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The Jesuit Way

Office of University Mission and Ministry

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The Jesuit Way
... at Fordham

Go forth and set the world on fire!

St. Ignatius Loyola
You are invited to be transformed.

Above all else, the primary mission of Fordham University is to transform for the better the life of each and every one of its students.

This is because Fordham believes, in a larger sense, in the transformation of the world through God’s redeeming love: one heart, one mind, one soul, one student at a time.
But, you might ask, from where does that mission come? And in what form does that transformation take place?

Fordham’s mission to transform the lives of others and, in turn, the world is embedded in Fordham’s great history and fostered by its heritage, both of which are rooted in the longstanding tenets and traditions of the Society of Jesus, otherwise simply known as the Jesuits.

Fordham invites you to engage in this transformation and to embrace all that has underscored the transformation of so many students and members of the Fordham family since the founding of our school in 1841.

“The mission of the Society of Jesus ... is a mission rooted in the belief that a new world of justice, love and peace needs educated persons of competence, conscience and compassion, men and women who are ready to embrace and promote all that is fully human, who are committed to working for the freedom and dignity of all peoples, and who are willing to do so in cooperation with others equally dedicated to the reform of society and its structures.”

“Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach”
(A 1993 statement of principles for Jesuit education around the globe)
A Living Tradition Begins
St. Ignatius Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits

In 1491, in the Basque country of northeastern Spain, Iñigo López de Oñaz y Loyola was born. The youngest of 13 children, Ignatius hardly knew his mother who tragically passed away when he was a child. His father died when he was 16, leaving Ignatius to discern his own gifts and talents, and thus create a path on which his life would continue.

In the spring of 1521, Ignatius suffered a debilitating leg injury in a battle with the French. The image he had of himself as a handsome and fashionable courtier was forever changed.

Then 30 years old, convalescing and uncertain of his future, Ignatius discovered new wisdom within books. The only reading material available was an illustrated life of Jesus Christ and a book detailing the life stories of many Christian saints.

Inspired by the wisdom he found in Christ’s teachings, Ignatius undertook a new spiritual journey. With a strong reliance on contemplation, Ignatius found the critical link to action. And in 1540, with a small group of friends, he founded the Society of Jesus: “contemplatives in action.”

Ignatius’ followers quickly built a reputation as scholars and teachers. Students from all over Europe flocked to the burgeoning Jesuit schools. As his original companions traveled the globe, they opened schools and colleges where there had been none before. By 1600, there were 245 schools.
Living the Vision

Since the earliest days of the Society of Jesus, Jesuits have grounded their lives and their labors in a set of spiritual practices formulated by Ignatius himself.

Eventually known as the Spiritual Exercises, these guiding directives were designed to help them cultivate a deep sense of personal mission and prepare them to put their imaginations to work in the service of God, the Church, and the wider world.

All that they strived to do each and every day of their lives was intended to be initiated and completed for the Greater Glory of God (Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam).

Around the globe and throughout the centuries, Ignatius’ distinctive spiritual practices have given ongoing vision and meaningful direction to the lives of more than a hundred thousand Jesuits.

Moreover, people without number, both within and outside of Catholicism, have drawn sustenance and renewed spiritual energies from Ignatius’ insights and wisdom.

Within years of their humble beginnings, Jesuits established numerous educational institutions which would eventually spread and flourish the world over as they gave practical direction to ideals articulated in Ignatius’ Exercises.

Today, the educational experience at Fordham University is grounded in the very same Jesuit tradition that first began with Ignatius and his initial companions and continues to this very day with the ongoing works of their modern successors and collaborators.
Engaging the World

Saint Ignatius, as he would later become known, believed that life was a constant interplay between action and reflection, work and prayer, doing and knowing. He maintained that you learn best when you are actively engaged in the learning process which Fordham’s mission statement aptly describes as the Discovery of Wisdom.

Here at Fordham, we celebrate those intellectual and interior discoveries which will enable you to grasp ever more complex realities, embrace their significance in your life and thus engage you more effectively with an increasingly diverse and dynamic world.

Such active and ongoing seeking and searching also encourage each individual to press beyond the frontiers of intellectual growth.

Extending an Invitation

As a person with a unique set of God-given attributes and abilities, you are invited to refine not only your mind, but also your sense of self-understanding. You are called to become more fully prepared to enrich the world through your talents and professional accomplishments—whether in the realm of public service or business, media or ministry, healthcare, education, the arts, or beyond.

This invitation is continuously extended to the entire Fordham community—students, faculty, staff, alumni, people of all backgrounds and faith traditions, as well as those with no religious formation or identity. For our students especially, we feel strongly that these years in your life are about discovering what you believe and finding where you belong.

