

# SIGNS OF HEALING IN THE TIME OF ECOLOGY



# SIGNS OF HEALING IN THE TIME OF ECOLOGY TODAY'S CREATION

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On different occasions I have been asked how such a document as *Healing a Broken World* came to be written. It was a very valuable experience for me as a member of the task force and in reflecting more deeply on it and sharing process. It also helped me listen to others in seeking new ways to address old problems and most of all establish a process of beginning with gratitude. I will seek here to be relevant to initiatives concerning environmental sustainability in light of our mission and identity as Jesuit people; specifically the intersection of your shared mission and environmental concern, a commitment to justice and reverence and respect for all forms of life.<sup>1</sup>

I present here the document's content and something of what went into it. Then I talk about some of the activities that are emerging and some of the needs, from the limitations of my context and experience.

## **I. AN INTRODUCTION TO *HEALING A BROKEN WORLD***

*Healing a Broken World* is a translation of GC35's Mission and Ecology for "Jesuit people". The document tries to get at the needed vision and relations of today, the work context and ecological crisis, and then gives a clear set of recommendations. It is not intended to be a theological exposé. The document gives spirit, as in *animus*; it seeks to truly animate a vision and context, which for reflective people elicits commitment. Thus it does not go into the details of orienting institutions or capacity, rather it delivers a set of recommendations that we can choose to act upon strategically. It assumes the ability to read the signs of the times and to connect a life of service with the suffering servant and the salvation of all. It is an invitation to go beyond turmoil, and look for human integrity.

*“We recognize the wounded and broken world and humbly acknowledge our part; yet this is an invitation to respond, to be a healing presence full of care and dignity in places where the truth and joy of life are (otherwise) diminishing.”<sup>2</sup>*

The vision calls for a deepening of our faith experience: our world is full of paradoxes and confusion, but in hope and trust we progress, encouraging others to take action. The document proposes specific ways to integrate concern for ecology into all Jesuit ministries, as well as suggests action plans with an inter-disciplinary approach. The effort is to seek synergy with where we are and reform our learnings and actions to be transformative. These plans focus on areas where the Society can apply its distinctive strengths, particularly on issues and aspects of global and international importance.

It uses the framework of ‘See, Judge and Act.’ To “see” is to engage and have empathy with those caught in the turmoil of our global ecology, to grapple with regional assessments and to acknowledge global tendencies and the role of science and technology. “Judging” here is not about right or wrong, but about the Ignatian way of deciding – discerning – where there must be continuous analysis, reflection and evaluation. The dimensions of creation, faith, justice and inter-religious and cultural dialogue all come together in the mission of reconciliation with God, neighbor and the environment. With such articulated insight and commitment comes the challenge of seeking where and how best to “Act.”

The recommendations may appear generic or expected. You might ask: why all the palaver of a task force? The principles are worth reviewing, the different levels of governance and the diverse, yet coherent goals, all make for a workable strategy. The first three recommendations are basically provincial level; the next four are Conference level and the last one universal. They are simple, but strategic, anything but random.

Eight people from around the world gathered to deliberate on the matter. We were very diverse in our commitments yet clear that the environmental degradation we were seeing needed to be reversed. Others were involved in the process, and we received responses from 159 people. I am still shaken that we could have had such a global reflection and recommendations; even with all the prayers and intercessions, I am still surprised that the Holy Spirit could pull this off.

Let us look at these ACTIONS:

1. Jesuit communities and apostolic works are invited to **discern the management of our own institutions** and to exchange and **develop practices** for more ecologically sustainable lifestyles in our communities
2. All Jesuits and partners in mission are invited to **address the effects of the environmental crisis on the poor**, marginalized and Indigenous Peoples
3. Those in charge of communication and media are invited to **develop ways of increasing the awareness and motivation** for action among Jesuits and all those involved in various apostolic ministries.
4. Jesuit higher education institutions, theological faculties, business schools, research and capacity-building centres are invited to **engage students in transformative education** and to explore new themes and areas of **interdisciplinary research**.
5. Centres of theological reflection, spirituality, social and pastoral works are invited to **develop the spiritual sources motivating our commitment and fostering our celebration of creation**.
6. The governance structures of the society are invited to **review our Jesuit formation** in the light of environmental concerns.
7. All conferences are invited to explicitly **include** the theme of **ecology in their apostolic plans**.
8. The central government of the society is invited to develop a mechanism, which can help Fr. General to **follow up and evaluate implementation of the GC35 mandate to establish right relationships with creation** as expressed in these recommendations.

