

Jesuit Education: Forming Men and Women of Conscience

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(2nd writing- PREPARED FOR IN-PERSON SIPEI)

We are gathered here to discuss various aspects of Jesuit Education almost after two decades of practicing the Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm based on the *Ratio Studiorum* and almost after three decades of defining the Characteristics of Jesuit Education. Those were historical moments in the life and education ministry of the Society of Jesus. In fact, the founding of the Society of Jesus itself was a defining historical moment in the life of the Church and the world. It was the need of the hour to which St. Ignatius responded, totally guided by the Spirit and in a definitive manner. The founding of the Society was not a planned action but an action of total surrender to the will of God discerned through the Spiritual Exercises. The Church needed the Society to defend its faith which was being challenged by various schisms of the time. It should surprise no one that responding to the challenges of the time and need of the hour, the Pope approved the founding of the Society with the promulgation of *Licet debitum* in 1547 paving the way for a new definition of religious life in the Church besides defining the works of the Society.

The Jesuits, as they will be known eventually, entered into this mission and its challenges, keeping in mind the only one goal of serving their Master. They established many schools, colleges and universities to help the neighbours through the education of the youth in letters, learning and Christian life. This will earn them the sobriquet of being the “school masters of Europe.” Within a short span of time, they would be challenged by the need to train the many young men who were joining the Society and this would become an integral part of their mission.

In order to achieve these goals of training their men and educating the youth, the Jesuits adopted the *modus parisiensis* and established many *studium generale*. This further challenged the Jesuits to define their plan of studies for those entering the Society and the externals to be followed in all their educational institutions. The Jesuits promulgated the *Ratio Studiorum*, the method and system of studies of the Society of Jesus in 1599 and it still remains the guiding force of Jesuit education. The Jesuits responded to the educational challenges of the twentieth century after following the path of the *Ratio Studiorum* for almost four hundred years with the documents *The characteristics of Jesuit Education* and *Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm*. These were not entirely new treaties on Jesuit Education but a redefining and reinventing of the core values of Jesuit Education practiced for four hundred years to make the ministry more fruitful and relevant.

The dawn of the twenty first century brought new challenges not only to Jesuit education, but education as a whole. The late twentieth and early twenty first century created huge demands for quality education and the international community and global agencies responded to it through various schemes to make education available to vast majorities of the global population. This yielded some rewards, yet the challenge of facilitating education of all, still remains unanswered. The utilitarian outlook of education is posing a serious challenge to the goals of education and reducing it to a process of producing persons who are employable. The concepts of digital learning, home schooling, distance learning, etc. are also posing a relevant challenge to formal schooling in various parts of the world. The knowledge explosion and technological developments have become a challenge to the rigours of learning, otherwise practiced by the learners. The lack of facilities for quality education, talibanization of education, establishment of groups like the ISIS, increased activities of Boko Haram, threat to innocent minor children especially girls inside the schools, etc. are grave concerns for the global world which need immediate and appropriate response from responsible governments and citizens.

The Jesuits have responded to such challenges and Jesuit Education is once again expected to respond to these. We need to remind ourselves at this juncture of the goal and purpose of Jesuit Education as envisaged by St. Ignatius. We can understand the mind of St. Ignatius when he wrote to the Duke of Bravia, that “we tend in our colleges to stress the formation for life rather than the acquisition of knowledge.” That formation of the person is the pivotal goal of Jesuit Education. St. Ignatius stressed two aspects of education namely: *Eruditio*, the acquisition of knowledge and *pietas*, acquisition of personal attitudes to life. We need to ensure that these aspects are not reduced to mere attributes but remain core values of Jesuit Education while we respond to the challenges of twenty first century Jesuit Education. The same core values of Jesuit Education was rearticulated by Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach when he said, “We aim to form leaders in service, in imitation of Christ Jesus, men and women of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment.” Therefore we are discussing the theme of the day, formation of men and women of conscience through Jesuit Education.

Conscience

Let us begin with the definition of conscience given by Encyclopaedia Britannica which defines conscience as, “a personal sense of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one’s own conduct, intentions, or character with regard to a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.” We can accept that conscience involves the person, his/her conduct and desire to be a good human person.