It is an invitation that encourages you to become who you are and what you are called to be. This powerful invitation, deeply rooted in the Jesuit tradition, comes from the heart of God, that quiet Voice within each one of us.
As we strive together to live our lives “for the Greater Glory of God,” a phrase which the Jesuits crafted carefully as one of their identifying hallmarks, St. Ignatius insists that we remain flexible and ready to adapt ourselves to the everchanging times, places, circumstances and events in our lives. In this spirit, a Jesuit education at Fordham is a living tradition and an ongoing journey.

Yet there are some elements common to all Jesuit schools as established throughout the world. To these shared yet distinctive characteristics, we now turn.

**Defining the Jesuit Way of Educating**

**Caring for the Whole Person**

Jesuit education is grounded in the conviction that one’s full education consists of more than just intellectual development. While it is possible to grow intellectually without engaging in moral reflection or taking stock of one’s emotional responses to new information and new ways of understanding, such an approach is ultimately lacking. For without serious moral engagement and attention to one’s deepest desires, intellectual achievement alone becomes stale; it lacks the power to effect real transformation by bringing meaningful direction to one’s life.

St. Ignatius experienced God not as distant and removed but as a caring teacher personally involved with his life, eliciting in him new hopes and bold desires, gently instructing him in the ways of prayer. Similarly, St. Ignatius wanted those involved in his schools to care for each student personally, always attentive to the particular needs and talents of each person. Such care for each and every student entrusted to our care became known simply as *cura personalis*.

Cared for and challenged as the unique individual you are, Fordham invites you to go beyond learning just academic content and to embrace true wisdom in the context of careful moral consideration as you engage in a process of searching self-reflection that will add needed dimension to your life and focus to your decisions.

**Encouraging Ongoing Discernment**

Ignatius also believed that the practice of making informed choices and thoughtfully reflecting on their consequences, great and small, was crucial to living a life shaped by a sense of vocation. We are most likely to recognize and respond to God’s call, Ignatius suggested, when we are most mindful of our motivations and most attentive to our aspirations. Consequently, in his *Spiritual Exercises* he emphasized a practice known as *discernment*.

Discernment requires an individual to sift persistently through thoughts, emotions, and desires and, in so doing, to come to understand what generates a sense of internal passion and fulfillment in contrast to what leads toward apathy and emptiness. When discernment becomes an everyday habit, it both disposes us to make effective, fruitful decisions and bestows invaluable perspective on how our particular gifts might best be put at the service of a greater good.
Striving for Excellence: the Magis

This leads to another foundational principle that Ignatius imparted to Jesuit education: the magis, the more. Seeking the magis means always reaching for creative new horizons in the service of God and the service of others. It means putting our imaginations to work for the good of the world and learning how to be more magnanimous towards others, more selfless and more generous with our talents and gifts. It means that the good we do for others becomes the standard against which we measure all our efforts.

“[In following what St. Ignatius teaches us, the main element ... is to learn to be magnanimous. What does being magnanimous mean? It means having a great heart, having greatness of mind; it means having great ideals, the wish to do great things to respond to what God asks of us.]”

Pope Francis
(from his address to students of Jesuit institutions)

Thus, the magis principle inspires a distinctive commitment to advancing justice in the world. Jesuit education aims to form men and women for and with others—persons who not only use their talents for the greater good, but who are also committed to standing in solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized and with all whose human dignity is ignored, imperiled, or diminished.

Far from an abstract or overly idealistic goal, the promotion of justice in our world should compel us all to act justly in our daily lives—in our relationships and our work—so as to be able to rise and meet the many daunting challenges that undermine human dignity in our day and age. Jesuits refer to such a perspective on life as living a faith that does justice.

Community service projects
Finding God in All Things

Finally, Jesuit education strongly encourages your “finding God in all things.”

This principle arises from the world-affirming perspective given to us by Ignatius who believed that every aspect of human life was a portal through which an individual could be drawn into a deeper, more affective and experiential relationship with God.

Jesuit schools are fitting places to help us find God in all things. Students take a variety of courses in different disciplines. Here, we can find God’s fingerprints in all that we study. For example, because God is found in the natural world around us, we study biology, chemistry, and physics. Because God is found in our humanity, we study the works and ideas of women and men across the ages. We revel in the beauty of fine art and literature, we ask questions fundamental to the human person in philosophy and theology, and we see the best and worst of human nature in history. Always a very practical man, Ignatius would no doubt agree that we can also find God in our business courses, in the innovation that leads to progress and in whatever promotes genuine human community and economic justice.

