.

There are some real surprises, too. Consider the letters between John J. Pershing, commanding general for the U.S. during the First World War, and his wife, Micheline Resco, a Romanian-born Parisian portrait artist. The collection was acquired by Pershing biographer Donald Smythe, SJ. After his death, the archivists at John Carroll University recognized his scholarly collections belonged at the Jesuit Archives.

These collections combine to help deepen the knowledge of the history of the Church and the Society of Jesus in the United States.

“Records are often at risk of being lost, destroyed or unexamined. As a result, history is at risk of not being told,” Miros said. “Here, disparate pieces can be pieced together to tell the important story of the Church in the United States.”

The Jesuit Archives & Research Center brings together in one place the memories of more than a dozen U.S. Jesuit provinces, past and present. The former New Orleans Province collections arrived in mid-May. The collections from the West Coast will arrive in multiple shipments over the coming year. Having a central repository for all these documents and artifacts creates significant advantages for researchers and therefore, opportunities for new scholarly insights.

“The Society of Jesus has a rich story to tell, not just about the Jesuits, but about the history of the Church and the United States.”

— David Miros

Six times larger than the previous Central Archives, the JARC features space for exhibits, research, digitization and preservation work, meetings and presentations, in addition to the archival areas.
More than 130 members of the Jesuits USA Central and Southern Province gathered in St. Louis for Province Day, an annual event preceding the province’s celebration of ordinations. They were there to learn more about the province’s history of slaveholding and to consider what reconciliation might entail in light of this past.

Just over three years ago, Fr. Provincial Ronald Mercier met with Saint Louis University President Fred Pestello, archivists, staff and faculty and resolved to learn more about the history of Jesuit slaveholding. Today, it seems impossible to imagine Jesuits participating in this grave evil. The truth remains, however: Jesuits in the United States used forced labor to help their works survive, including the missions in Missouri and southern Louisiana.

The fact of Jesuit slaveholding is not news; historians have long known and written about it. However, scant attention has been paid to the enslaved people. Now, their lives – their names, their living conditions and their families – are the focus of the Slavery, History, Memory and Reconciliation Project.

As its name suggests, this project is about more than the research, though the research is vitally important. The project has three primary goals:

1. Research the history of Jesuit slaveholding in what is now the USA Central and Southern Province, with a particular focus on learning the identities and experience of the people who were held in slavery. Researchers are also tracing the family lineages of the enslaved people, in the hopes of identifying descendants and connecting them with their family history.

2. Share what is learned.

3. In dialogue with descendants and African-American communities, respond in an appropriate way, with an emphasis on healing and reconciliation.

The study began nearly two years ago. David Miros, Ph.D., director of the Jesuit Archives & Research Center, and Jonathan Smith, Ph.D., vice president for diversity and community engagement at Saint Louis University, serve as co-directors of the project. Kelly Schmidt, a Ph.D. candidate at Loyola University Chicago, is lead researcher.

In May, Fr. Mercier released the information that has been learned so far. The Province Day gathering provided Jesuits the opportunity to delve more deeply into the material.

“As Jesuits, we know now that our history, while graced, is tragically sinful,” Fr. Mercier said. “While we must acknowledge this truth, we remember how the past is not history. It’s not even past. It continues in the form of racism today.”

Father Mercier encouraged the members of the province to consider the Slavery, History, Memory and Reconciliation Project as “Holy Saturday” in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. “Guilt, shame and blame can trap us in the past,” he said. “But like on Holy Saturday, we remain in God, who can open us to something new, who can offer a path to reconciliation.”

Three African-American Jesuit collaborators joined the Jesuits for the Province Day conversation on slavery and reconciliation. They spoke after Miros and Schmidt presented the findings of the research so far.

Eric Clark, Ed.D., is president of Loyola Academy of St. Louis and an alumnus and former assistant principal of St. Louis University High School. Danielle Harrison, J.D., served as the provincial assistant for social ministries
and lay collaboration for the former Missouri Province. She was a founding member of the Loyola Institute for Spirituality, and later taught theology at St. Louis University High School. Rita Montgomery Hollie, J.D., is a long-time member of St. Matthew’s Parish, the Jesuit parish in the Ville Neighborhood of St. Louis. An attorney, she also coordinated the Bridges Program – which sponsors Ignatian retreats – at the St. Charles Lwanga Center in St. Louis.

Harrison began the panel discussion by singing There is a Balm in Gilead – which served as a balm in its own right. “We are at a time, as descendants of enslaved and as descendants of those who enslaved, when we need a balm from God to heal our sin-sick souls,” she said. When she learned that the Jesuits who foster the spirituality that guides her life had owned slaves, she had to “stop and take a breath. It is very hard.”

Hollie agreed. “I felt blindsided,” she said. “I thought the Jesuits could solve the problems of the world. Then to learn they were part of the problem? I was angry, appalled.” Having some time to come to grips with the history, Hollie now says, “It’s messy. It’s necessary to get this information, but it is very, very difficult. I applaud the Jesuits’ courage in beginning this, but we have to get in the muck together to figure out how to heal.”

Clark enumerated the many ways the vestiges of slavery continue to this day in the form of racism and inequality. “The Jim Crow laws did not become illegal until the 1950s and ’60s. That’s not so long ago,” he noted. “People who grew up with this kind of racism are still affected by it. What does reconciliation look like? I don’t know. It won’t happen quickly. It’s necessary to admit wrongdoing and begin conversations.”

The research will continue. The next step is to connect with descendant communities to share the information, invite conversation and find ways to heal the deep wounds of slavery.