I give comment on these later, let us first look at the making of the document.

## II. WHAT WENT INTO THE “HEALING” DOCUMENT

### WHERE DOES THE INSPIRATION OF THIS DOCUMENT COME FROM WITHIN THE SOCIETY?

Part of it comes from the needless destruction of life we see and the suffering of people in degrading landscapes. Part of it is in holding onto that one adage for centuries of “finding God in all things” and a few simple reflections of Ignatius on creation through which we can experience the deep consolation of knowing the Creator. Ignatius drew this from the mysticism of his times, the end of the medieval era. For many of us, finding ‘God in all things’ often means adding our own views rather than experiencing God’s hidden presence. A few Jesuit poets have the gift of keeping this alive as a reflection of the world “charged with the grandeur of God”<sup>3</sup> and a few science teachers who dared to engage both intellect and passion in class outings.

This adage needs to become a way of life “a contemplation in action” for all Jesuit people deep down in the turmoil of our hearts. It has given great solace to many and is now renewing our commitment to justice and our sense of reverence and respect for all forms of life and the land itself—“*Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.*”<sup>4</sup>

Suddenly environmental sustainability in light of our mission and identity as Jesuit and Catholic higher education takes on a deeply human and mystical experience intersecting with science and policy, behavior and action, and our shared mission and environmental concern.

It is no surprise that this document was a long time in the making.

The Society gave the first institutional expression of universal concern for the environment in saying: “Lack of respect for a loving Creator leads to a denial of the dignity of the human person and the wanton destruction of the environment.”<sup>5</sup>

The GC34 discourse moves for companionship with Christ in a geographic and time focused discussion of mission. There were concerns raised and recommendations made:

- of spirituality, and to strengthen our relation with creation
- of lifestyle, and to personally be more responsible for my use of resources and disposal of waste
- of apostolates, and for them to contribute in their specific ways and strengthen effective collaboration

In GC34 ecology was linked to Indigenous Peoples, and justice;<sup>6</sup> and though these issues were not tangible for most, they were “burning in the hand” for those who were engaged.

Fr. Kolvenbach was very hard to answer after that; “how fundamental was Creation to our faith?” he asked. I knew we had long left the doubts raised by animism or pantheism when speaking of the love of Creation. It felt more like a question of ‘is it really part of the genuine struggle for justice and gift of salvation?’ I answered, “but does not the Bible begin with the Creation stories; how do we live without food and air from creation and how do we understand natural disasters?” Do we just hand over to science this natural affinity with the life around us? Do we just cut off our nerve endings?

Fr. Kolvenbach asked these questions as an encouragement to others. There was intellectual awareness at the Congregation, but the “theme was a very broad one and would have required preparatory studies and competent experts... Finally, the time was limited.”<sup>7</sup> This had given way to a general response of ‘no entry’ into ‘ecology’ at this time. We were not prepared to cross the threshold.

At the request of GC 34, Decree 20, Michael Cherney of the Social Justice Secretariat sought a response to the ecological concern and gave 37 of us the first window by which to address the experience of the last millennium through “*We Live in a Broken World*”. On looking back, it had many of the same steps and orientation: our reading of ecology, Ignatian spirituality, apostolic contributions and collaboration, community lifestyle and institutional decisions, and orientations for our way of proceeding. There was an initial sharing from outlying individuals, but no joint reflection or institutional convergence. The reflections are apostolic and a personal encouragement to act. For most people who picked up the document, it appeared more like the “flavor of the month” and was soon gone.

With GC 35, a clear statement of need was made on global pressures, movements and the needed inclusion of all humanity in a sustainable environment. Whoever we are, we must be responsible partners in managing our environment and this cannot simply be left to others more knowledgeable.

### **WHY WOULD THE SOCIETY ENGAGE THIS TOPIC AT THIS TIME?**

Time—the signs of the times—has caught up with us. It is not simply a matter of how much we know, but that we are conscious of the damage done and are

called to share and show solidarity in action. The Society has the intellect and discourse to see ecology as mission and has the heart to heal.

