



CURIA GENERALIZIA DELLA COMPAGNIA DI GESÙ

**Assimilating and implementing
the Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029**

2019/13

TO ALL MAJOR SUPERIORS

Dear friends and companions,

This Easter time of hope and new life presents a good moment to reflect on how we can begin to implement our new Universal Apostolic Preferences as requested by the last General Congregation:

“GC 36 asks Major Superiors to ensure that apostolic discernment and planning in their Provinces or Regions is consistent with the universal apostolic preferences of the Society and the apostolic discernment and planning of their Conferences, so that the mission preferences of the whole Society are taken into account in the ministries of their Provinces or Regions” (Decree 2, n.22).

With this letter, I ask every Major Superior to take this mandate of the GC as a mission and to ensure that we start to implement the Universal Apostolic Preferences effectively in the next years. Key in this process are all Jesuits, our partners in mission as well as other groups and peoples of good will who also share our mission and hopes. The Preferences are a path to renewal of the Society of Jesus. They can also help us to participate in the renewal of the Church today as the *mínima Compañía colaboradora*.

The Preferences provide a spiritual path. They do not seek merely to establish static apostolic ends or actions but, rather, they are a *dynamic means* for us to continue to be led by the Spirit of renewal that inspired GC36. The Universal Apostolic Preferences are orientations, not priorities. A priority is something that is regarded as more important than others; a preference is an orientation, a signpost, a call. Preferences are not just about doing but about being; they involve our entire life. They are calls extending over the next ten years, calls that come to us from the Holy Father himself.

How do we begin?

As we start, from the single integrated reality of life and mission we need to find the right positive tension between being and doing. There can be a temptation to rush ahead, or to fit what we are already doing into the Preferences, or to tick the boxes to affirm our current plans. But by doing this we would miss the call to a deeper conversion and to a deeper renewal; we would miss the *magis*. If the Preferences are truly to be a dynamic path that can guide us for the next ten years, then beginning the journey patiently and prayerfully is of the utmost importance.



We find the means to guide our process in the first Preference. The tools for conversion and for fruitful action lie in our rich spiritual tradition of prayer, Spiritual Exercises, spiritual conversation, discernment in common. These will help us embody all four Preferences in an integrated way. We cannot skip this aspect. If we skip it, we will miss the chance for a genuine engagement with ourselves, our partners and with the reality around us. Most of all, we will miss the call of our Risen Lord and the new life that He can offer us on our path of renewal through the Preferences.

Sensing the Reality, Hearts once again on fire

- We begin by an application of the senses. A Major Superior can help Jesuits and our partners in mission as individuals, communities and institutions to hear the cries of those who are seeking God, the poor, oppressed and excluded, of young people struggling to find a future, of the earth that is exploited and in need of healing.
- As we seek to walk this path of renewal, I now make some concrete proposals: invite Jesuits to experience more deeply the Spiritual Exercises, starting from an honest evaluation of how they do their annual retreats and encouraging them to be accompanied in their Exercises and spiritual life.
- Give our partners in mission real opportunities to enter into the experience of the Spiritual Exercises. This means, among other resources, to have spiritual directors available, and to reserve time in the yearly calendar and in schedules of work.
- Encourage Jesuits and our partners in mission to engage in a prayerful and contemplative reading of the letter of promulgation of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (February 19, 2019) followed by spiritual conversation. The attached list of resources has materials to guide a first set of conversations, and more will be provided.
- A video on the Preferences is available as are various presentations. These can help as you begin community meetings or meetings of boards of apostolic works.
- There is a list of resources attached to this letter that gives further indications. Please use them as you find helpful and appropriate; they will promote understanding and foster motivation.
- Integration of our work on the Preferences can happen in annual retreats, in Province meetings and consults, in formation gatherings, in community meetings.
- Your Regional Assistant, the Formation Counsellor as well as the Counsellor for Discernment and Apostolic Planning are available to give practical help.

The Crucified and Risen Lord goes before us into the Galilees of our day and promises to be with us until the end of the ages. He will never desert us; he is always at our side.

Formation

Since the Preferences hope to bring about a profound conversion in our life-mission by 2029, it is vital that they be integrated and implemented in the formation of our young men. Toward this end, I propose these two concrete steps:

- First, all formation communities should prayerfully and contemplatively read the letter of promulgation of the Preferences, and take time to hear the cries of the people and the earth in their local context.



In a time of increasing superficiality, our men in formation must experience how to enter the path of the Preferences more deeply through their own deep experience of the Spiritual Exercises, spiritual conversation, study and ministry.

They should be moulded by the Spiritual Exercises and come to know well its dynamic and potentiality to accompany others.

- Second, the Preferences emphasise that now, more than ever, the Society needs to re-commit itself to intellectual depth that has always characterized our service to the Church. To support this commitment, I am asking that the revision of intellectual formation begun by Father Nicolás move into its next phase. We will be sending out further details and templates.

Collaboration

The Preferences call us to a deeper understanding of our call to be collaborators in the mission of Christ entrusted to the Church we are part of. We have the wide vision of the Gospel that invites us to a more effective collaboration. When we fully share this mission with our lay and religious partners, we find grace, vision, creativity, and abundant help.

I, therefore, ask Major Superiors to be sure these partners are included as you begin to pray together, share spiritual conversation, and listen to the cries of the Preferences in your local contexts. If the Preferences truly are to change how we work together as one people of God, then a spirit of collaboration must inspire every stage of implementation right from the start.

Conclusion

Easter is a call to find anew the Risen Lord and to walk with Him building this narrative of the Kingdom of God, a narrative so different from the narrative of the world around us. Our ten-year framework has begun; it will not leave the Society unchanged. We will be different in 2029 than we are now. We desire, after these ten years, to be more in tune with the cries of our world, closer to each other and to our partners, more at the side of Christ and closer to Him.

In these weeks of Easter may each member of the Society of Jesus and those who partner us in mission find consolation and direction in these Universal Apostolic Preferences. May we work with the Risen Lord to bring consolation, hope and healing to our world and may the joy of the Risen Lord be with all of you in this Easter Season.

With warm personal regards,

Arturo Sosa, S.I.
Superior General

Rome, Easter Sunday, 21st April 2019

(Original: English)

6 resources to help in the implementation of the UAP

UAP Video

The official video of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP).

<https://youtu.be/TgUJvtzUuZA>



JCAP video

The JCAP video presentation of the Universal Apostolic Preferences.

<https://youtu.be/80znqgitP48>



Letter Fr. General

The letter from Fr. General where he presents and explains the meaning of each preference. Please find the letter in the *Ad usum* section on scuria.global.



www.ignatianresources.org

A website full of resources on Discernment in common and apostolic planning.



www.pilgrimleadership.com

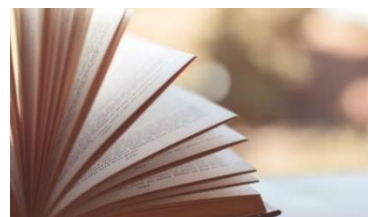
A website with resources on Ignatian Leadership and tips on how to build your own course.



Prayers

A collection of prayers to help you reflect on the UAP.

jesuits.global/en/uap



Further resources are available from the office of Discernment and Apostolic Planning, contact:

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