In particular, the sense of wonder that comes with new discovery and the excitement of creative innovation provide especially potent moments during which we can come to know God more fully. In these moments, you are invited to recognize how God becomes present to you and experience how you are transformed in the process.

“The world is charged with the grandeur of God”

Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J. (1844-1889)
The Jesuit Way:

An Invitation

So much more could be said of the Jesuit Way, but suffice it to say that it is an invitation that is extended to you each and every day of your life at Fordham.

Just know that this invitation to be transformed for the better is a standing invitation.

Our hope is that you will embrace it with energy and live it with vigor for it is an invitation you will never regret having accepted.

A • M • D • G

Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam
1491 St. Ignatius Loyola is born in the Basque region of northern Spain
1521 Ignatius, a soldier, is wounded in battle and begins a spiritual journey that would eventually lead him to found the Society of Jesus
1540 The Society of Jesus is formally founded with the approval of Pope Paul III
1542 St. Francis Xavier, S.J., becomes the first Jesuit to enter India
1548 First Jesuit college is founded in Sicily
1549 First Jesuits arrive in Brazil
1551 Gregorian University founded in Rome by the Jesuits
1556 Ignatius dies in Rome
1583 Matteo Ricci, S.J., becomes the first Jesuit to enter China
1612 Early theorist of calculus, André Taquet, S.J., is born
1613 Jesuits establish a mission in North America, their first in what would later become the United States
1623 Javeriana University is founded in Colombia by the Jesuits
1634 Jesuits establish a mission in Maryland
1646 St. Isaac Jogues, S.J., missionary among the Mohawk Indians, is martyred near Auriesville, New York
1665 Jesuits establish a mission in Wisconsin
1670 Scientist Francesco Lana de Terzi, S.J., publishes illustrations of an early prototype for air travel
1691 Jesuits establish a mission in Arizona
1773 Society of Jesus is disbanded by order of Pope Clement XIV
1789 First American Jesuit University is established in Washington D.C.
1814 Society of Jesus is restored by order of Pope Pius VII
1818 Angelo Secchi, S.J., pioneer in the field of astrophysics, is born
1841 St. John’s College, renamed Fordham University by Archbishop John Hughes in 1907, is founded at Rose Hill
1844 Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., renowned poet, is born
1859 Jesuits found Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines
1860 St. Xavier College is founded by the Jesuits in India
1881 Philosopher, scientist, and mystic, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., is born
1887 Jesuits establish a mission in Alaska
1896 Jesuits found Campion Hall, a college of Oxford University, England
1904 John Courtney Murray, S.J., political theorist and leading figure at Vatican Council II, is born
1904 Theologian Karl Rahner, S.J., is born
1912 Philosopher and linguistics scholar, Walter Ong, S.J., is born
1913 Jesuits found Sophia University in Japan
1925 Michel de Certeau, S.J., philosopher and historian, is born
1925 Biblical scholar Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., is born
1931 Jesuits found Baghdad College in Iraq
1960 Jesuits found Sogang University in South Korea
1975 The Society of Jesus recommits itself to working internationally for justice, especially among the poor
1984 Jesuits found Hekima College in Kenya
1989 Six Jesuits at the University of Central America in El Salvador are martyred, along with two of their companions, for their advocacy for the poor
1994 Jesuits found Arrupe College in Zimbabwe
2013 Pope Francis (Jorge Mario Bergolio, S.J.) is elected the first Jesuit pontiff in history

Cunniffe Fountain, Rose Hill Campus
“For over a century and a half, the men and women of Fordham have gone forth ... renewed in faith and eager to transform the world—either in heroic ways or in quiet and quietly effective ways.”

Joseph M. McShane, S.J., President, Fordham University

St. John’s College (Fordham University), founded in 1841

Fordham University Hall of Honor

Archbishop John Hughes
First Archbishop of New York | Founder of St. John’s College*

John Cardinal McCloskey
Archbishop of New York | First American named to the College of Cardinals | First President of St. John’s College

Colonel Robert Gould Shaw
St. John’s College | Commander of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment in the Civil War

General James R. O’Beirne
St. John’s College, Class of 1853 | Civil War Hero | Provost Marshal of Washington, D.C., at the death of President Lincoln

John Lafarge
St. John’s College | Stained-glass Designer and Artist

John Cardinal Farley
St. John’s College, Class of 1867 | Archbishop of New York

Esteban Bellán
St. John’s College, Class of 1868 | First Caribbean Major League Baseball Player