Let us also be aware that we are not reducing conscience to just a mechanism of defining what is morally right and what is morally wrong. We shall attempt to arrive at an acceptable definition of conscience to take our discussion further. I suggest that first we take a bird's eye view of the concept of conscience in various spiritualities.

Understanding of Conscience in Different Religions

In Christianity, every believer is invited to follow the Spirit of the Risen Christ. We believe that it is the spirit of Christ which animates, regulates and inspires human persons to a life of righteous actions and behaviours. It is an inner voice in every human person which calls him/her to a life in union with the Spirit of the Risen Christ. It is a call to come near to God and achieve the purpose for which each one is created. It could be debated whether this call is the same as what St. Ignatius calls the Principle and Foundation in his Spiritual Exercises. In Hindu spirituality it appears that conscience is understood in terms of the soul which is an indestructible element which guides one's life and actions. It further tells the believer that the goal of one's life is to attain *moksa* (liberation from the bondages of one's *karma*: actions and union with God). The process is guided by a form of truth which enables the person to follow the right path to ensure right moral living to be finally liberated from *samsara* (cycle of birth and rebirth). This is attained by a person's *Dharma* (Right actions) inspired by the *Atman* (inner self) which is indestructible. Islamic spirituality invites its followers to the development of *Nafs-e-mutminah* : a self that is contented and satisfied and is in union with *Allah* (Almighty). The attainment of this depends on the development of a pure conscience which guides a person to right and good actions. Buddhism also calls on its followers to adhere to the eight fold path to engage in right actions in every sphere of a person's life to attain *Nirvana*: a state of existence free from suffering and individual existence. Jainism advises that a human person can attain infiniteness of existence by following the triple gems: Right view, Right knowledge and Right conduct.

We find that all spiritualities call upon persons to engage themselves in right actions towards a realization and experience of God towards which all persons move in their lives. Every religion and spirituality comes across as inviting persons to move towards transcendence, if we call the experience of God this way, and the process propagated by every religion is the way of doing the right actions. Isn't this the same as what St. Ignatius proposes as the Principle and Foundation in his spiritual exercises?

A common understanding of Conscience

As we continue our discussions on the theme, I am attempting to incorporate the fruits of the two enriching online discussions we had on this topic. I am definitely indebted to Enric Puiggròs S.J and Lluís Ylla who prepared the summary of both the Spanish as well as English discussions. The discussions brought forth the need to arrive at a common understanding of the concept of conscience since the word may be understood with different nuances depending on the historical and cultural background of the language in which it is being used. The question also came to light whether being conscious is same as being a person of conscience. Let us for a brief while look at the etymology of the word conscience. In English it is used in the sense of ‘inner thoughts or knowledge’: via Old French from Latin *conscientia*, "knowledge within oneself, sense of right, a moral sense." from *conscient-* ‘being privy to’, from the verb *conscire*, from *con-* ‘with’ + *scire* ‘know’. The English word implies internal awareness of a moral standard in the mind concerning the quality of one's motives, as well as actions. In this sense we will be able to say without doubt that the word conscience definitely has reference to the one’s inner self and the rightness of one’s actions.

Let us try to understand the term a little better by looking at the various dimensions proposed during our discussion. I do not think that the concept of conscience can be equated with the word conscious. Being conscious or being a conscious person is different from being a person of conscience. The understanding of the word conscious could be different depending on the context in which the word is used. In a medical context, it may simply mean that the person is aware of his/her senses and is responding to various stimuli. Similarly in a social context, the word may refer to a person being aware of situations, surroundings, events, etc. and is capable of responding to these in a matured and socially acceptable way. Further, in an ethical context, it may add the ability of the person to respond to situations, people and events in an ethically and morally right way. Once again, all these meanings would greatly borrow from the cultural and historical background of the language in which it is being used. For example, as mentioned in our discussion, the Spanish equivalent of the word conscience, *consciente*, which translates to conscious, may not be an adequate translation. It may be closer to the noun form of the word *la conciencia*, but our Spanish colleagues here will be able to throw more light on these.