### **HOW THE TASK FORCE WAS PUT TOGETHER?**

The announcement of the newly named Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat in 2010 showed the first indication of change. The SJES under Fr. Fernando Franco and Jesuit Higher Education Secretariat, initially with Fr. Paul Locatelli and then Fr. Ron Anton, were tasked with animating the programs on the environment with the intention of engaging people in various fields. I believe discussion on the proposal for the creation of a task force on Jesuit Mission and Ecology began by January. The intention was to implement Decree 3 of GC 35: “to appreciate more deeply our covenant with creation” (36) and the care of the environment “touches the core of our faith in and love for God” (32). This was reinforced by the Benedict XVI in his message on Peace entitled “If you want to cultivate peace protect Creation”<sup>8</sup> and also a chapter in *Caritas in Veritate*.<sup>9</sup>

There is global urgency in environmental issues, such as climate change, natural events that turn into human disasters, the lack of good governance in the exploitation of natural and mineral resources, and other areas of poverty and exploitation. The task was to prepare a report of 15-20 pages for Fr. General on Jesuit Mission on Ecology.

The idea was to draw on what the Church and the Society had said and make recommendations—practical recommendations—to make ecology a “dimension” of all our ministries, with measurable targets, grounded projects and evaluation. There was a need for an inter-sectoral or inter-disciplinary dimension; stressing the global and international aspect of the issues; and focusing on issues and methodologies where the Society could use its distinctive strengths. We were asked to reflect on these.

The approach had four steps: (1) meet to set the agenda and structure of the report, and distribute the work among the members of the group; (2) consult Conference presidents and send a questionnaire to Jesuit centres and institutions engaged in research and grass root activities; (3) analyse the data and prepare a “Draft.” Then (4) meet again to discuss and finalise the Draft, and end by November 2010. And so it was.

At the end of the process, we had a significant discussion with Fr. General on how we developed the different sections and the recommendations. Father

General thanked us for being very practical, he said we have to be very humble as there are many people and organizations ahead of us in the work, but this does not mean we cannot be forthright about the difficulties: “don’t be afraid to shock and challenge, this will move us deeper.”

At that point we handed over the document, so we did not consider it ours any longer. I felt it as an absolution for all I had not said coherently to Jesuits and friends in the past; a relief that I could live with some integrity rather than just appear as a man of the mountains raving about trees. I had been listened to and could now go back and listen better to others. Healing, gratitude and love are the end point of the search and struggle for justice and they need to be experienced along the way. We could not use the document yet, so I drafted one called Our Environmental Way of Proceeding<sup>10</sup> based on Nadal’s understanding of Ignatius. I needed to move. It is from this I learned the deepest movement of gratitude that is so significant as a starting point and ongoing sustenance. This was then reviewed by members of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific and issued as our way of moving forward a strategy of healing a broken world.<sup>11</sup>

We went about our work; I am sure all the more committed to making a difference. In less than a year, the document was published in full with a letter from Fr. General asking all to consider and plan accordingly. It was a great relief, and in a way unexpected. On the one hand, a lifetime of desire and engagement of so many Jesuit people at the edge was critically acknowledged at the centre, and on the other hand, the mission was proclaimed and clearly embarked upon by the institutional Society.

Let us stop for a moment and internalize the problem on different levels. The first level is the actual destruction and vulnerability of the earth as a global ecosystem. The second level is how the seductiveness of “development” is blinding us to social inequalities, and third is how we are losing what we once would have called ‘our place in the scheme of things.’ This living relationship of all life is not captured in any one of the concepts as we use them today. This shows that for several centuries, the modern world as it advanced had little creative reflection or depth in cultivating a relationship other than domination. ‘Creation,’ ‘Nature,’ ‘the Sacred,’ ‘ecology,’ ‘environment,’ ‘stewardship,’ ‘sustainability’... these are concepts that are valued but inadequate, failing to transmit humanity’s search for peace in our present home. Increasingly, we struggle to express our deep desires to care for life, and often we feel remorse because we are unable to do so. We have vague spiritual

habits, which do not resolve this alienation; we need reconciliation with God, neighbor and creation. In this we see how ‘Healing a Broken World’ becomes a living parchment where we must craft how it is we are to live life. ‘Healing a Broken World’ is now becoming the expression of quality and depth for Jesuit engagement in the area of ecology. And ecology is a concept that elicits varying perspectives if the explicit relation of healing is lacking.