John Gilmary Shea
St. John’s College | Author and Historian

James J. Walsh
St. John’s College, Class of 1884 | Author and Historian

Clarence R. Edwards
Professor of Military Science and Tactics, St. John’s College and Fordham University | Brigadier General, U.S. Army

John Francis “Jack” Coffey
Fordham College, Class of 1910 | Athlete, Coach, and Graduate Manager

Francis Cardinal Spellman
Fordham College, Class of 1911 | Archbishop of New York

Frank Frisch
Fordham College, Class of 1920 | Member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame

Ruth Whitehead Whaley
School of Law, Class of 1924 | First African-American Woman Admitted to Practice Law in New York State

Honorable Malcolm Wilson
Fordham College, Class of 1933: School of Law, Class of 1936 | Governor of the State of New York

Victor Francis Hess
Professor of Physics | Nobel Laureate in Physics, 1936

Vincent T. “Vince” Lombardi
Fordham College, Class of 1937 | Legendary Coach of the Green Bay Packers

Wellington Mara
Fordham College, Class of 1937 | Owner of the New York Giants

*Fordham University was originally named St. John’s College; it became Fordham University in 1907.
**The College of Business Administration was renamed the Gabelli School of Business in 2010.
Richard J. Bennett
Fordham College, Class of 1938; School of Law, Class of 1942  |  Chief Executive Officer, Schering-Plough Corporation

George E. Doty
Fordham College, Class of 1938  |  Chief Executive Officer, Goldman Sachs

Vincent E. “Vinn” Scully
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1949  |  National Baseball Hall of Fame  |  Ford C. Frick Award Winner, 1982  |  Voice of the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers

Robert “Bob” Keeshan aka Captain Kangaroo
Undergraduate School of Education, Class of 1951  |  Emmy and Peabody Award-Winning Children’s Educator and Entertainer

The Rev. Vincent R. Capodanno, Servant of God
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1952  |  U.S. Navy Chaplain, Recipient of the Medal of Honor

Theodore Cardinal McCarrick

Charles Osgood
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1954  |  Award-winning Journalist

Robert E. Campbell
College of Business Administration,** Class of 1955  |  Vice Chairman, Johnson & Johnson

Thomas W. “Tom” Courtney
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1955  |  Gold Medalist, Track and Field, 1956 Summer Olympics

Alan Alda
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1956  |  Award-winning Actor

John D. Feerick
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1958; School of Law, Class of 1961  |  Dean of Fordham Law School (1982-2002)

Geraldine Ferraro
Fordham School of Law, Class of 1960  |  First Woman Nominated by a National Party for Vice President of the United States  |  U.S. Congresswoman (1979-1985)

E. Gerald Corrigan, Ph.D.
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Classes of 1965 and 1971  |  President, Federal Reserve Bank of New York

Robert C. Murray
Fordham College at Rose Hill, Class of 1968  |  Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, Recipient of the Medal of Honor

Rose Marie Bravo
Thomas More College, Class of 1971  |  Chief Executive Officer, Burberry

Denzel Washington
Fordham College at Lincoln Center, Class of 1977  |  Academy Award-winning Actor

Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.
First United States Theologian Named to College of Cardinals  |  Laurence J. McGinley Professor of Religion and Society (1988-2008)

Jesuit Colleges and Universities in the United States

1789 Georgetown University
1818 St. Louis University
1830 Spring Hill College
1831 Xavier University
1841 Fordham University
1843 College of the Holy Cross
1851 St. Joseph’s University
1851 Santa Clara University
1852 Loyola University of Maryland
1855 University of San Francisco
1864 Boston College
1870 Canisius College
1870 Loyola University of Chicago
1872 St. Peter’s University
1877 Regis University
1877 University of Detroit Mercy
1878 Creighton University
1881 Marquette University
1886 John Carroll University
1887 Gonzaga University
1888 University of Scranton
1891 Seattle University
1910 Rockhurst College
1911 Loyola Marymount University
1912 Loyola University New Orleans
1942 Fairfield University
1946 LeMoyne College
1954 Wheeling Jesuit College

Number of Jesuit colleges and universities:

Worldwide: 191
In the United States: 28

Statue of St. Ignatius,
Lincoln Center Campus
Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, falling in Love in a quite absolute, final way.

What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything.

It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, whom you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.

Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.

Pedro Arrupe, S.J. (1907-1991), 28th Superior General of the Society of Jesus
“God is certainly in the past because we can see the footprints. And God is also in the future as a promise. But the ‘concrete’ God, so to speak, is today ... God is to be encountered in the world of today.”

Pope Francis, First Jesuit Pope