I would not hesitate to say that conscience certainly will act as compass that guides us through our actions but we cannot merely reduce the person of conscience to an ethical question of choosing

between good and bad or right and wrong. I would definitely raise the question for discussion whether the concept of conscious person, can be understood as included in the person of conscience? I would definitely say yes, because it is necessary for a person to be conscious (aware) of oneself, the surroundings and the happenings to respond as a person of conscience. Therefore I would define conscience as the innate ability of every person to correctly analyse the world and its events, so as to make correct decisions that drive us towards meaning in our lives. In this sense, it is not necessarily the product of a process of rational consideration of the moral features of a situation or the application of principles, rules or laws but can arise from parental, peer group, religious, state or corporate influence and training. For us and in the context of Jesuit Education, it will undoubtedly be influenced by the Gospel values and Ignatian Spirituality. Thus the formation of men and women of conscience will continue to be a challenge for those engaged in Jesuit Education.

Challenges in Jesuit Education

The Society of Jesus has always adapted itself to the situation and the needs of the time to respond meaningfully and in a relevant manner and to be effective ministers of the ministries of the Society. It has evaluated the effectiveness of Jesuit Education and has reinterpreted the *Ratio Studiorum* to ensure the effectiveness of its ministry through two important documents namely *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* and *Ignatian Pedagogy Programme*. These have increasingly become relevant when education is viewed in utilitarian terms. We're aware of the fact that we have these great tools (Spiritual Exercises, The Examen, IPP, Characteristics of Jesuit Education, etc.), but sometimes we aren't very familiar with them, and sometimes, although we know them, we're not sure how to apply them in the day-to-day affairs of our classrooms. It remains a challenge for us to determine methodologies to adapt these great tools to the global situation with all its intricacies and at time complications.

The combination and duality of *eruditio* and *pietas*, core values as envisaged by St. Ignatius, pose another challenge for us in our education ministry. It is possible that in our search for excellence (*excelentia*) we may lose sight of our real goals. There is a need to arrive at a balance of these two core values in our Jesuit Education. There were two important questions raised during our discussion regarding *eruditio* and *pietas*. Is *eruditio* the way the world sees excellence and is *pietas* the Ignatian and biblical vision of excellence? In current pedagogical practice, what keeps us from promoting *eruditio* and *pietas* in Jesuit Education? Let us try to answer these questions.

When the newly founded Society entered into the ministry of education, the mission was amply clear that it was to train the young men who were entering the Society and also to help the neighbours through the education of the youth in letters, learning and Christian life. Thus the formation of the person was an integral element of Jesuit education from its inception. St. Ignatius made it increasingly definite through his letters and communications to his companions. While we discuss the combination and duality of *eruditio* and *pietas*, we ought to recall the context and reasons for adapting the *modus Parisiensis* in the Jesuit schools and colleges. It is true that St. Ignatius and most of his companions were students of the University of Paris and it was not a natural choice to adapt the model in the schools and colleges of the Society. But it was a deliberate and discerned decision to implement this model when they had the option of adopting one of the two existing models, *modus Parisiensis* and the model of Bologna. In both these models, teachers and students constituted a community but in the Bologna model the power in the universities remained with the students and in the Paris model the power remained with the professors. It was not the power that mattered in the choice of *modus Parisiensis*, but the way the formation of the students took place that mattered most. In this model the students were trained through the triple processes of *Lectio* or lesson, *quaestiones* or planned questions and *disputationes* or debates to be eloquent not only to speak, write and communicate but to reason, feel and express oneself harmonizing virtue with letters. Virtue and letter was the objective that coincided with all the programmes of the college and thus we may be able to conclude that the Society adapted this model since it amply exhibited the possibility of achieving the goals of Jesuit education.

We are in an economy driven world where almost everything is viewed in terms of the economic returns and the profit margins they provide. The same ideology is extended even to education today. In such an environment, the outcome of education is measured in terms of the employability of the educated and such utilitarian influence structures academic profiles according to the market. Therefore it will be difficult for us to say that *eruditio* as envisaged by St. Ignatius and Jesuit Education is the same as the way the world sees excellence today. St. Ignatius and his companions considered the contribution and effect of the educated on the community as the outcome of education and thus it was focused towards, every individual growing to be persons who are looking outward to others rather looking inward to promote one's own wellbeing and comfort. While *eruditio* (acquiring of knowledge) was a core value of Jesuit Education, it was *pietas* (acquiring of personal life attitudes) that defined the ultimate goal of Jesuit education.

