



# JESUITS

Central and Southern

Special Edition

## A Superior Visit:

The Province Welcomes Superior General  
Arturo Sosa Abascal, SJ





## Message from the Provincial

Dear Friends,

Peace of Christ!

The visit of Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, to the U.S. Central and Southern (UCS) Province was a moment of grace for all of us. Although it was filled to the brim with meetings, meals, Masses, conversations and presentations, all the effort was worthwhile when I saw how much Jesuits, our lay colleagues, and those to whom we minister enjoyed being in Fr. General's presence. I was struck by how much it meant to them and how generously Fr. General responded with care-filled attention and warm words of guidance and encouragement.

As I look back at the trip, I think that one of his biggest impressions of the UCS Province was its diversity, as we traveled from mile-high Denver to below-sea-level New Orleans, from snowy and frigid St. Louis to sunny and balmy Belize, from the vibrant culture of Puerto Rico to the booming population of Houston – including cities old and young, languages from Spanish to English to Garifuna, and ministries ranging from schools to parishes to work with migrants. Uniting this far-flung and varied province, however, is a common faith and a common dedication to our mission – which, as Fr. General reminded us, is not the Society's, but rather Jesus's.

I cannot pass up the opportunity to thank all those who made this visit so successful. I am grateful to my brother Jesuits for welcoming Fr. General and engaging him in prayer and conversation. I am grateful to the leaders of our apostolates, including some of our students, for hosting him and discussing matters of significance with each other, for which his presence provided a unique opportunity. And I am grateful to our friends and benefactors for their support – especially John and Angela Schmidt, whose generous help with transportation made the trip a hundred times easier than it would have been.

In Christ,

Thomas P. Greene, SJ  
Provincial

Queridos amigos:

¡La paz de Cristo!

La visita del P. Arturo Sosa, SJ, Superior General de la Compañía de Jesús, a la Provincia Central y del Sur de Estados Unidos (UCS) fue un momento de gracia para todos nosotros. Aunque estuvo repleta de reuniones, comidas, misas, conversaciones y presentaciones, todo el esfuerzo valió la pena cuando vi cuánto disfrutaban los jesuitas, nuestros colegas laicos y aquellos a quienes atendemos de estar en presencia del P. General. Me llamó la atención lo mucho que significaba para ellos y cuán generosamente respondió el P. General con una atención llena de cariño y cálidas palabras de orientación y aliento.

Al recordar el viaje, creo que una de sus mayores impresiones de la Provincia UCS fue su diversidad, ya que viajamos desde Denver, a una milla de altura, hasta Nueva Orleans, por debajo del nivel del mar; desde la nevada y gélida St. Louis hasta la soleada y templada Belice; desde la vibrante cultura de Puerto Rico hasta la floreciente población de Houston – incluyendo ciudades antiguas y jóvenes, idiomas que van del español al inglés y al garífuna, y ministerios que van desde escuelas hasta parroquias y trabajo con migrantes. Sin embargo, lo que une a esta provincia tan extensa y variada es una fe común y una dedicación común a nuestra misión, la cual, como nos recordó el P. General, no es de la Compañía, sino de Jesús.

No puedo dejar pasar la oportunidad de agradecer a todos aquellos que hicieron que esta visita fuera tan exitosa. Estoy agradecido a mis hermanos jesuitas por dar la bienvenida al P. General e involucrarlo en la oración y la conversación. Agradezco a los líderes de nuestros apostolados, incluidos algunos de nuestros estudiantes, por recibirlo y discutir asuntos de importancia entre ellos, para lo cual su presencia brindó una oportunidad única. Y agradezco a nuestros amigos y benefactores por su apoyo, especialmente a John y Angela Schmidt, cuya generosa ayuda con el transporte hizo que el viaje fuera cien veces más fácil de lo que hubiera sido.

En Cristo,

Thomas P. Greene, SJ  
Provincial



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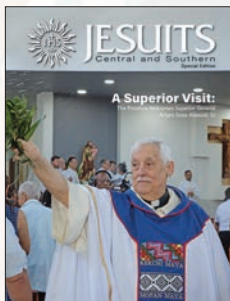
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Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, blesses the newly renovated Fordyce Chapel at St. John's College in Belize City, Belize.

## Province Welcomes Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ

The Jesuits and colleagues of the USA Central and Southern (UCS) Province welcomed Superior General Arturo Sosa Abascal, SJ, for an informal “family visit,” January 26 through February 12, 2026.

Father Sosa stopped in six cities of the province: Denver, St. Louis, Houston, New Orleans, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Belize City, Belize. In each location, he listened as much as he spoke while he met with leaders of the local apostolates and spent time with the Jesuits of the region – celebrating the Eucharist, giving talks and answering questions. He also met with the bishop or his delegate in each diocese he visited and spent five days with the provincials of the Jesuit provinces in Canada and the United States.

