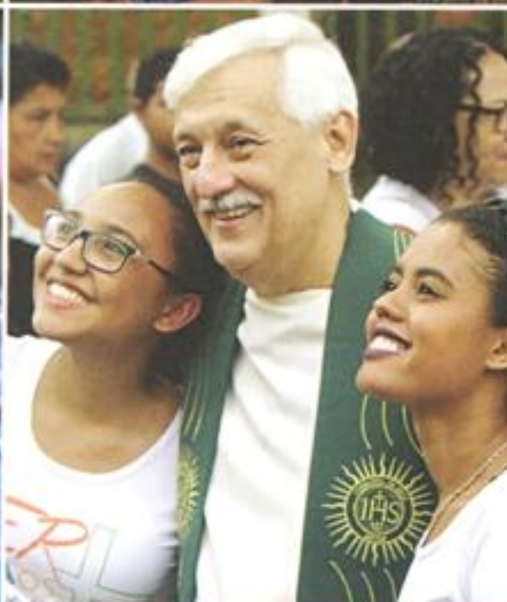


Jesuits

2019

YEARBOOK OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS





INTERNAZIONALE: JWL

Jesuit Worldwide Learning: Higher Education at the Margins

Francis P. Xavier, SJ



JWL follows the Ignatian pedagogy, namely education in the context of the marginalized and based on the experience with them. The educational program designed is embedded with social values.

St Ignatius of Loyola writes in his letter to the Jesuits at Padua (1547): “Friendship with the poor makes us friends of the eternal King.” Fr Adolfo Nicolás underlined in Chicago (October 2013) that according to “the Ignatian concept of service, growth leads to transformation.” He added that the ultimate objective is individual formation and “through individuals, the transformation of the society.” Again in Mexico City (April 2010), he called for networking in Jesuit Higher Education to shape “the future for a humane, just, and sustainable globe.” This needs to evolve as the *proyecto social* based on the need to “re-imagine and re-organize ourselves” for a new globalization (of liberation, peace, and harmony). Further, General Congregation 36 portrays that Jesuit education “should help form men and women

committed to reconciliation and able to confront obstacles to reconciliation and propose solutions.” Further, it “should be strengthened to help in the transformation of our cultures and societies” (GC36, D.1, No.34).

Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL) not only echoes the vision of Jesuit education but also brings in “learning together to transform the world,” starting with the poor and the marginalized. The key to reform society is education that gives hope even amidst the hopeless situation; and the courage to break through the dominating and oppressing fetters of suppression and discrimination for liberation and dignity. JWL’s higher education programs bridge the gap between the hope of the marginalized and opportunities in life.

In 2010, a few faculty members from

the US Jesuit Universities, under the leadership of Mary McFarland, came together and contemplated what could be done for the marginalized. The outcome was Jesuit Commons: Higher Education at the Margins (JC:HEM) with the focus on the refugees. JC:HEM joined hands with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and started offering education that would empower the refugees. This began as a pilot program in the refugee camps of Kakuma (Kenya) and Dzaleka (Malawi) and later extended to learning centers in marginalized communities in Jordan, Chad, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and North Iraq. The center of operation had been mainly from the USA.

In 2016, in order to realize the global nature of service, JC:HEM was renamed as Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL, often pronounced as JeWeL) with two registered societies (JWL-USA and JWL) with the headquarters in Geneva.