Father Joseph Brown, SJ, a professor in the Department of Africana Studies at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, believes it is past time for this research and the conversations about reconciliation. “We are in the midst of a retrenchment in our country,” he said. “We are back to the ugly days of (overt) racism. But even in those days, there were people who stepped up to bring light. That’s what the Jesuits are doing through this project.”

He continued, “Just as the sacrament of reconciliation begins with the humble acknowledgment of our sinfulness, it is only by telling these stories with humility and openness that we begin the process of reconciliation.”

Father Brown and the panelists agree that it is right for Jesuits to take the lead in finding truth and working for reconciliation because, as Fr. Brown says, the “whole notion is very Ignatian, maintaining an openness to see what the Holy Spirit prompts.”

Harrison noted that Ignatian Spirituality fits well with African-American spirituality. Both recognize that God is for all people, in all places. “Who would be better at embracing this history and bringing healing (than the Jesuits)?” she asked.

Harrison encouraged the Jesuits of this province to “Listen, just listen. Listen to their (the descendants’) pain.”

“The call to reconciliation comes directly out of the Society’s 36th General Congregation,” Fr. Mercier said. “Also, the Church in the United States is asking religious communities to promote racial reconciliation. This is difficult work, but it is what we are called to do.”

Visit JesuitsCentralSouthern.org/HistoryResearch to read more about what has been learned through this research and to meet one enslaved woman whose strength and persistence have impressed researchers more than 150 years later.

To find out how you can contribute to this knowledge base or trace your ancestors, email HistoryResearch@Jesuits.org or call 314-376-2440.

Peter Queen was the first child born to an enslaved couple in the Missouri Mission. He continued to live at St. Stanislaus Seminary even after he was emancipated, until his death around 1907.

History, despite its wrenching pain, Cannot be unlived, and if faced with courage, Need not be lived again.

~Maya Angelou
Jesuits love to tell stories of our forebears—the courageous missionaries, the apostolic entrepreneurs of schools and parishes, the scholars, the spiritual giants and the visionaries. We have our saints with a capital or small “s” and celebrate their legacies.

Then we read that our Jesuit predecessors in this province owned 150 slaves. They built upon their labor and their backs, whipped them, separated parents from their children, and may have even sold a child to punish his parents. It stops us cold. We would rather not know. We feel guilty by association or we offer reasons that we are not to blame.

Both guilt and shame are common reactions to social injustice. I think personal guilt over slavery itself is not appropriate, however; and shame is not particularly helpful as we start our province Slavery, History, Memory and Reconciliation Project. (The legacy of slavery in contemporary inequality has other implications for us, discussed on the next page.)
What then of the evil and the suffering of slavery and the indisputable role of Jesuits as slaveholders, this “undeniable part of our history”? Canadian theologian Gregory Baum suggests that one proper Christian response to social evil is mourning. As Jesus did at the tomb of Lazarus or overlooking his beloved Jerusalem, we should grieve, even weep. We don’t close our eyes to the harshness of human evil, but we also do not blame ourselves if we are not involved. Instead, we mourn. We grieve the past suffering of fellow human beings and join our grief and mourning to that of God and of all creation. We take a moment or an hour of personal time, our meetings, our conversations and our prayer to attune ourselves to the suffering around us, to be one with it, and to mourn as Jesus shows us. We grieve with Jesus and God.

As we pursue the Slavery, History, Memory and Reconciliation Project, we want to know the truth of Jesuit slavery and to be honest about it, which is a primary goal of the project. We also must recognize that slavery was just the first stage, the “original sin,” in our nation’s history of racism and racial injustice. It was followed by a century of legal segregation and now a half-century more of entrenched inequality that truly are the legacies of slavery and racism. They are part of the “history” and “memory” in what we are examining. What we find will be our share in the common history of this nation, and what we remember will be drawn from our Jesuit files and public records and from the memories of those enslaved and their heirs.

What, then, after remembering? The research summary report continues, “We are called now to an intentional response, one made in collaboration with those members of our community who continue to suffer from the consequences of slavery.” This suggests the more complex move from truth to reconciliation, because the truth spans centuries and many different actors and systems played different parts.

Reconciliation requires an understanding of how the legacy of slavery, legal segregation and discrimination—and our amnesia about them—continues in racial attitudes toward individuals and groups and in systemic or structural racial injustice. This calls for moral judgments and faith responses.

The moral judgment of racism is grounded in fundamental scriptural beliefs: equal dignity of all people, created in God’s likeness; and Christ’s redemption of all. The Catechism of the Catholic Church spells this out:

The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it: “Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God’s design.”

Moral judgments on racism, based on equality, are consistent: “any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable”; and “racism is not merely one sin among many, it is a radical evil dividing the human family ...” Jesus tells the Good Samaritan story—one of his three “great parables” according to Pope Benedict—to answer, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:25-37) His response addresses entrenched divisions between Jew and Samaritan and sets the stage for the call to the unity of “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:5). This unity admits “no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex...”

Individual racism includes conscious acts, spontaneous attitudes, “the tendency to stereotype and marginalize,” indifference, and “the triumph of private concern over public responsibility ...” Personally, we are called to conversion—to see the legacy of racial evil and to respect the rights, dignity, equality and sanctity of racially different individuals and groups. “This does not mean erasing cultural differences,” but “…a positive appreciation of the complementary diversity of peoples” and the distinct contributions of racial minorities to the process of healing also needs to include the pursuit of truth, not for the sake of opening old wounds, but rather as a necessary means of promoting justice, healing & unity.

~ Pope Francis
“the internal strength of our nation.” Moreover, the tradition emphasizes “respect for foreigners, acceptance of dialogue, sharing, mutual aid and collaboration with other ethnic groups.”

Understanding and responding to individual racism, however, is not enough as we contemplate the call to racial reconciliation.