Wouldn't it be apt for us to conclude that while obtaining mastery over the letters remained an integral part of education for St. Ignatius and his companions, it was the acquiring of personal life attitudes which drew a person out of oneself to finding others and community and responding to it with total commitment that defined excellence?

Let us come to the second question of this part of our discussion. In current pedagogical practice, what keeps us from promoting *eruditio* and *pietas* in Jesuit Education? Within a decade of the starting of Jesuit schools and colleges, the Jesuits earned the title "school masters of Europe" for the excellent ways these institutions were administered and the students were formed by rigorously following the prescribed curriculum and method. We can confidently say that the Jesuit schools and colleges were centres of learning and formation of men and women and it continues to be so even today. Meanwhile the late twentieth century and the dawn of the twenty first century transformed the education scenario all over the world. Many more people came to be involved in the field of education and the global world woke up to the urgent need of universalising education. There was a sudden spurt in the establishing of "quality education institutions" on the one hand and there was an attempt to establish basic education institutions which focused mainly on literacy much more than education. Jesuit Education was not untouched by these developments. The schools and colleges in some places began to struggle to keep pace with the infrastructural and technological advancements and to maintain the leading role that they had in the field of education and in other places, Jesuit Education also began to focus on providing literacy to otherwise illiterate people. Quite naturally in a globalised world the meaning of excellence drifted from acquiring knowledge and life skills to achieving higher economic dividends as a result of the education that one has received. These could be some of the reasons for keeping us from promoting *eruditio* and *pietas* in Jesuit Education as St. Ignatius and his companions did. Another very important and rather sensitive issue is the religious intolerance which began to spread at a rapid speed in the late twentieth and early twenty first century. There was and is a tendency to keep anything associated with a religion or spirituality away from the education institution so that one does not come to be seen as promoting what is closer to a religion or spirituality. In this context, it is possible that Jesuit Education also began to understand excellence in the way the world sees it and attempts have been made to maintain the lead role in the field of education by moving along the same parameters as the world. But I would like to caution at this time this is not a general opinion and we should not apply this to every Jesuit education institution universally.

Our Response

We are involved in the ministry of education in a complex world where a number of stakeholders are involved and these have begun to increasingly assert themselves to claim their rightful place in the functioning of the education institutions. This is a positive and encouraging development if this can be rightly channelized to create a synergy to maximise the outcomes of our education institutions. The Jesuits have responded to such defining challenges in the ministry of education and will continue to do. We do so by sharing our vision of education with all the stakeholders and get them more and more deeply involved in the formation of our students.

Our Vision

The Jesuit vision of education is inspired by the Gospels and the Spiritual Exercises. The Principle and Foundation in the spiritual exercises becomes the launching pad for every ministry in the Society and it is the same for Jesuit Education as well. “Man (no exclusivity intended) is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul.” Our vision for education springs forth from this Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises. It further goes on to say that “The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining the end for which he is created.” The aim of the person, which we find in the Spiritual Exercises, is to do the will of God. That way, the use of all things will be in the measure that brings us closest to the aim for which we were created. This vision has to be practically lived out by everyone who is associated with the education of young minds.

The Educators

The educators have a very important role in the formation of men and women in our institutions. The role of the educator is not merely being knowledge providers but is a combination of roles. They play the roles of mentors, guides, counsellors, etc, in the lives of the students and their influence is not limited to the precincts of the institution either. Therefore it is necessary to have educators in our institutions who are affectively influenced by Ignatian Spirituality and Ignatian legacy as all educators are responsible for the formation of men and women of conscience in our schools and colleges. It is through the educators that we share our vision with the other stakeholders in this mission and it is through them that we achieve this goal of forming men and women of conscience. Therefore as it emerged in our earlier discussion school directors should

favour training of teachers as people of conscience, help them to get to know Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm values and have the opportunity to practice Exercises to form themselves to be men and women of conscience. We need to be conscious to educate with conscience. This may be the first step that we need to ensure in our ministry to fulfil our goals. I would suggest the following steps to make this a reality:

1. Every educator in our schools be familiarised with the Ignatian legacy through various programmes.
2. Provide opportunities for the practice of the Spiritual Exercises for our educators. It may be possible to engage them in the 19th annotation retreat.
3. Train the educators to practice the daily Ignatian Examen and make it a part of the daily activity in the school.
4. Share the Characteristics of Jesuit Education with all the educators and inculcate in them these core values.
5. Equip all the educators to practice the Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm by adapting the process of experience, action and reflection to every sphere of school life.

