

Go Forth!

UMI Planning | 2020-2025



DRAFT



For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. — Jeremiah 29:11

Universal Apostolic Preferences

Showing the Way to God

*Show the way to God
through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment*

Walking with the Excluded

*Walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world,
those whose dignity has been violated,
in a mission of reconciliation and justice*

Journeying with Youth

*Accompany young people
in the creation of a hope-filled future*

Caring for our Common Home

*Collaborate, with Gospel depth,
for the protection and renewal of God's creation*



DRAFT



Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. — Proverbs 3:5-6

UMI Guiding Principles

The Midwest Jesuit Provincial shares these guiding principles for the consideration of fellow Jesuits, Catholics, other Christians, people whose pathways to the divine are other faiths, people who struggle with their faith, and all people of good will who labor within and are served by our diverse ministries.

2020-2025

In response to these Universal Apostolic Preferences, we seek union in mission over uniformity of expression. By reading the signs of the times, we likewise have discerned these principles as essential for the religious and spiritual vitality of our mission in the Midwest Province today and into the future. These principles are to be used in the important task and function of the Province office when evaluating and deploying resources, including Jesuits, for future service. They will also be used in conjunction with existing protocols for evaluating the continued sponsorship of ministries. The leadership of Jesuit sponsored works are invited to embrace, support and advance these guiding principles.

1 The Midwest Province recognizes that our ministry is carried out in a “**culture of encounter**” with diverse constituencies: fellow Catholic believers who regularly practice their faith, as well baptized Catholics who no longer practice their faith regularly; other Christians, people of diverse faith traditions, and people who struggle to find their pathway to God. Amidst this encounter, the Midwest Province is passionate about **evangelization** in the service of faith and the promotion of social justice to share the joy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We desire to lead others to Christ and the sacraments in and through welcoming and inclusive church communities of hope. As Pope Francis has written in *Evangelium Gaudium*, “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin,

sorrow, emptiness and loneliness. With Christ Joy is constantly born anew.” (EG 1)

2. The Midwest Province is committed to promoting **lay formation in Ignatian Spirituality and leadership** as both a pathway to God as well as an essential strategy for the religious and spiritual vitality of both our sponsored works as well as the parishes which have been entrusted to our care. Lay formation opportunities will ensure that the lifeblood of Ignatian Spirituality will pulse in our Ignatian colleagues and our works. The Midwest Province is committed to supporting an increase in local, regional and conference-wide initiatives in Ignatian formation both within and across apostolic sectors, and the provincial asks our sponsored works to increase their commitment of human and financial resources to these efforts. The provincial invites our larger and better resourced works to help support and include our smaller works in these efforts.

The Midwest Jesuits also are deeply grateful for the ways in which the **lay spirituality of our Ignatian colleagues** and the people of God we serve in our ministries both enrich Jesuits and form us in our understanding of the lived experience of the people of God and their experience of the church.

More than two decades after the GC 34 Decree 14 “Jesuits and the Situation of Women in Church and Civil Society” (1996) the Midwest Province recognizes that while there has been great progress in some areas, such as greater visibility of women in important leadership roles in many Jesuit sponsored works, the **Midwest Province commits itself to striving for greater recognition, respect, inclusion and empowerment of the gifts of women in the life of our church and our Jesuit works.**

3. The Midwest Province affirms that **sponsorship** of Jesuit works depends upon the religious and spiritual vitality of the mission, along with a clear relationship with and accountability to the provincial regarding mission effectiveness, and through the provincial to the Superior General; sponsorship will not depend upon the number of Jesuits missioned to a sponsored work. There have been in the past and there will be in the future apostolic works sponsored by the Society of Jesus which do not have full-time Jesuits assigned to them that are very effective Jesuit sponsored apostolates. We are committed to offering high quality *cura apostolica* to our sponsored works primarily through the support of provincial assistants.