### **III. ADVANCING THE RECOMMENDATIONS: SHADOWS AND RAYS**

The work has begun. The environmental and spiritual baseline of where we are moving from has not been assessed, but there is an on going global reporting of awareness, activities and projects. There are four main sources of change emerging:

- The Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat through its coordinators, are drawing from provinces and regions lists of activities in communities and the social apostolate that give focus to reconciliation, with many household and social projects emerging.
- Our educational institutes are defining their priorities, projects and programs. Fr. Michael Garanzini has now taken up this critical role in the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities and is seeking a network of Jesuits in higher education to produce a living text on regional and global environmental concerns.
- The Global Ignatian Advocacy Network is developing an overview of involvement in the governance of natural and mineral resources, and ecology including climate change. It is at this point, an experiment is developing a venue for global engagement.
- The 6 Jesuit Conferences are defining their priorities and seeking inter-provincial collaboration.

Now, in reviewing the recommendations I speak more from the context of the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific and its Ecology program. This is where we are trying to coordinate activities and initiate collaboration based on the recommendations made by the Task Force.

#### **1. STARTING AT HOME: OUR LIFESTYLES AND INSTITUTES**

*Jesuit communities and apostolic works are invited to discern the management of our own institutions and to exchange and develop practices for more ecologically sustainable lifestyles in our communities.*

Being accountable at home is the most difficult area for Jesuit action as it always calls for attitudinal change: changes in what we are used to doing, changes in functional values that still remain consumerist at the core. We need deeper spiritual experiences to act in defense of creation and we need to act with many more people and so develop greater capacity to collaborate.

As many Jesuits have said in the last year: we feel the responsibility to appoint people to roles. Often, we don't follow up because upon looking around we sense that we are already ecologically literate and aware of the debates. We are practical in the efficiency of our major houses and our institutions are always incorporating new ecologically sound initiatives. If we want to go beyond the norm, however, we are caught in a whole web of difficulty where efficient answers do not abound and we have to struggle through. Many honestly say, "commitment is as yet lukewarm."

Scholastics who enter the Society seeking change in self, consciously and unconsciously seek change in how Jesuits live and operate, are not encumbered with how things were. They see the ecological challenge more as an invitation and are the generation that is changing how things are going to be in community. They are clearly the greatest source of soul searching and change seeking to be accountable with others for how we live and treat all life. Such values, though still needing capacity, can make the difference.

In much of Asia there is a boom of waste segregation in many houses, often led by the scholastics. In institutes, composting is reducing the load to the landfill by 60 percent along with a further reduction due to recycling of paper and bottles (plastic and glass). There is still a long way to go before achieving zero waste management and as waste collection is often outsourced or sent to landfills, what we don't see we don't know.

Many countries in the Conference have mountainous waste dumps and at some point Jesuit advocacy along with others may enter these areas seeking change in the social and ecological consequences.

Migliore is the Holy See's permanent observer at the UN and has spoken on the personal commitment needed: "*Beyond all the studies on environment and development, the primary concern ... is the importance of grasping the underlying moral imperative that all, without exception, have a grave responsibility to protect the environment.*"<sup>12</sup> At another time he said: "*Laws are not enough to alter behaviour. Behavioural change requires personal commitment and the ethical conviction of the value of solidarity.*"<sup>13</sup>

Shaping up to this recommendation is not easy. In Latin America there is a good adage emerging, a behaviour that looks for “a good life not a better one”, understanding that if someone has a better life someone else has it worse. It is not simply a zero sum game but it does remind us of the quality of how we live life and that very simply it can be good and not driven by comfort and consumption.

## **2. EFFECTS OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS ON THE POOR AND INDIGENOUS**

*All Jesuits and partners in mission are invited to address the effects of the environmental crisis on the poor, marginalized and Indigenous Peoples.*

Care for creation requires much sensitivity to human suffering. Our recent national natural disasters in the Philippines are times of deepest suffering, times also of healing and of feeding, ... and if we can see far enough – they are times of re-creation not only of the land but of the heart.

During such times we may be unsure as to where and who God is. Is God judging, inactive, abandoning, present, the silent one? How do we find God? People offer prayers of supplication, of submission, of anger, of gratitude, of hope and of courage. There are quiet promises to commit, to be in solidarity, to be more compassionate, to allocate budgets and not to manipulate the picture of reality. For as long as we have the faith to face our mortality and the disaster we draw meaning and dearer life values.