His homilies and talks in each place centered on reconciliation and returned frequently to five topics:

- the universality of the Society of Jesus
- the confirmation of the Jesuit charism
- the service of justice, specifically the Jesuit mission to the frontiers
- collaboration for mission
- the role of the local superior.

Father Sosa was accompanied on his journey by Fr. Provincial Thomas P. Greene, SJ; Fr. Douglas W. Marcouiller, SJ, general counselor and regional assistant for Canada and the USA; Fr. Steven A. Schoenig, SJ, province socius; and Fr. Vernon A. D’Cunha, SJ, regional assistant for south Asia.

A Venezuelan, Father Sosa was elected the 31st Superior General of the Society of Jesus at the Jesuits’ General Congregation 36 in Rome on October 14, 2016.





Jesuit novices receive the special privilege of hearing the Superior General of the Society of Jesus reminisce about his own novitiate days.



# DENVER

JANUARY 26-28



Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, appropriately began his visit to the province in the same place Jesuits entering the USA Central and Southern Province begin: at the Novitiate of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Denver. When asked what advice he would have for novices, his answer was simple: "Pray!" Observing for themselves the fruits of the General's life as a man of prayer was inspiring for the novices, as they seek to make these habits their own.

Later in the day, Fr. Sosa met with area Jesuits and apostolic leaders, where they discussed the challenges in carrying out the Jesuit mission in a secularized culture.



Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ (front row, center), poses with the future of the USA Central and Southern Province at the Novitiate of St. Stanislaus Kostka. Several of the novices grew mustaches in honor of Fr. Sosa during their 30-day Spiritual Exercises retreat, which they had just completed before his visit.



Father Sosa meets with leadership at Regis University in Denver, including Fr. D. Scott Hendrickson, SJ, and Board Chair Derek Scarth.

# ST. LOUIS

## JANUARY 28-30



Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, greets Fr. Baudilio Guzmán Mercado at St. Ignatius Hall in St. Louis.



Father Sosa encourages the senior Jesuits at St. Ignatius Hall to pray for the Church in Africa.



Father Sosa's second stop was St. Louis, the seat of the province and home to its largest number of Jesuits.

While meeting with senior Jesuits at St. Ignatius Hall, Fr. Sosa encouraged them to pray for the canonization of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus from 1965 to 1983. He said the Society of Jesus of today is Fr. Arrupe's "miracle," because of the leadership he showed during a challenging period in the Church's history.

In conversation with Jesuits in formation from around the United States, Canada and the Caribbean who are studying at Saint Louis University, Fr. Sosa urged them to act as reconcilers in the polarized society in which we live.

He charged both groups to heed Pope Leo XIV's message of peace: "This is our mission today."

On January 30, Fr. Sosa listened to students at Loyola Academy of St. Louis, a school for underserved upper-elementary and middle school boys, as they spoke of why they value their Jesuit education. Later that day, Jesuits and lay partners from apostolates across the area related how they collaborate for their shared mission.



Superior General Arturo Sosa enjoys a casual conversation with the Jesuits in first studies at the Bellarmine House of Studies.



Loyola Academy students demonstrate tremendous poise and sincerity while sharing with the Superior General why their school means so much to them.



# HOUSTON

JANUARY 30 – FEBRUARY 1

In Houston, Fr. Sosa received the final vows of Fr. Randall S. Gibbens, SJ, president of Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory, during an all-school Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on January 30. He then listened to presentations by Cristo Rey and Strake Jesuit College Preparatory students on how their Jesuit education forms them to engage with the world beyond their schools. In his conversation with the students, he emphasized hope. "The bare minimum," he said, "is for all of us to bring hope to our world. We need to be agents of hope."

In addition to meeting with apostolic leaders, Fr. Sosa spent time with province consultors and with Jesuits working on the United States-Mexico border. Father Sosa has written about the Society of Jesus being "uniquely suited" to respond to the cries of migrants around the world.



Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, receives the final vows of Fr. Randy Gibbens, SJ, on January 30, 2026, in Houston.



Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ (center), enjoys his time with students from Strake Jesuit College Preparatory and Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory of Houston, as well as the two schools' presidents, Fr. Jeff Johnson, SJ (left) and Fr. Randy Gibbens, SJ.



Fr. W. Penn Dawson, SJ, professes final vows in the Society of Jesus on February 2, 2026; Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, receives his vows.



# NEW ORLEANS

FEBRUARY 1-3

In New Orleans, Fr. Sosa received the final vows of Fr. W. Penn Dawson, SJ, in the Holy Name Chapel at Jesuit High School. Father Dawson is the local superior and an assistant professor of law and campus minister at Loyola University.