In 1986, the U.S. bishops wrote:

Whether the problem is preventing war and building peace or addressing the needs of the poor, Catholic teaching emphasizes not only the individual conscience, but also the political, legal and economic structures through which policy is determined and issues are adjudicated.

Earlier, in 1975, the 32nd Jesuit General Congregation underscored the importance of social structures in these words:

It is becoming more and more evident that the structures of society are among the principal formative influences in our world, shaping people’s ideas and feelings, shaping their most intimate desires and aspirations; in a word, shaping mankind itself. The struggle to transform these structures in the interest of the spiritual and material liberation of fellow human beings is intimately connected to the work of evangelization.

Recognizing the reality of social, economic, political, cultural and religious systems and structures and the power that they exert over our ability to live Gospel values marks one of the most critical insights in Catholic theology in the last 60 years.

Theologians, bishops and popes describe “sinful social structures” as those that dehumanize individuals and groups, devalue human life, break up families, alienate races, escalate violence and spread poverty and inequality. These systems and institutions socialize us, subtly promoting and reinforcing values and behaviors that we would call “sinful.” They also keep us from seeing the reality of racial injustice in the heritage of slavery, legal segregation and racial inequality—a blindness to what more contemporary theologians and others call “white privilege,” the inordinate advantages which accrue to white people simply because of their race.

Theologians also now speak of “graced social structures” as those that promote life, enhance human dignity, encourage the development of community, cure inequality, heal racial wounds and reinforce caring behaviors. The province’s Slavery, History, Memory and Reconciliation Project can be just such a graced endeavor for us.

One of the particular dangers of talking about sinful social structures, however, is that our consciousness of them can seem to absolve us of any responsibility. We say, “It’s the system; there is nothing we can do about it.” It all just seems far beyond our grasp, much less our ability to do anything effective.

In a 1987 encyclical, Pope Saint John Paul II at first acknowledges the reality of sinful social structures. His term is the “structures of sin”; but his analysis ties these structures much more tightly to individuals “who introduce these structures, consolidate them and make them difficult to remove.”

The pope laid out four ways individuals can remain responsible for sinful structures, as: (1) creators, supporters, or exploiters; (2) accessories through complicity or indifference; (3) accessories through fatalistic avoidance (“the supposed impossibility of changing the world”); and (4) accessories through consecration of the status quo.

One can look at each stage of our nation’s institutionalized racism—slavery, legal segregation, racial inequality—and see how our forebears and now most of us living today, including the Society of Jesus and the Church itself, remain responsible for these realities because we fit in one of St. John Paul’s four categories. We talk about being fair and good to people, but too little attention is paid to the equally important economic, social, and political tasks demanded by racial solidarity and needed to end institutionalized racism.

Pope St. John Paul underscored the urgency of connecting action for justice to...
faith in a term reflecting his experience with a famous Polish union, the duty of solidarity. For him, solidarity meant not just attitudinal changes and love of neighbor, but the structural responses demanded by Gospel love and involving fundamental societal changes. He wrote bluntly, “Solidarity is undoubtedly a Christian virtue.” He explained in a much-quoted passage:

This, then, is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good, that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all.\(^1\)

This solidarity takes concrete form, Pope St. John Paul wrote, in how we live as individuals and families, use resources, conduct our civic activity, make economic and political decisions and commit ourselves nationally and internationally.\(^1\)

If societal systems promote or condone racism and racial inequality, then our faith response in solidarity has to be structural as well as personal. We must do justice as well as charity. As we think about this project’s call to racial reconciliation, we should consider specific actions directed toward imbedded racial injustices. The first is reform of existing institutions like the criminal justice system (including policing), underfunded public school systems, unjust employment practices, income and wealth inequality, inadequate family support and welfare programs, de facto residential segregation and regressive tax systems.

The second is strengthening graced institutions and initiatives such as legal services and public defenders, civil rights organizations, community organizing, affirmative action, fair and affordable housing, collective bargaining, multiracial coalitions, targeted scholarships, community reinvestment, political reform, creative philanthropy and alternatives to incarceration.

The third is developing new institutions and structures, such as our Cristo Rey and Nativity Schools, to right the past wrongs of slavery, Jim Crow, and de facto segregation and privilege. In these ways, we can bring together people of different races to create and ensure a just, diverse and equitable future in which no one will “be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”\(^1\)

In this overdue but very necessary project, we are potentially embarking on a very long and difficult journey, but it is one that will require the courage and discernment we admire in the great Jesuits in our history to whom we look with pride and gratitude.

Father Fred Kammer, SJ, is director of the Jesuit Social Research Institute, based at Loyola University in New Orleans. He is the author of several books including Doing Faithjustice: An Introduction to Catholic Social Thought.

Sidenotes

1 Slavery, History, Memory, and Reconciliation
5 United States Catholic Bishops, Brothers and Sisters to Us, 1979, no. 39.
6 Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, no. 32.
7 Brothers and Sisters, no. 22.
9 Brothers and Sisters, no. 21.
10 The Church and Racism, no. 25.
12 36th Jesuit General Congregation, The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice, Decree 4, 1975, no. 40.
13 Pope Saint John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 1987, no. 36.
14 The Church and Racism, no. 9
15 Sollicitudo, no. 38 (emphasis added).
16 Ibid., no. 47.
17 Martin Luther King, Jr., from his “I have a dream” speech on the Washington mall, August 28, 1963.
He also encouraged the new priests to “Believe what you teach. Teach what you believe. And practice what you teach.”

The liturgy of ordination is movingly beautiful. During the rite, Fr. Provincial Ronald Mercier, SJ, called each man by name and presented him to Archbishop Prendergast. Later, the four men lay prostrate on the floor in a gesture of humility while the congregation prayed the litany of the saints. Each received a blessing, first by the archbishop, then by his Jesuit brothers, more than 100 priests in all.