This too is good; we strengthen our reflection and discourse in conscience and in action. We have come to understand God’s omnipotence as having been sacrificed for witness; there is an unknown witness by God in these disasters. We are the ones that must cry out, listen to ourselves and see if we do what we say. Can we really see ourselves; can we see humanity for what we are? Everything has to be stripped away - even the environment has to be laid bare.

The reality of deep poverty is permanent in our society, economy and environment and has to be exposed. The norms of daily life need to be stripped away before we recognize our inhumanity, destructiveness and denial. When a disaster strikes, we understand in our hearts the depth of human suffering. In humility before the presence of God, we recognize our lack of engagement, and we find forgiveness and reconciliation. In being appalled, in seeking forgiveness, we find the most frail human dignity... like a veil, a shadow of what we thought we were... but there, Christ is visible. The needed rest from self-questioning should lead to rebirth, new energy and life... and as

we see what is good, we find in conscience God, and desire to live anew, to love deeply.

In this there is the *will to truth*, the desire to establish truth: honesty toward reality, sister/brotherhood of the gospel caring for one another - compassion and service to the weak. We then seek changes in society so that such vulnerability from neglect does not happen again with such devastation. This is how our conscience forms. Frank Brennan says: “*The catholic view of conscience holds in tension the dignity and freedom of the human person, the teaching authority of the church and the search for truth and good.*” We are challenged to form an active conscience in a world of human and natural disaster as well as the imbalances in a global market.

Living Values Education (LVE) is a way of conceptualizing education that promotes the development of values-based learning communities and places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of education often in the context of violence. LVE emphasizes the worth and integrity of each person involved in the provision of education, in the home, school and community. In quality education, LVE supports the overall development of the individual and a culture of positive values in each society and throughout the world, believing that education is a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout much of Asia we are faced with the integration of the uplands in lowland society and how this happens with cultural equity and social access to resources. Multi lingual education is becoming an approach to this and has an inherent depth in peaceful relation with the land.<sup>15</sup>

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS**

*Those in charge of communication and media are invited to develop ways of increasing the awareness and motivation for action among Jesuits and all those involved in various apostolic ministries.*

When the document was published and became a mission statement it brought a whole community of friends back into discussion. Global Advocacy began: *Jesuit Commons* (<http://jesuitcommons.org/>) *EcoJesuits* newsletter ([www.ecojesuit.com](http://www.ecojesuit.com)) and websites such as those of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat ([www.sjweb.info](http://www.sjweb.info)). The Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific ([www.jceao.net/](http://www.jceao.net/)) helps us update. Ecology concern is no longer beyond the reach of Jesuit participation; we acknowledged we are part of the problem and part of the response.

Through these various communication portals, we hope to build on the recommendations and proposals of *Healing a Broken World*, and more importantly, ensure that Jesuit people are connected to these efforts and are participating meaningfully in the effort for true reconciliation with creation.

Beyond fostering this exchange with a growing number of associates, the role of communication and broader education for action needs much greater exploration. The need for documentation and visual communication is needed everywhere, but capacity and ‘marketing’ are limited, as well as the strategy and commitment. Advocacy on global issues is difficult to establish and is still effective only in very select cases.

#### **4. TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION**

*Jesuit higher education institutions, theological faculties, business schools, research and capacity-building centres are invited to **engage students in transformative education** and to explore new themes and areas of **interdisciplinary research**.*

All our campuses and students need to be connected to the land, water and air use, to farm production, landfills, watersheds and climate; especially when we outsource our problems. We have to be very honest and seek justice for the land and water and the people who live there, whether in wilderness, rural or urban ecosystems. Our intellect, attitude and actions are intimately linked with the integrity of our ecology and sacredness of life for which we must again grasp the reality of the problem in conscience. Only then do we truly share our green campus with others. The experience of LUC Retreat and Ecology Center<sup>16</sup> and the new Center for Sustainable Urban Living grounds the university and provides a core education in the rural and urban challenge of integral living. Sustainable organic food production is central to this, but also the wilderness experience of meeting God across the prairies and wetlands.

Transformative education is growing in importance as conventional training and study cannot provide the necessary personal reflection and integrated knowledge. A serious level of behavioral change is sought in adjusting to today’s world where resources are limited, and where resource exploitation can lead to further human exploitation, affecting not only the current generation of resource users but also future generations.