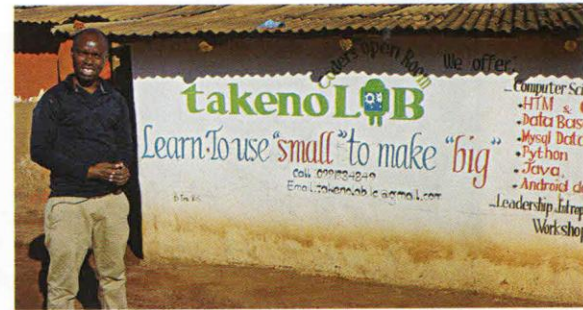
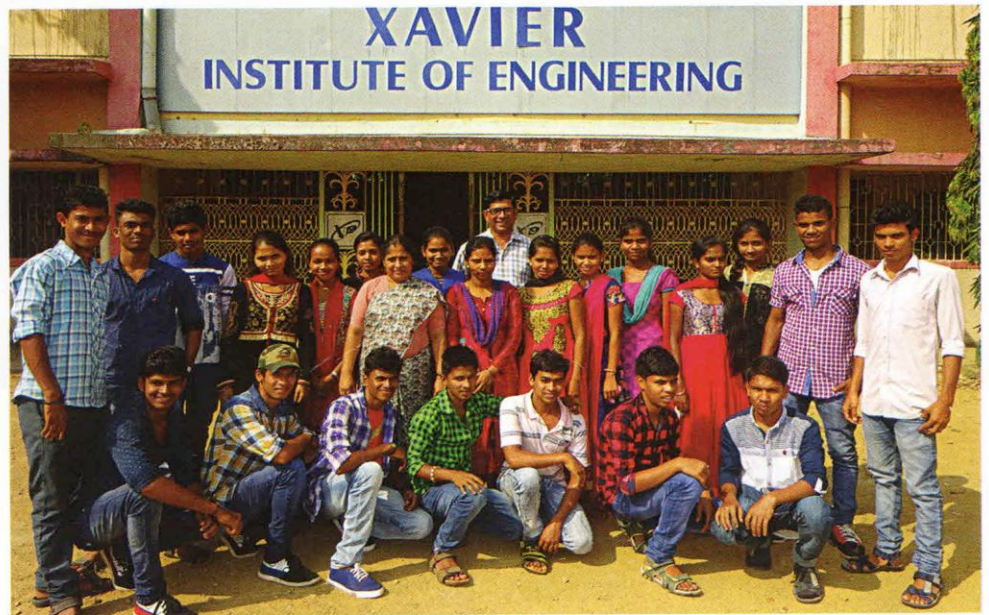
With the vision of “Learning Together to Transform the World”, JWL’s mission is to provide “tertiary learning to people and communities at the margins of societies – be it through poverty, location, lack of opportunity, conflict or forced displacement.” The formative education is Ignatian in pedagogy with an embedded social service component.

The mission of the founding fathers of the Society, namely “Care of the Soul” eventually evolved as the holistic development of the person. Similarly, the mission of JWL, though started with the JRS, began to spread wings. JWL realized that there are others who are impoverished as victims of social, religious, and political discrimination, such as internally displaced, rural poor in developing countries, indigenous peoples, Tribals, and the Dalits. JWL wanted to embrace them as well in the fold of education. Today the education program

is offered to these disadvantaged and wherever there is greater need.

JWL follows the Ignatian pedagogy, namely education in the context of the marginalized and based on the experience with them. The educational program designed is embedded with social values. It is the bottom-up model for ac-

JWL’s higher education programs bridge the gap between the hope of the marginalized and opportunities in life.



Jesuit Worldwide Learning: Higher Education at the Margins

academic endeavors: education, through academic information, should form the people at the periphery (who are at the bottom of the social pyramid) and empower them to transform society. The major components of this model are: (a) Creating the pedagogy of critical thinking with value-embedded curriculum that results in capacity building to lead others. (b) Learning together builds up global citizenship with inter-cultural and inter-religious experience (that we belong) to an extended global society; and (c) Globally the education is of high quality but at an affordable cost for the learner.

Ultimately, the JWL program gives the best to the least in society, in order

to make them the central power of leadership; and to create a new world order of harmony and peace. Thus, the leadership formation given to those at the bottom of the social pyramid permeates upward as social transformation.

JWL is a service provider, operating like the Star Alliance (of airlines) finding academic resources and putting them in touch with the needy. In this way, networking of the Jesuit universities the world over with the needy in unknown corners of the globe is effectively carried out.

With the ever increasing centers of learning globally and with the need for new courses, a hybrid interfacing model is developed as the learning pathway starting with Global English Language program (with Cambridge Linguaskill exams) as the prerequisite and then launching of three credit professional courses (such as social work, community health, finance). These would be eventually incorporated into 45-credit diploma courses (nearly 30 in number). Except for the English Language program,

other programs are offered as blended programs, with an online teacher as well as an onsite tutor. JWL is gearing up and exploring the possibility of moving into Associate Degree, and then with Bachelor and Master Degrees. JWL does not want to draw any line or limit for the learning capacity of the students.

With collaboration and networking with other institutions of higher learning, preferably with the Jesuit universities, not only new courses are designed and developed but also the necessary diplomas would be issued. The international Subject Matter Experts as well as the Curriculum Oversight Committee ensures the quality of the courses. The course on Child Protection (Gregorian University) is offered through JWL; Regis University is offering the diploma for JWL diploma program. The course on Peace and Leadership (from Hekima College, Kenya), Sustainable Environment (from Newman Institute, Sweden and Xavier University, India) would soon become operative. Courses on Hygiene and Public Health and Youth

JWL





Sports are getting ready to be rolled out.