4. The Midwest Province will strive to encourage and support **regional/metro “communities-for-mission”** across apostolic sectors. Inspired by St. Ignatius and the first companions, we seek to create and support communities of Ignatian colleagues and Jesuits who take time to pray together, inspire one another, celebrate, offer mutual support, learn and grow in the service of our mission both within apostolates and across regions and networks. Local Jesuit communities should nourish and model what being on mission together looks like.

The province will begin to partner with regional leaders, both Jesuit and lay, to plan a pilot cycle of large metro/regional gatherings beginning in 2021 as a catalyst and “sacrament” of our common mission across apostolates in each region. We affirm the value of **spiritual conversation and discernment in common** as the foundation for decision-making at every level of our sponsored ministries.

5. The Midwest Province affirms **racial healing and reconciliation** as a shared priority for the Jesuits and our sponsored works. We

are mindful of the unique histories of the diverse racial and ethnic groups we serve throughout the Midwest and Great Plains. With great sorrow and regret, the Jesuits in the USA recognize and accept our historical complicity in the institution of slaveholding, for which we have apologized and asked forgiveness. As Fr. Timothy Kesicki, S.J., the President of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the USA said at Georgetown on April 18, 2017, “We have greatly sinned, in our thoughts and in our words, in what we have done and in what we have failed to do.” With great sorrow and regret, the Midwest

Jesuits also recognize the deep and painful wounds of many Lakota Native Americans from the boarding school era on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations in South Dakota when native culture was not respected. We recognize that seeking truth, healing, reconciliation and transformation in communities scarred by the sins of racism and sinful social structures must be intentional and ongoing. Conversion of minds and hearts is essential; so too is working together to dismantle systemic racism. We invite our sponsored works to join us in this critically important mission priority.



6. The Midwest Province affirms the importance of **depth in the intellectual life** as a defining characteristic of all Jesuit ministry. We recognize that **higher education** in the USA and, with it, Jesuit higher education, are both at a critical turning point in terms of responding to demographic shifts as well as evolving student interests for new programming in response to a rapidly changing economy. At the same time, there is a need to contain costs and seek new revenues, with an eye towards sustainability and affordability for the sake of maintaining and increasing access to Jesuit higher education. For a myriad of reasons, exercising religious and spiritual leadership on college campuses can be very challenging. The Midwest Province accepts these challenges and seeks to encourage our six sponsored universities to strive for greater religious and spiritual vitality, for the greater glory of God. With Fr. Sosa, we are convinced that Jesuit higher education at its best exercises transformative leadership for social transformation in the service of God's kingdom.

The Midwest Province recognizes that higher education is the one apostolic sector which will see the largest decrease in actual numbers of Jesuits working in this sector over the next 5-10 years, precisely

because of the large concentration of Jesuits active today in higher education who are 70+ years of age. The Midwest Province will cooperate with the anticipated articulation in May 2020 of **national missioning priorities for Jesuits in higher education**, especially for professors, administrators and leaders in mission effectiveness formation. We recognize that it takes a larger number of Jesuits to have a significant impact at our larger, more complex universities. At the same time, a small group of dedicated Jesuits working together in a multi-apostolic community can make a valuable contribution in pastoral ministry and Ignatian formation at our smaller universities. The Midwest Province will strive to support all six UMI universities in their pastoral and sacramental activities as well as their mission effectiveness programming.

7. The Midwest Province anticipates that, with some exceptions, **Jesuit staffing levels in other apostolic sectors outside of higher education will remain fairly similar in the coming five years**, although from time to time some apostolates may feel that they are "one Jesuit short" for a time. Jesuit parishes may draw more on the supply services of other Jesuits in the region if and when a given parish needs this assistance due to

fewer full-time Jesuits assigned to a given parish. This will provide a privileged opportunity for Jesuits in a given metro area to support one another's ministry across apostolic sectors. In some places, Jesuit parishes can serve as a "hub" for the Ignatian mission in a given region. Similar opportunities and needs may present themselves for punctual support of Jesuit high school ministry and retreat house ministry by Jesuits whose primary ministry is in another sector. An exception to this goal of "level staffing" across works would be the Kentucky Mission, which will be greatly reduced in Jesuit personnel in the coming five years. The provincial will propose to Father General that our house in Lexington become a house of the Cincinnati Jesuit Community. This young diocese has deeply appreciated the contributions of Jesuits over the past 35+ years. We will strive to continue offering spiritual direction in this diocese going forward. The provincial also anticipates the likelihood that Jesuit ministry at Walsh Jesuit High School will, at some point, be assured from the Schell House Community in Cleveland. Finally, the provincial will propose that the two Jesuit communities in South Dakota be united with the house on the Rosebud Reservation becoming a dependent house of the community on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