We have to find new ways for the youth to move forward. Engaging the youth in the meaning of life is difficult, as value and fashions change by the day.

The youth play with freedom, while forming consistent response takes time. Our institutions are trying to challenge the youth in transforming the mind but also in forming conscience and the sense of responsibility that builds relations and addresses needs in our global society. Education is not focused on graduation day and job opportunities, but on the youth understanding our apostolic preferences in life, with some joining initiatives that give purpose and takes them forward.

Taking this further, in undertaking development work with poor communities that seek authentic and meaningful social change, technical and academic responses can have serious limitations. It is not only about differences in policy, governance, implementation, resource allocation and culture, but also the daily priorities families must set and the interaction of internal and external values. These limitations are evident when development fails to integrate the reality of a community's context. This understanding is frequently missing and development becomes a jarring experience that does not enable the poor to improve their situation.

Transformative education recognizes the need to go beyond academic boundaries to improve the capacity to integrate knowledge at many levels. It also develops a greater understanding of the range of issues at play on the ground and ensures that the common good and sustainability of the environment are possible and remain primary goals.

## **5. SPIRITUAL AND THEOLOGICAL CENTERS**

*Centres of theological reflection, spirituality, social and pastoral works are invited to develop the **spiritual sources motivating our commitment and fostering our celebration of creation.***

Ignatius bridged two worlds, one of medieval chivalry, the kingdom and the court, and the other of a rational program of studies, the Reformation and mission. In Ignatius' early life the idea of the two books, that of Nature where you see the hand of God, and that of revelation, the Bible, would have been familiar. No sacred book would have been written if the sacred relation and experience of being on holy ground were not first known.

Before, it was people with spiritual training, with the ability to believe in more than just what they saw with the eye, who were able to read the book of nature and enable scientific development. We have handed over inquiry of the natural

world to science, for it to break down and analyze in ways that give us control and comfort but not humility or meaning.

We now live in a world of science where technology can give us gratifying relations but little meaning is sustained or grown. Does the world have a purpose? Science does not answer the inner vision and instead, masks the sacred presence of God. The sacred text of nature is lost until we open to the mystical experience of life.

There are still scientists today, often revealing the cosmos process, who are struck with awe and ask where are we in this unfolding. They have that inner vision of seeing God in all things while doing science. Einstein certainly did.

We seem to lose the gratitude for life—even our own—and all that sustains us. We are still alienated from creation because we have not taken the book of nature seriously. Scientific knowledge and gratitude for life allow us, with humility, to be truly instruments of healing. Healing is necessary in everything we do; it is one of the main movements of Jesus, inseparable from his ministry of teaching.

## **6. REVIEW FORMATION**

*The governance structures of the society are invited to **review our Jesuit formation** in the light of environmental concerns.*

Jesuit scholastics spend much time in philosophical studies as a preparation for apostolic work. Simply put, the aim of philosophy is to help people live a virtuous life and to heal. We have to learn how to understand the truth, know what is just, have mercy and be reconciled, if we are to heal the wounds of the world. There are many philosophers to be studied but this study must relate to science and technology and to new models of development, human security and sustainability, if in our thoughts we are going to right many of the wrongs in our global world.

We are challenged to deepen our sense of respect for all life. In many parts of the world, journalists die; church members and the vulnerable who speak up disappear. We may think that this is the norm in developing country dynamics, part of the cost of growing up; but we also have to realize that this is very much tied to development models, corporate greed and the polarities in a global society that prevent us from celebrating human dignity and human development. We also have to talk about population imbalances, the lack of

food security and the privatization of water and other resources. Though the laws may be in place, the policies working and social behavior normal, the hurts of the past are often not healed. What of our own society? How do we operate globally, not in terms of war, but in terms of labor and resources?

Environmental literacy is being incorporated into formation. A sense of ecology and social responsibility is being strengthened in institutions, and deeper theological reflection is called for. It is not resolved simply through social or environmental exposure but through engagement, often through organizations where commitment is developed in relation to peoples' life concerns. Formation challenges our education programs to provide the means for deepening our witness to Christ in creation and the suffering of the people.