These steps will enable us to share our vision of education with our collaborators and make them equal and responsible partners in the formation of men and women of conscience.

The Parents and other Associates

We are not educating and forming our students in a vacuum. They are influenced by the surroundings in which they live and study. Their parents have an important responsibility to fulfil in this regard and many of them do this with love and care. The cultural and familial changes that have become part of the world today have affected the families and the children as well. The concept of single parent family, issues of separated family, idea of independence and freedom of children, peer group influence, socio-cultural values, etc. are adding to the baggage with which children are coming to the school and searching answers for themselves regarding life and undertaking the task of establishing themselves as successful individuals in their life. There are parents who are trying to adapt themselves to the developments of the changing world and those struggling to understand their roles and the ways to fulfil them. It is in this context that we attempt to form them as men and women of conscience. Needless to say that we ought to engage with the parents of the children as we become partakers in the formation of their children. Therefore they need to be well integrated into the mission of Jesuit Education.

The Students

They are the focal point of our mission. They come to our institutions with a variety of experiences, some liberating and some may be binding as well. They will have varying backgrounds, cultural upbringing, social values, etc. coupled with the challenges of technological developments which affect their outlook towards life. There will be differences in the way each of them understand the purpose of education and the manner in which they define excellence. In this context, it is necessary for us to adapt to their situation and create ways and means of interacting with them and engaging them in the learning process in a manner that will promote the formation of men and women of conscience. In this process anything over done and not in tune with their values and ways may be met with a sort of reluctance. Therefore we need to ensure that we are in tune with their context and do not take them totally out of it and place in a totally alien context. The Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm appears to be the way forward for us and there is a need to strengthen this process in Jesuit Education.

In order to understand the possibility doing this, let us once again return to the findings of our discussion. One question that arose during our discussion was what experiences we should offer to help train individuals of conscience. This question brought us to state that our educational activity should:

1. Involve the surroundings and context of the individuals and create opportunities to make them conscious (aware) of their context and experiences.
2. Taking advantage of these experiences and context and the advantage of news, recent events, etc. any subject or moment can be the time for activities to form individuals of conscience.
3. Offer opportunities and spaces for the students to enter into a reflection process based on their experiences and context and in the light of their learning and by putting students in contact with different socio-economic situations and by entering into a collaborative analyzing of reality and by identifying possible responses to these experiences and context.
4. While doing this remember to work with different personal dimensions: sensibility, memory, conscience, intuition (and discernment of intuitions), reflection, etc. Accompany them in this process and it could be the "*cura personalis*" that is required in our institutions.

5. In the light of the above undertaking work on content / curriculum: make curriculum proposals that favour integrated, well-rounded learning (cognitive, social-affectionate, critical thinking, creative thinking, metacognition, spiritual and religious dimension) and generate educational experiences that help to develop interiority; promote volunteering / social action to gain consciousness of surroundings and respond to them as integrated individuals.
6. Work on methodologies and tools that help acquire consciousness and develop conscience such as a personal or spiritual notebook / diary, individual meetings, individual learning, learning with /from others, etc. Ensure the progressiveness of these pedagogical proposals according to age and personal development in mind.

These suggestions could be understood as practical ways of making Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm alive in our institutions. In fact, these suggestions are the concretisation of the five elements of Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm viz., context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation. A renewed practice of these in our institutions could rejuvenate Jesuit Education to achieve its goal of forming men and women of conscience. Along with this, I would suggest as it emerged clearly in our discussion that we make the Ignatian Examen an integral part of the daily activities in the schools. It should be adapted to the socio-cultural-religious milieu of our institutions to make it relevant and meaningful rather than making it another ritual to be followed. The students should be presented with models that they could emulate and follow and specific time should be allotted in the daily calendar and routine of the schools to ensure the desired outcome of this exercise.