Once they were vested and their hands anointed, the four new priests joined the archbishop in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The five new priests of this province are among 27 Jesuits to be ordained to the priesthood this year in the United States, Canada and Haiti. All five men will serve in pastoral ministry for at least the next year.

Special thanks to photographer Michael Burks
Jesuit ordinands Penn Dawson and Jason LaLonde; ordaining prelate The Most Rev. Terrence Prendergast, Archbishop of Ottawa; ordinands David Paternostro and Michael Wegenka. Back row: Fr. Provincial Ronald Mercier; Deacon Fernando Luis Barreto Mercado, who will be ordained July 28 in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Deacon Jean Bertin St Louis and Fr. Michael Harter, director of formation.
W. Penn Dawson, SJ, practiced as a trial lawyer in Tampa, Fla, for 23 years, before his local parish nominated him for the permanent deacon program in the diocese. While studying for the diaconate, it became apparent to him that he might have a vocation to religious life. Drawn to the Jesuits’ diversity of ministry, Dawson left the diaconate program and entered the Society of Jesus in 2009. As a novice, he worked with missionaries in Guyana, South America; lived in a L’Arche community in Mobile, Ala., and a homeless shelter in New York City; served as a volunteer chaplain at a juvenile detention center; and taught theology at Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, Mo. While studying philosophy at Loyola University Chicago, he also worked as a chaplain to a diverse population at Stroger-Cook County Hospital. He taught for three years at Loyola University New Orleans School of Law. He studied theology at Regis College at the University of Toronto, earning a Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Divinity degree. He serves on the board of trustees at Jesuit High School in Tampa. A native of Tampa, he attended the University of Florida in Gainesville and received a bachelor’s degree in history in 1984 and a law degree in 1987. Father Dawson’s first assignment as a priest will be in the Central American country of Belize.

Jason C. LaLonde, SJ, was born and raised in Lakeland, Fla. He experienced a call to the priesthood during his childhood but put discernment on hold during high school and college. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Florida State University in 2002, majoring in English and history. During college, he developed an interest in music and hosted an opera program on FSU’s public radio station. After graduation, he worked in arts administration for the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico for two seasons and for the Sarasota Opera in Florida for a year. He then earned an MBA at the University of Florida, while working in marketing. He entered the Society of Jesus in 2007. As a novice, he served in a village in El Salvador, assisting in the Jesuit parish and teaching English in an elementary school. Later, he taught English, Latin and Greek at Jesuit High School in New Orleans. He earned a master’s degree in philosophical resources at Fordham University in the Bronx, N.Y., and a Master of Divinity degree and is working toward a Licentiate in Sacred Theology at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. He served as a deacon at the South Boston-Seaport Catholic Collaborative, ministering at three churches. His first assignment as a priest will be at Immaculate Conception Church in Albuquerque, N.M.
David C. Paternostro, SJ, first heard the call to the priesthood while a student at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston. He attended Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, for one year before entering the Jesuit novitiate in Grand Coteau, La., in 2005. As a novice, he worked at St. Martin de Porres Parish in Belize City, Belize. In 2007, he enrolled at Fordham University in the Bronx, N.Y., earning both a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in philosophical research. During his years in New York he helped with the theater program at Cristo Rey High School. From 2011 to 2014, he taught and served as an assistant theater director at Jesuit High School in Tampa, Fla. Next missioned to the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, Calif., he completed a Master of Divinity degree and a Licentiate in Sacred Theology and set up the theater program at Immaculate Conception Academy in San Francisco. As a deacon, he served at Saint Mary Magdalen Parish in Berkeley.

Inspired by the Jesuits in his school, Michael J. Wegenka, SJ, began thinking about a vocation to the Society of Jesus during his junior year at Strake Jesuit College Preparatory in Houston. He entered the novitiate in Grand Coteau, La., directly out of high school in 2005. As a novice, he worked with the Franciscan sisters at Casa de Los Pobres, a community center and shelter in Tijuana, Mexico. Afterward, he completed a bachelor’s degree in English literature and philosophy at Fordham University and taught confirmation classes at St. Martin of Tours Parish in the Bronx, N.Y. He then taught theology and American and British literature in both the Girls and Boys Divisions of Regis Jesuit High School in Aurora, Colo. In 2014, he was missioned to the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, where he earned a Master of Divinity degree and worked as a deacon at Boston University’s Catholic Center. He is completing his theological studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and will receive a Licentiate in Sacred Theology this winter. Over the course of his formation, he has studied Spanish in Peru, attended World Youth Day in Poland and worked with Jesuits in Kyrgyzstan. After ordination, Fr. Wegenka will be assigned to St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Grand Coteau, La.

During his Jesuit formation, Paternostro studied Spanish in Managua, Nicaragua; learned French in Paris; and traveled with Tampa Jesuit High students to World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro. After ordination, Fr. Paternostro will be assigned to Immaculate Conception Parish in New Orleans.
Here to Learn:

El Paso Border Immersion Experience and the Grace of “Encounter”

Story and Photos by Claire Peterson
In the heart of El Paso’s Segundo Barrio neighborhood, at the United States – Mexico border, Sacred Heart Parish is a source of help and hope for its community. A Jesuit parish since its founding 125 years ago, Sacred Heart, or Parroquia Sagrado Corazón, is more than a religious home; it also provides programs for the immigrant community, a food bank and a weekend catering project. This March, it was a focal point for a border immersion experience, welcoming 18 Jesuit partners in mission who came to learn more about immigration and the experiences of people who seek to start new lives in the United States.