8. The Midwest Province reaffirms its long-standing tradition of hospitality to international Jesuits and lay colleagues who enrich our communities and ministries and help us gain greater perspective. Recognizing the **universal dimension of the Jesuit vocation**, the Midwest Province will also continue to be generous to the needs of the Roman Houses and other international assignments, remembering the invitation of Fr. Nicolas to strive to have at least 10% of our active membership ministering outside of our own culture. We will continue to deepen our "convenio" relationships with the Eastern Africa Province, Kohima Region of Northeast India, and the Province of Peru, seeking reciprocity and gifts freely given. In addition, we will help our UMI ministries and stakeholders develop a more contemporary missiology. We support international solidarity working in a counter-cultural way against "America First" mindsets and misinformation. We will cooperate with other provinces in the Conference to strengthen international partnering.

9. The Midwest Province Jesuits embrace the call of GC 34, stating that **for Jesuits "community life is itself a mission"**; the brotherhood afforded by religious community in and of itself is an apostolic mission where Jesuits ground



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And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. — Romans 8:28





their identity. Jesuit friendships within community and beyond are to be prized and fostered. The provincial encourages the value of area-wide gatherings to offer mutual support and help Jesuits thrive as a religious and apostolic body. The provincial will be intentional in assigning men to communities, taking into consideration the desires and needs of both the individual Jesuit and local communities. The provincial recognizes that some Jesuits can live happily and healthfully in very small communities where sometimes only two or three Jesuits are living together for the sake of

the mission. Most Jesuits need greater fraternal Jesuit companionship and support on a daily basis in order to thrive. Multi-apostolic communities will be the norm and communities serving one apostolate will be the exception.

10. The Midwest Province recognizes that the **promotion of vocations** provides a vital lifeblood for our mission. We affirm the promotion of vocations to lay ministry, religious life, and priesthood as the work of the whole church, and we rejoice in the diversity of vocations in our church.

Regarding vocations to the Society of Jesus, the Midwest Jesuits value each enquirer and candidate as a man of faith, working to find his calling in relation to the Church and the world. We are determined to grow the pool of qualified men in discernment for the Midwest Province. We are committed to a team approach which values different skill sets, experiments and learns from our experience, and whose knowledge can be passed on to the men who care for the vocations process after us. We promise to employ the highest professional, pastoral, ethical, and spiritual

standards in the application process for the good of both the applicants and the Society. We depend upon the collaboration of Jesuits, our lay and religious colleagues in mission, and sponsored ministries to promote vocations to the Society of Jesus.





Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed. — Proverbs 15:22

Reflection Questions

For individual Jesuits and Ignatian colleagues in mission: Within my current ministry and work, what new initiatives might I personally undertake to further the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) and these 10 Guiding Principles for the Midwest Jesuit province in the coming five years? What help would I need from other Jesuits, Ignatian colleagues, our sponsored apostolates, and/or the Midwest Jesuit Province in order to undertake these new initiatives?

For Jesuit communities and sponsored apostolates: What ongoing conversion of minds and hearts is called for by the UAPs and the 10 Guiding Principles? What new initiatives might we undertake to further the Universal Apostolic preferences and these 10 Guiding Principles for the Midwest Jesuit province in the coming five years? What help would Jesuit communities and sponsored apostolates need from Jesuits, Ignatian colleagues, other sponsored apostolates, and/or the Midwest Jesuit Province in order to undertake these new initiatives?

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With Christ joy is constantly born anew.*

— Pope Francis, in *Evangelii Gaudium*



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