JWL has initiated research as well. The research, while studying the impact of JWL program on individuals as well as on the society, would serve as a feedback loop for the future direction in the global service of empowering the marginalized to become the social leaders leading the society.

JWL creates an atmosphere for global learning through intercultural interaction. The students have the opportunity to work with students in another country with another culture, especially for their assignments.

At present JWL has Community Learning Centers in Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Central African Republic), in Asia (Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Myanmar), in the USA (New York), in the Middle East and Central Asia (North Iraq, Afghanistan). In the near future, JWL is exploring the possibility of learning centers in the Caribbean (Cuba, Haiti). JWL is ready to go where there is greater need for the service of the needy. In 2017, 3,050 students studied with the

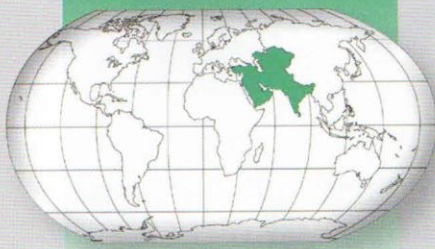
help of JWL and the projected number by 2020 would be 10,000.

Right from its inception, JWL sought the refugees and the marginalized, especially the youth, and offered education that would make them entrepreneurs and at the same time social leaders to transform society. Service to society is an inbuilt component of the JWL educational program. The interconnectedness African concept of *Ubuntu* is based on the philosophy of “everyone is part of the whole” and the social awareness that “I am what I am because of who we all are” could inspire the youth that they are part of something larger and more powerful. This concept could kindle one’s social responsibility of caring, sharing, and being in harmony. At the same time, the collective concept of being empowered will arouse in all the sleeping lion of courage and confidence within the poor and the marginalized so that they could get educated, organized, and agitate for their rightful rights and powers in society and at the same time they could scale the summit of prosper-

The JWL program gives the best to the least in society, in order to make them the central power of leadership; and to create a new world of harmony and peace.

ity. JWL is looking for academic collaboration and funding partnership in realizing the dream of reaching out to the needy all over the globe with empowering education.

Charles, who fled the Democratic Republic of Congo after his father was assassinated, says the only thing his father left him with was this advice: “I don’t have anything to give you, but I ask you to continue with your education. Education will be your mother and father when I am no longer here.” Charles is now in Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi diligently following the advice of his father. There are many more such people JWL looks forward to serve.



SOUTH ASIA: Sri Lanka

Magis at the Margins

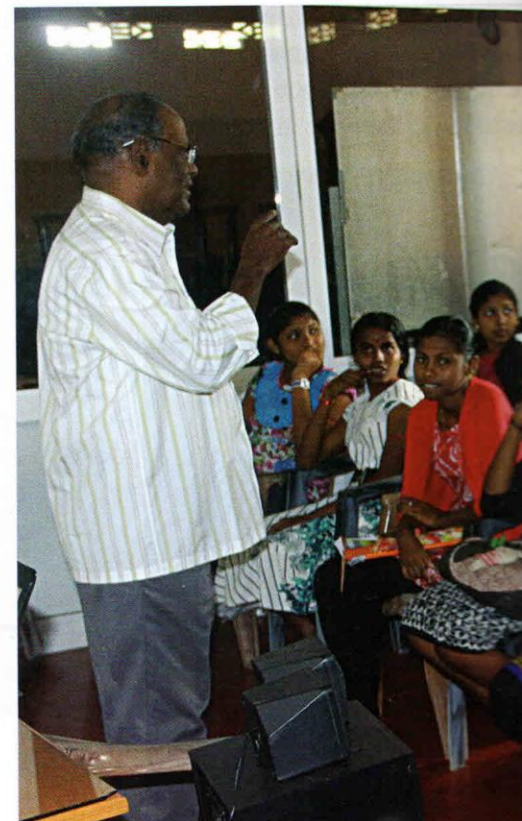
Milroy Fernando, SJ

Loyola Campus is a shared community of learners who journey together in companionship with one another, with the nature and the Divine.

Loyola Campus (LC), an initiative of the Sri Lanka Jesuits under the Northern Mission, was formed in 2017 to offer tertiary and higher education opportunities, especially to the war affected youth, who are at the margins of our society. Motivated by the motto 'Educate. Empower. Transform', the initiative hopes to create new learning spaces, where Jesuits form a generation of young women and men who burn with the zeal for a reconciled humanity. It is important to understand that Loyola Campus is a shared community of learners who journey together in companionship with one another, with the nature and the Divine. A community that transcends the physical walls and the barriers created by human limitations. Wherever this community is present, Loyola Campus operates with that Ignatian ideal to transform the world.