Father Rafael García, SJ, associate pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, and Mary Baudouin, USA Central and Southern (UCS) Province’s provincial assistant for social ministry, led the border immersion in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, March 15-18. The trip included four full days of opportunities to encounter migrants who have come to the United States seeking asylum, safety and stability, and to learn about organizations migrants encounter.

Participants traveled to El Paso from all over the UCS Province and beyond. Some were members of Jesuit parishes in Kansas City, Mo.; New Orleans, Saint Louis and San Antonio, Texas. Other participants were employees of Jesuit apostolates, including the Ignatian Solidarity Network, Loyola University and Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Two Jesuit novices who were ministering in El Paso also joined. Participants’ ages ranged from 22 to 81, which made for rich, intergenerational dialogue. The convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph, where the group stayed, provided a welcoming space to reflect each day.

The Spanish word for “encounter” – encuentro – translates to “discovery.” Indeed, immersion participants said their experiences on the trip revealed...
The Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI) in New Orleans seeks to transform the Gulf South by focusing on issues of race, poverty and migration. JSRI fellows aim to work at the intersections of these issues, supported by their rootedness in Catholic Social Teaching. This year, JSRI celebrates its tenth anniversary, and the staff looks forward to many more years of faith, action and solidarity.

Father Fred Kammer, SJ, a member of this province, has served as executive director and senior fellow of JSRI.

Jesuit Social Research Institute Celebrates 10 Years of Advocacy

The Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI) in New Orleans seeks to transform the Gulf South by focusing on issues of race, poverty and migration. JSRI fellows aim to work at the intersections of these issues, supported by their rootedness in Catholic Social Teaching. This year, JSRI celebrates its tenth anniversary, and the staff looks forward to many more years of faith, action and solidarity.

Father Fred Kammer, SJ, a member of this province, has served as executive director and senior fellow of JSRI.

Jesuit partners in mission "immersed" themselves in a border experience in El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

The deeper aspect of the word, as they not only encountered new facts and ideas, but also felt authentic connections, kindled by meeting people where they were on their journey.

While visiting the border wall between El Paso and Ciudad Juárez, participants met with a Border Patrol agent, whose perspective on migration was one of many the visitors would hear.

An attorney with Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services, Anna Hey presented on the challenges and myths of the immigration system. In El Paso, only about 2% of applicants are granted asylum, compared to the national average of 50%.

Hey noted, “Seeking asylum is not a crime, and denial in an asylum case can be a death sentence” when people are fleeing violence, threats, extortion, political instability and extreme poverty.

Across the border in Anapra, one of several impoverished neighborhoods in Juárez, the group toured a construction site where nearly 40 young volunteers from the community were helping to build sustainable, low-cost houses, and heard the testimonies of impoverished women with cancer at Centro Mujeres Tonantzin.

There are many unforeseen “problems that come from being a poor woman with cancer,” said one woman, such as access to chemotherapy, which is only accessible in the capital city four hours away. That requires the sick woman to arrange for child care, then pay the $70 bus fare just to make it to the treatment...
Participants visited the El Paso U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center where migrants are held while awaiting trial. Father García, who regularly provides pastoral care there, and Fr. Eddie Gros, pastor of Holy Name Parish, New Orleans, concelebrated two Masses for detainees.

Participants experienced how the combined community of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez accompanies those who are challenged by life on the border. The two cities, nestled together, separated only by a legal border, forever encounter each other. Many residents see one community, undivided by the border’s 18-foot steel fence.

Ruben García, director of Annunciation House, a hospitality home for migrants, said, “The world will no longer allow us to live in isolation.” It is imperative, García urged, that U.S. citizens see the nation’s “intimate relationship” with migrants, many who flee their home countries for reasons not unconnected to American foreign policy and the drug trade.

Father García and Mary Baudouin hope this immersion will be the first of many opportunities for encuentro at the border and reflection on moments of challenge, confusion, discomfort and joy. At the end of their stay, participants reflected on the call to welcome more radically all God’s people.

The border immersion experience was a collaboration between the USA Central and Southern Province and the Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI). JSRI is itself a collaboration between the UCS Province and Loyola University New Orleans. Based at the university, JSRI educates and advocates on issues of race, poverty and migration. Father García, who ministers to immigrants and refugees in El Paso, is an associate of JSRI.

since 2009. Father Kammer is a lawyer and the author of Doing FaithJustice: Introduction to Catholic Social Thought. JSRI lives its mission through action research, education and advocacy, embodying a faith that does justice. JSRI’s regular publications, JustSouth Quarterly and Monthly, and special reports like JustSouth Index 2017, push the boundaries of scholarly research, provide statistical analyses to support their advocacy, and allow the organization to disseminate its findings.

JSRI conducts educational “teach-ins” pertaining to specific topics within the issues of race, poverty and migration. The teach-ins are opportunities for attendees, whether college students, parishioners or community leaders, to encounter these issues through personal testimony by those who have lived the reality. The fellows collaborate with groups at the national, state and local levels, draft legislation and testify for and against bills. Additionally, JSRI sends Action Alerts to inform citizens when they might contact their public officials to advocate on specific issues.

A woman describes the challenges of “being a poor woman with cancer” navigating a broken healthcare system.
From the beginning to the end of life and everything in between, diocesan priests are expected to be able to handle every situation.

Their undergraduate work prepares them well in a liberal arts curriculum. The seminary grounds them well in theology and as spiritual and sacramental leaders.

But tending to the spiritual needs of a parish community is just one part of the job of a priest, and learning is far from over at ordination. Certain skills make up core competencies for those in leadership positions, including diocesan priests, like running committees, leading fundraising efforts, responding to specific issues, and even hiring the right team. The experience of being in charge of a spiritual organization is, in these ways, more complex in practice than in theory.

