

# Alpha Sigma Nu

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**"Once we employ  
our Ignatian tools  
of understanding  
for the purposes of  
racial justice, our  
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for transformative  
change."**

-MARY WARDELL-GHIRARDUZZI



*The Honor Society of Jesuit  
Colleges and Universities*



**T**his edition of our *Alpha Sigma Nu Magazine* focuses on Ignatian spirituality — a richly unique approach to living and nurturing one's Christian faith.

While Ignatian perspectives and methods can help greatly with major life decisions (marriage, career, etc.), the spirituality of the Jesuits is especially valuable in the course of one's daily life, in the flow of family and job and community and all that's included in the everyday.

#### ON THE COVER

"The Examen" statue at Fairfield University depicting identical, mirrored figures of Saint Ignatius in black and white. Created by Jeremy Leichman and Joan Benefiel in 2011.

Two facets of Ignatian spirituality have been valuable for me over the years: the challenge to find God in all things and the realization of the fundamental link between faith and justice.

Finding God in all things is a challenge and a comfort. A challenge in that we're asked to find the divine in the daily—in a smile from a colleague, in the tantrum of a two-year-old, in a project gone humorously awry. At the same time we're challenged to find God, we're comforted by the presence of God, affirmed by our faith, in our daily lives. So, as in any treasured relationship, the presence of the other (Other) is a reality to be constantly re-discovered and continuously affirmed.

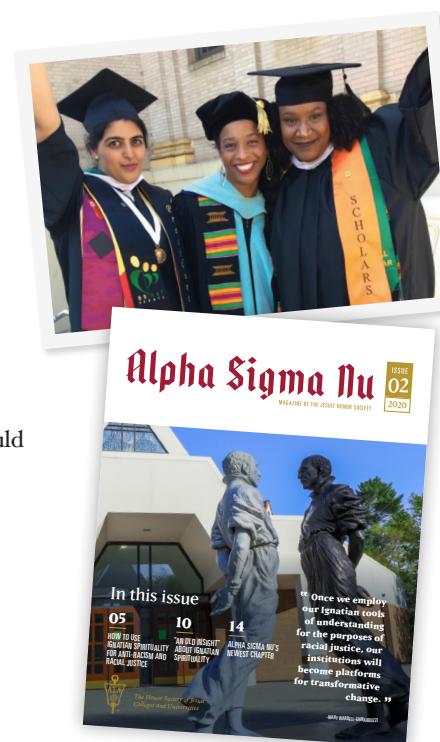
The unity of faith and justice—"the service of faith and the promotion of justice" as Jesuit documents call it—holds that love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable and that right relationships must happen at the individual and social levels. My faith should be inextricably bound to the many aspects of my everyday

living—how I seek or spend my wealth, vote for elected officials, consume goods and services, support or oppose institutions and organizations.

The abundance of Ignatian spirituality is well-presented in the articles that follow; I hope you find them enlightening and encouraging.

**Tom Nolan** (Saint Louis '01)  
*President of the AΣN  
Board of Directors*

Below: Dr. Wardell (center) graduating with student scholars from USF.





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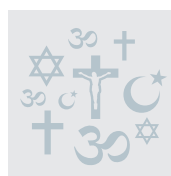
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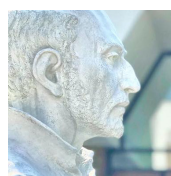
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# A Student Experience of the Pandemic

DAN GROFF (Fordham '19)



**AS A STUDENT LEADER AT FORDHAM UNIVERSITY,** I served as a resident assistant and chapter president for Alpha Sigma Nu. My favorite part of each of these roles was the opportunity to build community with my residents on campus and with the members of Alpha Sigma Nu. However, as the effects of COVID-19 began to ripple throughout the country and into our daily lives, I found it difficult to fulfill my student leadership responsibilities. I began to worry about my future. Will we have an in-person graduation? Will I be able to say goodbye to all my friends? Will I still have a job after graduation? Will my family be safe and healthy?

I found the first week of remote learning and quarantine especially difficult for me. I allowed self-pity to get in the way of my student leadership work. Whether it was feeling bad about not having an

in-person graduation or sad about not being able to spend my last few months with my friends, I let things I had no control over impact what I loved to do most throughout my time at Fordham: building community.

About a week into quarantine, after spending most of my day feeling bad for myself because my senior year was ruined, from out of the blue, I received an email. It was from a friend at Campus Ministry. The email was thanking me for the work I had done this past year collaborating with Campus Ministry, while recognizing this was not the end of the year any of us wanted to have. While she may not have realized it, this small gesture lit a fire in me.