#### **7. CONFERENCES: OUR ASIAN ENVIRONMENT IS STILL BEING DEGRADED FOR SHORT TERM RETURNS.**

*All conferences are invited to explicitly include the theme of **ecology in their apostolic plans.***

**Mode of Development.** Today we are faced with the long-term impact of industries such as mining and logging and the continuing human disasters due to typhoons, earthquakes and droughts in the region. At the same time, there are signs of a greater consciousness of the problems and a growing awareness of climate change and the need for adaptation. There is the global “Occupy Movement” that raises questions—without answers—about the economic maldistribution in the world. A significant percentage of the youth of the region remain unemployed. Pope Benedict continues to speak of the human good and true development, not simply profit.<sup>17</sup> We need to speak of a good life, no longer a better life.

The problems we are seeing today stem from an inadequate mode of human development. A lack of environmental measurement and transparency block accountability in management and hampers our ability to say, “Enough is enough”. So we are challenged to return and reflect upon what we are teaching and our notions of the world, and recognize the need for deepening Catholic social teaching and a radical review of assumed concepts of modernity and development.

Institutional management and organizational strategy are important areas of capacity development in the region. We are beginning to identify geographic areas of regional priority and to select themes and projects. There are

many deep human developments and desires for a sustainable world. For professionals, one response is the “Leadership Beyond Boundaries” program for individuals looking to explore greater coherence in their personal, professional, social and spiritual lives.<sup>18</sup>

## **8. FOLLOW UP, UNIVERSAL**

*The central government of the society is invited to develop a mechanism, which can help Fr. General to **follow up and evaluate implementation of the GC35 mandate to establish right relationships with creation** as expressed in these recommendations.*

The team of support emerging around the Secretariat of Social Justice and Ecology may be the mechanism considered for sustaining ecological accountability in the Society. Already social coordinators are reporting on programs implementing directives of GC35 on this concern. When Conferences are moving on reconciliation with creation, the Secretariat should be able to raise interdisciplinary groups with a broad scope of technical, ethical and political advice applicable to different circumstances. The system as a whole is moving and activities on the other recommendations are going deeper into the reconciliation we seek.

I understand these conversations today to be a beginning, so please let our discussion continue and flow into action. This is a generation of deep human awareness, of being the force in global ecology. Our actions are the basis for healing and hope.

Thanking you deeply for this engagement and the discussions that follow.

## ENDNOTES:

- <sup>1</sup> The basic text here was shared during Faculty Conversations of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Loyola University Chicago, 25 February 2012.
- <sup>2</sup> Healing a Broken World 2.7 [http://www.sjweb.info/documents/sjs/pj/docs\\_pdf/pj070eng.pdf](http://www.sjweb.info/documents/sjs/pj/docs_pdf/pj070eng.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *God's Grandeur*. Poems. London: Humphrey Milford, 1918; Bartleby.com, 1999.
- <sup>4</sup> Hopkins, G.M., *The Windhover*. Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> General Congregation of the Society of Jesus 33, D1, n.35, 1983.
- <sup>6</sup> GC 34, D
- <sup>7</sup> Miralles, Josep S.J., Introduction to Decree 20 in the French and Spanish editions of GC34.
- <sup>8</sup> Pope Benedict XVI. *If you want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation*. Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2010.
- <sup>9</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, to the bishops, priests and deacons, men and women religious, the lay faithful and all people of good will, on integral human development in charity and truth. Jun 29, 2009.
- <sup>10</sup> OEWP: [http://jcap.essc.org.ph/?page\\_id=1803](http://jcap.essc.org.ph/?page_id=1803)
- <sup>11</sup> GC34. D 26.
- <sup>12</sup> Migliore, H.E. Mons. Celestino. *Intervention of The Holy See at The Second Committee of the General Assembly of The United Nations on Sustainable Development*. New York , 25 October 2006.
- <sup>13</sup> Migliore, H.E. Mons. Celestino. *Intervention of The Holy See at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of The United Nations on Sustainable Development*. New York. 29 Oct 2007.
- <sup>14</sup> [www.livingvalues.net](http://www.livingvalues.net)
- <sup>15</sup> Walpole, Pedro. *Learning Sustainable Life: Bukidnon Pulangiyen Community Experience of Intergrating Mother Tongue Education for Sustainable Development*. 2010.
- <sup>16</sup> Loyola University Chicago (LUC) is now growing a new Retreat and Ecology Campus (REC) in Woodstock Illinois.
- <sup>17</sup> Pope Benedict XVI
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.jss.org.au/just-leadership>