Those lessons sometimes come as a surprise, according to the Fr. Justin Hoye, pastor of Kansas City’s St. Thomas More Parish and the director of priestly life and ministry for the Kansas City-St. Joseph Catholic Diocese.

“There is an understanding that priests will simply pick up the management skills they need, that they will learn as they go along,” he said. “But there’s a need for development of those skills in addition to the spiritual development that we continue to go through after ordination.”

There’s a lot to be said for on-the-job training. But Fr. Hoye said it is also important to give priests entering the leadership phase of their formation — a critical time when they are preparing to take over as associate pastors.
and pastors — a chance to learn from experts in the various fields of administration, from bookkeeping to human resources, in an environment that includes their own peers.

Before he was named director of priestly life and ministry, Fr. Hoye said conversations were already underway among leadership at the Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocese about developing a program that could be part of a longer schedule of formation activities to assist priests with additional education in the kind of earthly matters that come with pastoral responsibilities.

Father William Oulvey, SJ, former associate director of mission and ministry at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, recommended the university’s Helzberg School of Management for such a program.

Myles Gartland, Ph.D., director of graduate business programs for the Helzberg School of Management, said the school was happy to serve as the host, adding that the expertise the nationally recognized faculty and experience-rich alumni network of the school was able to bring to the table made them natural partners for the diocese.

“There’s a certain structure that the Helzberg School is able to bring to a program like this — shaping leaders able to take on every challenge — this is definitely in our skillset,” he said.

Gartland said the program is a manifestation of the spirit of collaboration. Rockhurst University is located within the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, but he said sometimes they feel like different worlds. The leadership formation program both assists the priests of the diocese of which the Jesuit university is a part and brings the two worlds closer together.

“This is truly a partnership,” he said. “A lot of the priests in the program don’t have regular contact with the Jesuit community here. So, one of the other benefits of offering a sustainable, ongoing program is opening up those channels, strengthening some of those connections.”
Moreover, Gartland said he sees the program as a form of service to the diocese. He regards Rockhurst University, as a Jesuit educational institution, as uniquely positioned to give priests an overview of skills in the liberal arts tradition. In other words, it’s a great fit for an institution that seeks to form lifelong leaders.

The Helzberg School of Management and the diocese invited the first cohort of priests to participate in the program in 2017. Over the course of nine sessions in as many months, the 13 priests in that first group learned about everything from how to balance the books to how to communicate with community stakeholders and the public, even how to approach human resource issues like hiring and terminating employees — all skills the students could apply immediately.

During its inaugural year, the 13 participants came from all ages and were at different stages of the formation process — some had been ordained for close to a decade, others were relatively young and in the midst of their first assignments. For the second round of the program, Fr. Hoye said the experience was tweaked, recruiting those clergy in a similar stage in their formation — approximately three years after their ordination. There are reasons for that choice.

“Three years into the priesthood, we think, is kind of a sweet spot in their formation when the sessions are relevant,” Fr. Hoye said. “Earlier than that, you might not know the questions to ask. After being out for a couple of years, you have some exposure and some awareness of what you want to work on.

“The vast majority of the priests in the program this year are just beginning to cut their teeth on having administrative responsibilities,” he continued. “So everyone is essentially on the same page, the same place in their formation, having the same conversations.”

Throughout the year, the small group of priests gathers once a month to talk, roundtable-style, with both faculty and experts on a given topic, chosen to lead the discussions. Gartland said the sessions fit somewhere between traditional academic lecture and free discussion, rooted in the Jesuit tradition of “Ignatian conversation.”

“We make it as applicable and practical as possible, and encourage that back and forth discussion,” Gartland said. “The priests are very, very hungry for the knowledge, and the discussion allows the group to benchmark with each other.

“We even had them bring in their financial books from their parishes for part of the class,” he added. “This is an opportunity to talk about how a particular subject is lived out in their particular ministry.”

Isn’t managing a parish different than leading something like a corporation? Not as much as one might think. After his ordination, Fr. Leonard Gicheru, parochial administrator at St. Monica’s Catholic Church in Kansas City, said he was eager to begin serving a faith community. But he admits he didn’t realize the exact scope of that mission.

“I was serving as part of the pastoral council, the parish council and the finance council,” he said. “And meetings were sometimes a challenge, because I didn’t know the best way to run one — how to prepare beforehand, why it’s important to stick to the time limit for the meeting, things like that.”

Ellen Martin leads a discussion of human resources with students in the priest formation leadership program at Rockhurst University.

Father Gabe Lickteig, a recent graduate of Rockhurst’s leadership program, at his parish, St. Thomas More, in Kansas City.
It was knowledge from the Rockhurst program that Gicheru said he was able to put into practice right away. It might seem simple, but it has made all the difference. It's a common theme among the students in the course. And it makes sense to Gartland.

“Nobody gets into a vocation, whether it’s academia or health care or the priesthood, wanting to necessarily do all the other stuff you have to do (like administration),” he said. “We did it for another greater purpose.”

The other, non-pastoral tasks involved in leading a church can be the stressful part. Fr. Gicheru said the responsibilities start piling up, and it can cause burnout.

“It’s one thing to be formed in the spiritual side of the priesthood, but when you get here, you find how much of your time is taken up with the management side,” he said. “It’s the management that wears you down. You never hear of priests stepping down because they don’t know how to baptize.”

Fr. Gicheru said the leadership formation program also showed him he didn’t need to do it all — at least not alone.

“I’ve really empowered my staff,” he said. “Instead of looking at them as people who do things for me, my approach has been a little bit different – I’ve let them know that I’m part of them, and we are working as a team.”

Father Gabe Lickteig, from the most recent cohort, underlined how important that lesson was to him, as well. In the last class session, the priests drew cartoons to illustrate the value of looking to others to find solutions.