I have always been a strong believer in trying to find God in all things. It can be especially difficult to find God during these challenging times of COVID-19

*But sometimes, God can be found in our inbox from a friend, with a few words of encouragement to push us back in the right direction.*

After receiving the kind note, I shifted my focus away from feeling bad for myself and back to what I loved doing at Fordham; building community. Soon thereafter I began reaching out to my fellow resident assistants and Alpha Sigma Nu board members to brainstorm ways to keep in touch as a team in addition to supporting each other with virtual community building initiatives. I am so grateful for that email reaching me in my time of need to remind me why I do what I do. 🙏





FEATURE



# HOW TO USE IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY FOR ANTI-RACISM AND RACIAL JUSTICE

DR. MARY J. WARDELL-GHIRARDUZZI (U of San Francisco '09)

*Vice Provost and Chief Diversity Officer,  
University of San Francisco*





## IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY & DIVERSITY

**A**mid civil unrest with the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbury, a long overdue reckoning on race in America is happening. This reckoning has captured the attention of people who have not thought deeply about race until recently. Seizing this moment is critical to fulfill our Jesuit Catholic mission as there is an urgency buoyed by the demands of marginalized people that institutions have a responsibility to address racial inequalities and a duty to understand what racial justice means in the context of their works.

As I have spent the last few months coaching my own young adult black children on how to manage their fear and frustration about racism as well as my own black students at University of San Francisco (USF), I believe that Ignatian Spirituality has taken on a new meaning as a way to understand racism and how to do better for students of color experiencing racial injustice. As a black executive woman and black mother working in Jesuit Higher Education, I know we must do better for their futures.

In 2012, I led an Ignatian Spirituality and Diversity dialogue series at USF. As a framework for our discussion, we used a set of questions that I would like to offer to all members of the Jesuit higher education community to further examine the role and purpose of Ignatian spirituality in the current state of rampant racial injustice:

- 1** WHAT IS THE INTERSECTION OF THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY MISSION AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION? AND HOW CAN THE TOOLS OF IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY INFORM HOW WE ADDRESS RACIAL INJUSTICE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
- 2** WHAT ARE THE TENETS OF IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY THAT ARE CONNECTED TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION?
- 3** HOW DO JESUIT EDUCATION CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS EMBRACE PEOPLE OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS? WHEN AND HOW HAS JESUIT EDUCATION BEEN EXCLUSIONARY?
- 4** WHAT ARE THE BELIEFS, BEHAVIORS, SPIRITUAL PRACTICES THAT INFORM AND EMBRACE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND CULTURAL INCLUSIVENESS?
- 5** HOW DOES ONE'S LIFE STORY INFORM THEIR APPROACH TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE JESUIT EDUCATIONAL TRADITION? WHAT ARE THE DESOLATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL NARRATIVES THAT HAVE LED TO RACIAL INJUSTICE?



## AN IGNATIAN CALL TO ACTION

Ignatian spirituality provides a framework for people of conscience who believe that God has a plan for everyone to prosper. Ignatian spirituality also gives us a framework to understand racism is a sin that can exist only within structures of power, privilege, and oppression.

Centering the needs of marginalized and vulnerable communities on our campuses is an Ignatian call to action. We hold these Ignatian spiritual gifts to help us dissolve the desolation of guilt and shame and confront the institutionalized evil of racism:



Seek to find the divine in all things—in all peoples and cultures, in all areas of study and learning, in every human experience.

See life and the whole universe as a gift calling forth wonder and gratefulness.



Give ample scope to imagination and emotion as well as intellect.

Cultivate critical awareness of personal and social evil, but point to God's love as more powerful than any evil.



Empower people to become leaders in service, men and women for others, becoming whole persons of solidarity, building a more just and humane world.

Once we employ our Ignatian tools of understanding for the purposes of racial justice, our institutions will become platforms for transformative change where individual actors can labor to end all forms of structural racism where we live, where we work, and where we do business.

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**PAGE 5:** Left to right: Aidah Muhammad (Saint Peter's '17), Busayo Adewale (Saint Peter's '17), and Stephen Gretchen (Wheeling Jesuit '18) at the 2018 Triennial Conference

## DISRUPTING WHITENESS IN JESUIT INSTITUTIONS

Disrupting whiteness is essential racial justice work. To do so takes courage and a commitment to bear the witness with others while uncovering one's own lack of awareness and complicities. Hearing the experiences and truths from those who have been marginalized, excluded, and whose dignity has been left behind is an act of Ignatian solidarity—we see the divine in others as God's love through us. Disrupting whiteness means cultivating an awareness of the stories of people who are different from your own. Disrupting whiteness means empowering BIPOC through one's power, privilege, and resources so they, too, can reach their highest potential. Disrupting whiteness means seeing the divine in Black students, faculty, and staff.

As we prepare for the work ahead to address racial injustice, reflecting and unpacking whiteness through an anti-racist lens is a critical step by answering some questions. Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and challenging racism, by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes to redistribute power in an equitable manner. What is my role in enacting anti-racism? Do I understand what that means? Why is it important that people have said for years that Black lives matter? Why do some people insist on saying, well, don't all lives matter? Am I one of those individuals? What is my understanding of the historical context and experiences of BIPOC of whom I have been called to serve? What might I need to unlearn that I was taught? What do I believe about race? What do I need to do now to take advantage of this time that God has given us? And, how is God calling me to be a person for others during this racial pandemic? The good news is that we have inherited a spiritual tradition that has equipped us to disrupt whiteness as a guide to push through difficult conversations and revelations.