Father Sosa visited the Harry Tompson Center, which provides services to people without housing, where he chatted and prayed with guests. He also met with staff at the Loyola University immigration law clinic and the Jesuit Social Research Institute, where he showed genuine, enthusiastic interest in their work and emphasized the Society's deep commitment to social justice, education and service to immigrant communities.

His meeting with other apostolic leaders focused on how they maintain the Jesuit character of an apostolic work in changing times.



Father Sosa prays with a guest at the Harry Tompson Center who approached the Superior General as he toured the Center in New Orleans.



Mary Baudouin, provincial assistant for justice and ecology (left), and Emily Bussen Wain, Harry Tompson Center executive director, provide background on the Center to Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ.



Father Sosa listens closely as Audrey Hughes, direct services assistant at the Harry Tompson Center, describes the services guests access at the Center. Eva Sohl, HTC assistant director, is in the center.



College students Luis Colón and Adam Torres (left) join Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, and Jesuit Frs. Gabi Cedeño and Fernando Luis Barreto Mercado as they prepare for Mass at the Centro Universitario Católico in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



Jesuit regent Reynaldo Belfort Pierrilus has been instrumental in revitalizing the Centro Universitario Católico.

# SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO

FEBRUARY 3-5

Father Sosa's first stop in San Juan, Puerto Rico, was the Centro Universitario Católico (CUC) on the campus of the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras, where he listened to presentations by students and celebrated Mass. Since its founding, the CUC has served as a space of fellowship and spiritual formation for university students and young professionals. Later, the focus remained on young people as area leaders discussed how to engage them in matters of faith and contemporary issues.



Superior General Arturo Sosa with the college students who gave presentations on what a hope-filled future means to them. Left to right: Myrllam Vargas Tavares, Viviana Rodríguez Arzuaga, Fr. Sosa and Simonely Hidalgo Rodríguez.

In Belize, Fr. Sosa visited St. Martin de Porres Parish and St. John's College in Belize City and St. Peter Claver Parish in Punta Gorda. A highlight was a Mass in Fordyce Chapel, the spiritual heart of St. John's College, which celebrated the 175th anniversary of the Jesuit presence in Belize and the blessing of the newly renovated chapel.

In the Toledo District of southern Belize, Fr. Sosa presided at a Mass at St. Peter Claver Parish, which serves a network of 31 rural and Indigenous village churches. The liturgy highlighted the living faith of the Maya and Garifuna peoples and incorporated elements of significance to the local cultures, including drums and incense.

The presence of the Superior General underscored the unity of the Society of Jesus across cultures and continents and affirmed the importance of mission carried out in humility, closeness to the people and fidelity to the Gospel.

# BELIZE

February 5-12



St. John's College President Mirtha Alice Peralta lights a candle during the blessing of the school's chapel.



Father Provincial Tom Greene, SJ (left), and Fr. Brian Christopher, SJ, local Jesuit superior, concelebrate Mass with Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ.



The censer and the incense burned during the Mass at St. John's College have their roots in Maya custom.



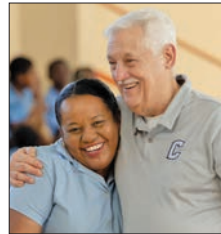
Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, is warmly welcomed at St. Peter Claver Parish in Punta Gorda, Belize. Left to right, back row: Pastor Matt Ruhl, SJ, Leticia Chee, Fr. Sosa, Elton Ranguy, N'Gaii Card and Claret Sanchez. In the front are Humbelina Tush and Olive Woodye.



# IN GRATITUDE

In thanking the Jesuits of the USA Central and Southern Province for the warm welcome he received, Fr. Sosa mentioned that his individual encounters with Jesuits and companions in mission filled him with gratitude for *tanto bien recibido* – for great love shown in word and action. In return, we are grateful to Father Sosa for his servant-leadership, time and presence with us in our province, and we join his prayer:

*May the prayers of  
Madonna della Strada obtain  
for us the grace to remain  
close to Jesus.*



Superior General Sosa meets with the Jesuits of Del Camino Jesuit Border Ministries, who provide pastoral and sacramental care to migrants.



Father Sosa greets senior Jesuits at St. Ignatius Hall in St. Louis. Left to right: Br. Don Schlichter, SJ, Fr. Richard Hadel, SJ, and Fr. Robert Hagan, SJ.



Father W. Penn Dawson, SJ, signs his final vows formula at Jesuit High School in New Orleans.



Superior General Arturo Sosa visits a classroom at St. Peter Claver School in Punta Gorda, Belize.





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# PRAYER | RECONCILIATION | PEACE



Superior General Arturo Sosa Abascal, SJ, encourages Jesuits in formation to make their relationship with Jesus the foundation of their lives. "We cannot lead the way if we are not close to Christ." He urges all Jesuits to be agents of peace and reconciliation, to pray and to remain faithful to their vows.



**This is the future of the Society of Jesus.  
This is the future of our province.**

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