“This class definitely opens my eyes to that, to finding people that you trust, that have the same mission,” he said. “You put yourself in a position to be successful by having people around you that you know you can trust.”

Since completing the course, Fr. Gicheru said he still brings out his notes from time to time and considers ways to build on what he’s learned.

“I’ve considered going back and taking some more management courses,” he said. “The class really showed me how much more there is to learn out there.”

The priests have grown to learn from each other, as well. According to Fr. Hoye, it’s not always easy to admit that you have shortcomings as a manager or an administrator. But having a group of peers with such a strong bond has allowed the lessons learned in the classroom to continue.

“We have continued the friendship, and that’s been helpful for everyone, I think,” Fr. Gicheru said. “Having that group there, we formed some strong bonds.”

The gift of new perspectives, of being able to look at peers in a different and new way, has been one of the most lasting and satisfying effects of the leadership formation course. Father Curt Vogel, a member of the most recent cohort, was able to connect the lessons learned to his spiritual life.

“It’s interesting how you read about these saints who were priests and their extraordinary and ordinary lives and, on a certain level, how complicated life is sometimes for a priest, how many hats we have to wear and how many different areas of responsibilities we have to respond to,” he said. “There are challenges there, but moments to realize that God is present in everything that we have to do as priests. We know that we’re going to get what we need from God to do that.”

In being able to connect the everyday challenges to the ongoing spiritual work of leading a parish, Father Joshua Barlett, of the most recent cohort, said he came to realize that his vocation includes all of it, and that being a better servant of God means serving well in all of his capacities — in Jesuit parlance, one might call it cura personalis. It definitely gives him a motivation and a renewed sense of purpose moving forward.

“Not only do I feel more equipped with those tools on the administrative side, but there’s a certain excitement to get into it now and start trying some of these things,” Fr. Barlett said. “It’s almost like another ordination on the other side of the priesthood that you get to explore.”

Contributor Tim Linn works at Rockhurst University.
Father William Hutchison, SJ, taught as a professor of social work at Saint Louis University for more than 30 years, undoubtedly making an impact on this world far beyond his numerous students. But it’s what he did outside the classroom that may leave his most lasting mark on the community of St. Louis.

After he finished theology studies and was ordained in 1966, Fr. Hutchison went to the University of Michigan for his doctorate in social work and sociology, prompted in part by his early experience working for civil rights. Doctorate in hand, he returned to his hometown in 1972 to teach in the School of Social Work at Saint Louis University. Rather than live at the on-campus Jesuit residence, he chose to live at St. Matthew’s, the Jesuit parish in the Ville Neighborhood, one of the first African-American communities in the highly segregated city of St. Louis.

The needs of the neighborhood were many, so he called on community members to find out what they saw as the priorities. And he listened. Hearing that senior citizens needed food assistance, he worked with his community to establish in 1973 a lunch program for low-income seniors, serving a second meal in the parish school cafeteria after the students had eaten. Later, they began delivering meals and providing activities for seniors, and the Northside Community Center (NCC) was born.

In time, the Northside Community Center began applying for and receiving grants to renovate homes and apartment buildings in the neighborhood. One of the early projects was a $1 million renovation of the former St. Matthew’s School into 20 apartment units for low-income seniors. The housing program became a separate nonprofit, Northside Community Housing, Inc., in 2003. Since its first project in 1977, it has renovated or developed at least 180 houses and apartments for low-income individuals and families.

Former St. Matthew’s Pastor Fr. Mark McKenzie, SJ, explains that for Fr. Hutchison, the “first thing is to listen. And to ask, ‘What do you need?’” As Fr. Hutchison continued to listen, the NCC began providing programs for young people, including tutoring and athletics. Northside Community Housing continues to flourish on the northside of St. Louis, and at 83, Fr. Hutchison remains a member of its board of directors.

“All my life, I have been involved in working for civil rights,” Fr. Hutchison said, noting that growing up in St. Louis, he was troubled by the racial injustice of segregation. While a student at Saint Louis University, he was inspired by the late Msgr. John Shocklee, a leader in the civil rights movement in St. Louis, and learned how to work for justice.

As a young Jesuit in philosophy studies in the late 1950s, he worked for the Congress for Racial Equality and participated in sit-ins alongside African Americans. During theology studies in Kansas, he lobbied the state legislature for fair housing and voting rights laws. And he chose to live in a predominantly African-American neighborhood and set out to become part of it – not a leader, but a member of the community.

While he sees improvements in civil rights today, he believes people, including Jesuits, must continue to work for racial equality. He cites Loyola Academy of St. Louis, a middle school for low-income students on the northside of St. Louis, as one way the Ignatian family can promote social justice.

When asked if his inclusive approach to neighborhood revitalization was ahead of its time, Fr. Hutchison offers just a hint of a smile as he replies, “Not ahead of its time. It was on time.”
Matthew Baugh, SJ: Living an Enthusiastic Yes!

How does a young man from Casa, Arkansas, population 179, wind up a Jesuit? By way of Oxford, of course!

Matthew Baugh, SJ, went to Oxford University on a Rhodes Scholarship after graduating from Duke University with a degree in international development. He met the Jesuits who served as chaplains there, and one introduced him to Jesuit saints in spiritual direction: men like Edmund Campion and Aloysius Gonzaga. The encounter proved decisive for Baugh, coming at a time when he could sense the Lord opening up new horizons.

“I was 22 years old before I had any inkling of a vocation,” Baugh says. “In my senior year, I had felt the Lord calling me deeper into prayer. When I got to Oxford and began going to evening prayer in our medieval chapel, I was overwhelmed by – astounded by – the beauty of the Faith.”