Networking

The analysis and suggestions so far is not a negation of many practices of the same or similar endeavours which are already in practice in quite a few of our institutions. They need to be strengthened, shared and new dimensions added through a collective enterprise of searching for more relevant ways of making these possible in all our institutions. Jesuit institutions are not individual institutions searching for excellence and fulfilling of responsibilities bestowed on them, but are part of a network that is collectively attempting to achieve the goal of forming men and women of conscience. Thus, collaboration and networking become ideal tools for moving forward. We do have a system of sharing and collaboration through the administrative set up of the Society and Jesuit Education. We need to develop a network (inter-school, inter-region, international, between different initiatives) to learn and help one another in this endeavour.

Technology allows us to work in an international / global network. I shall suggest a few steps to begin our process of searching in this regard.

1. Form and develop a core team (Jesuits and Educators) at the province or regional level to innovatively formulate strategies to implement the suggestions emerging from this conference in our institutions.
2. Form and develop an implementation team at each of our schools to ensure adherence to the programmes and adaptively implement the programmes.
3. Jesuit schools that are well endowed could adopt one or two Jesuit Schools which need assistance in terms of personnel, resources and training in their own provinces to universalise education.
4. Create a forum of Jesuit schools to share information and best practices that specifically aid the formation of men and women in our schools.
5. Undertake collaborative projects between students of internationally diverse student groups to make the practice of Ignatian Pedagogy Programme very enriching for the students and institutions.
6. Explore the possibilities of students' and educators' exchanges between schools to provide a real time experience to them.
7. Explore the possibilities of creating a forum where all these could be shared and networking between schools could be undertaken.

I would consider the above suggestions as just a few thought which could trigger our thoughts and enable us to enter into discussions and dialogues to make networking between our institutions a reality and an enriching experience.

Ignatian Heritage

While we attempt to put into practice many of the possible activities to promote formation of conscience among our students, we need to stay grounded on our heritage. Our heritage is the Ignatian legacy with its two main facets being the Spiritual Exercises and the daily Ignatian Examen. In the context of Jesuit education we have three more important documents which guide us in this enterprise of educating young minds and outline the roadmap which should become distinguishing aspects of our ministry. They are: Ratio Studiorum, The Characteristics of Jesuit Education and the Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm. These will remain the framework within which we explore possibilities of making Jesuit Education relevant and responding to the signs of the present day world.

The formation of persons of conscience should continue to be one of the most important components of Jesuit education. We need to keep in mind the Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises and the way St. Ignatius responded to the people who were requesting to open *studium generale* while we continue this mission of Jesuit Education. Our discerned priority will remain to be the formation of the youth. The Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm is the way forward for us and a strengthening of it in our institutions is the need of the hour. We achieve this by placing students in a continuous process of experience, action, and reflection which is the best tool to form persons of conscience and conscious individuals.

The Ignatian examen is a daily exercise of understanding ourselves in the light of the Spirit of God. It is here in the depths of our activity, that God moves us and deals with us most intimately. Our schools should aim at making this a part of the daily schedule and train our students to evaluate themselves and draw up resolutions to make them move forward in their formation. This could meet some challenges and maybe some reluctance in the midst of religious pluralism and intolerance. We need to be prudent to ensure that this exercise is not presented to the students as a Christian exercise but as a process of forming men and women of conscience. It is a challenge for us to make the Ignatian Examen and other Ignatian heritage a part of our Ignatian education.

Conclusion

The Society of Jesus continues to play an important role in the field of education around the world in terms of making education available to the farthest corners of the globe and providing quality education forming men and women of conscience, compassion, competence and commitment. It has set milestones in education and has been both a watch tower and light house showing the way of meaningful education to the entire world. The Society has the responsibility to ensure that education is not merely viewed in utilitarian terms forming employable men and women in the world today where economic success is fast becoming the criteria of measuring the usefulness of any endeavour. The formation of conscience should continue to be one of the major components of Jesuit education, helping persons to find an answer to the quest for meaning and transcendence. This task is fraught with challenges and possibly opposition as well. The Jesuits should create and provide a 21st century learning environment to the learners and ensure their development and formation as men and women of conscience.