First, it was in 2014, during the Apostolic Discernment that the Jesuit Province of Sri Lanka took a bold step in recognizing the need to serve the war affected youth of the country. This intervention in 2014 directed the Province to work in collaboration with the Jesuit Refugee Service - South Asia and Jesuit Commons: Higher Education at the Margins (JC:HEM) which is now known as Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL).

Loyola Campus and its preferred partner (JWL) believe that in Sri Lanka, in the post-war context, education plays a crucial role in creating a culture of peace and healing that is inclusive and socially just. The contention is that

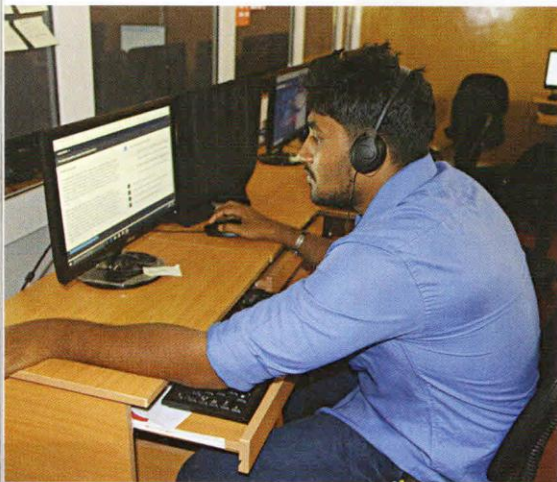




A community that transcends the physical walls and the barriers created by human limitations.



Magis at the Margins



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the higher education systems have the potential to contribute towards more effective post-war reconstruction and recovery.

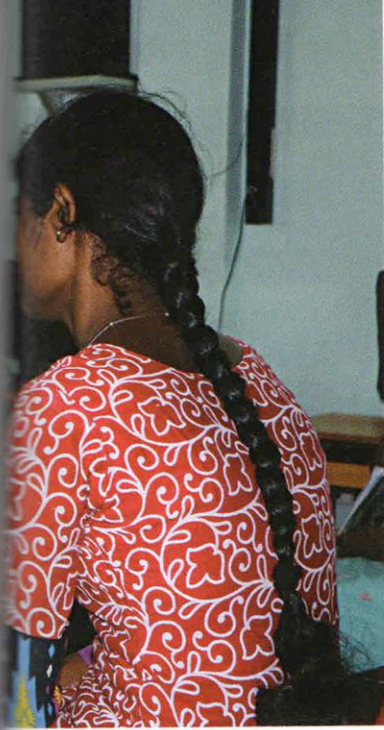
Higher education should be conceptualized as an important pillar of post-conflict recovery and transitions. Given the under-utilized nature of higher education for post conflict recovery, the Loyola Campus-JWL partnership offers what is to date the first attempt to

construct a shared community of global learners to transform Sri Lanka and the world. The aim is to form a generation of young men and women who are more acutely aware of the conditions of our time, who are able to think beyond the limits of their socio-economic, religious and cultural horizons and who are committed in re-creating spaces of peace, justice and reconciliation.

If this vision is realized, Loyola Cam-



Sri Lanka



pus-JWL partnership will become the catalyst of recovery in conflict-affected society of Sri Lanka.

Loyola Campus-JWL operates in seven places—Mannar, Vavuniya, Puthukudiyiyipu, Trincomalle, Hatton, Batticaloa and Mullaithivu—where students are given opportunities for on-site and online learning experiences. While concentrating on the learning centers all these campuses also reach out to peripheries for those who have limited access to the centers due to various difficulties.

A key focus area of the Loyola Campus-JWL partnership is to enable operating centers to expand modern teaching, learning and assessment methods that increase the academic quality of

programs, and the eventual social and economic contribution of graduates. This is a first of its kind results-driven operation in support of the Sri Lanka's Higher Education Development Strategy. The aim of the Loyola Campus-JWL partnership is to bring the best education to where the youth live in the worst of human conditions.

The desire is to Educate, Empower and Transform today's generation for a better humanity. Loyola Campus-JWL believe in *Vidaya-adi-danam*, the gift of knowledge as the "gift par excellence". We work in the spirit of Magis, the spirituality that offers 'infinite possibilities' and interventions. It is MAGIS at the MARGINS.