At the suggestion of his spiritual director, Baugh went on a silent retreat at an ancient Benedictine monastery, where a comic mix-up served to clarify his discernment. Upon arrival, he was mistaken for a young man coming to enter the monastery and was promptly shown to a bare cell with nothing in it but a wood-plank bed, desk, chair and crucifix.

“The sight of that room is seared in my memory!” he said. “In the moment, it didn’t strike me as austere so much as wide open. It’s as if part of me saw this beautiful thing and leapt forward before I even knew what ‘it’ was. Only later did I learn what was being asked.”

At the end of his time in England, Baugh returned to the U.S. to attend law school at Yale while finishing up his doctorate in international relations from Oxford. Halfway through the three-year degree, his vocation to the Jesuits became clear, and he went on a discernment retreat in Grand Coteau, La. With his decision confirmed, he felt a real sense of joy.

He entered the former New Orleans Province in August 2007 and pronounced first vows two years later. He studied philosophy at the University of Toronto, then taught politics and law at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Ala. He loved his three years at Spring Hill and found special satisfaction the final year, when he lived in student housing. “It’s a whole new opportunity for ministry,” he said. “In the dorm, students would come to my apartment late at night, when they’re most ready to talk. Conversations were deep. It was a real grace.”

This fall, Baugh will begin the final of three years of theology studies at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. Last year, he directed the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) program at Boston University. Seven people became full members of the Catholic Church, including a Muslim, a Buddhist and a Jew.

“They were an extraordinary group from such widely different backgrounds, and they received baptism with such childlike joy,” Baugh observed, with clear delight of his own.

He will continue the RCIA ministry next year. After his diaconate ordination in September, he will add preaching to his responsibilities at the vibrant Catholic Center at B.U. His coursework is mostly complete, so he will focus on writing his thesis on Catholicity and the university.

“Every university, by virtue of its mission, has to be catholic, with a lower-case C. I want to study what it means for an education to be Catholic in the fullest sense.”

Ironically, Baugh never attended a Catholic school until he began theology studies, but he embodies their mission in his living-out of the Gospel and enthusiastic sharing of the Faith.
Father J. David Corrigan, SJ
March 6, 2018
Father David Corrigan, SJ, was 83 years old, a Jesuit for 65 years and a priest for 52 years when he died in St. Louis on March 6. He had a heart for pastoral ministry and served in a variety of locations as pastor, assistant pastor or as chaplain or pastoral minister. At one point he was chaplain or pastoral minister at three places at the same time. He continued celebrating Mass, frequently at a retirement community, even after being missioned to the Fusz Pavilion in St. Louis. His rich, mellow, deep voice resonated while preaching, one of his joys in ministry.

Father Charles A. Leininger, SJ
March 10, 2018
Father Charles A. (C.A.) Leininger was in his 78th year as a Jesuit when he died in Dallas, still an active member of his Jesuit community. He was 93 years old and a priest for 64 years. His twin brother, Joseph B. (J.B.) Leininger, was also a Jesuit; the two are now buried in adjacent plots in the Jesuit cemetery in Grand Coteau, La.

A simple chronology of assignments cannot capture the service that Fr. Leininger offered to the Society of Jesus. His organization, clear thinking and attention to detail led to his being tagged for administration very early in his Jesuit life. He was a principal or assistant principal for a total of 19 years at four different high schools. He served as executive assistant to the provincial twice. He loved art and demonstrated real ability. However, his true love was the high school classroom, and it was with relief and joy that he took up his mission when sent to Jesuit College Preparatory School in Dallas in 1981. He simply loved teaching and frequently professed his desire to continue there as long as he possibly could. He was still on staff at the time of his death.

Father Edward P. Buvens, SJ
March 27, 2018
Father Ed Buvens is remembered by his Jesuit brothers for his big heart, tremendous enthusiasm and willingness to do whatever he was called to do, always putting the needs of others first. He was 83 years old, a Jesuit for 60 years and a priest for 48 years when he died in Grand Coteau, La.

Trained in social work and public health, he served in a variety of ministries, but two are especially noteworthy. As a member of the former New Orleans Province staff, he was the provincial’s delegate to the Jesuits working in diocesan parishes or as hospital chaplains, often in remote areas away from Jesuit communities. He visited each man, always taking time to get a sense of the particular work the man was doing, then he would write up detailed reports of each visit. These reports are often the only record of what was sometimes many years of a fruitful ministry.

He was called to another extraordinary ministry three months after he became superior at Ignatius Residence, a community for senior Jesuits in New Orleans, when Hurricane Katrina forced the evacuation of New Orleans in August 2005. Father Buvens was responsible for the evacuation of the Jesuit community. He moved with the largest number of them to Shreveport, where he administered a program “in exile” until it was safe to return to New Orleans.

Full obituaries are available on the province website: www.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/in-memoriam.
An Easy Gift to Make
A charitable bequest is a donation written in a will or trust that directs a gift to be made to a qualified exempt charity upon death. One benefit of a charitable bequest is that it enables donors to further the good work of an organization they support long after they are gone. Better yet, a charitable bequest can help save estate taxes by providing an estate with a charitable deduction for the value of the gift. With careful planning, families also can avoid paying income taxes on the assets received from an estate.

Learn more about a charitable bequest and other gift planning ideas. Send us a note in the envelope in this magazine or contact us online at:

jesuitscentralssouthern.org/supportus
“From the barrios in the Dominican Republic to the outskirts of Taiwan, the Lord has been very generous in pouring his grace and love during all these years of formation, made possible by the support and prayers of the people of God. With a grateful heart, prayers are promised and requested.”

~ Fernando Luis Barreto Mercado, SJ, to be ordained a priest July 28, 2018