Jesuit institutions must do better now and not later. As we begin another academic year, my hope is that we will engage our Magis to root out everyday forms of institutional racism for my children, for our students of color, and for our colleagues of color. Now is the time to muster our collective courage, to be responsive to the demands of racial justice with a sense of urgency, to answer the call from people everywhere, to commit ourselves to Black lives on our campuses. May we each learn how to call upon Ignatian spirituality to do this work and frame our humble yet earnest response in a climate of injustice to stop the effects of institutional racism for the greater glory of God. If we do this work, we are truly living the mission.

Read the full article at [www.alphasigmanu.org](http://www.alphasigmanu.org)

# Ignatian Spirituality for All

## REFLECTIONS FROM DIVERSE FAITH BACKGROUNDS

*What aspect of Ignatian spirituality or teaching resonates with you the most?*



**DEBRA MOONEY, PHD**

*VP Mission and Identity, Xavier University*

This has been an extraordinary year. My practice of **Ignatian gratitude** has helped me survive and thrive amidst the pandemic and other major happenings. Every day I name 5 gratitudes (of course, some days it's easier to do than others).

Having '*an attitude of gratitude*' has recently become very popular. Health clips on television news and grocery store magazines tout the benefits. When we are thankful and appreciative of life's ordinary and extraordinary gifts, we are more optimistic and happy. We are more helpful and compassionate, empathic and forgiving. We even take better care of ourselves by sticking to our exercise plan, getting good sleep, and choosing healthy foods.

Now trendy, I am glad to be a part of an educational tradition which has valued gratitude throughout its hundreds of years. In fact, it is regarded highly in all of the world's religions. Ignatian gratitude is a path to 'finding God in all things.' It invites us to (1) notice goodness and (2) to recognize that our joy, the feeling of gratitude, is an encounter with God, the Divine, Transcendence. It is prayer.



**JESÚS MARÍA DE LA TORRE CAÑADILLA**  
*(Loyola Andalucía '18)*

The aspect that resonates with me the most about Ignatian spirituality is **discernment**, both personal and communitarian. As St. Ignatius said, personal discernment allows us not only to discover our purpose in life in the light of the Spirit, but also the best ways to achieve it, which are the humblest ones. Similarly, community discernment lets us see who are in need—physically or spiritually—and it moves us to put our modest talents at their service to grow altogether. In short, discernment is the compass St. Ignatius gifted us to find the way in our complex realities.



**AMIR HUSSAIN** *(Loyola Marymount '19)*

*ASN Chapter Adviser*

I am a Muslim who chairs the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University. I came to LMU after 8 years of teaching in the California State University system. I knew it was time for me to leave when our new chancellor announced his goal for the CSU system, "to prepare educated workers for the California workforce." I want to create educated citizens for the world. That's something that fits in perfectly with the Jesuit and Marymount traditions of LMU, what we call in Ignatian pedagogy **cura personalis**, or the care of the whole person.





**MORGAN VAZQUEZ**  
(Fordham '13)

Particularly during this global pandemic, I find myself reflecting most deeply on the importance of **Cura Personalis**. Life is moving fast, but I push myself to remember that my body, heart, and soul all need equal and appropriate care if I want to truly be my best self each and every day. I have recognized the path to excellence requires commitment and dedication towards myself, and therefore, continuous and evolving personal growth is key to achieving my fullest potential. Humans aren't machines that can flip switches on and off to control different parts of life. It is critical to respect myself and my own well-being if I want to be able to give myself wholeheartedly to the people around me.



**INAARA BHOLA** (Seattle U '19)

Ignatian spirituality consists of taking control over oneself and bringing your life experiences to **benefit society as a whole over one's own personal desires**, especially during a time like this. These feelings constitute to the utmost good that God has in favor for us. This practice requires a holistic approach that encompasses the larger society rather than just the individual. Spirituality is not bound by a single definition or religion, therefore, the diversity of ideas and perspectives should be embraced and put into practice. It is a unique esoteric experience felt by each individual in a variety of ways.



**KARI KLOOS** (Regis U '14)  
*Assistant VP for Mission,  
Regis University*

As a Lutheran who has been transformed by Ignatian spirituality, practices of **discernment**—paying attention to how God is present and how I respond—shape my daily life. I reflect on moments in my day, like a conversation with a friend that left me energized or unsettled. I ask about those moments: did I respond generously and freely, or did I ignore God's invitation in that moment? The more I learn to listen, the more I see God active in the world around me.

## ALUMNI NOTES

### Lunch & Learn

OCTOBER 27, 2020 | 12:30 PM ET

Member-exclusive webinar featuring a panel discussion about the experience of Jesuit universities during the pandemic. Including University Presidents **Joseph McShane, SJ** (Le Moyne '91), and **Timothy Law Snyder, PhD** (Loyola Maryland '08) as well as other speakers.

Learn more and register at  
[alphasigmanu.org/events](http://alphasigmanu.org/events)

### Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice

OCTOBER 19-26, 2020

Ignatian Solidarity Network's annual event has moved to a virtual format. Join the Ignatian family for a week of inspiring speakers, breakout sessions, and networking events. The theme this year is Prophetic Resilience.

Use code promo code  
**ASNIFTJ** during registration  
to claim your **FREE** registration  
as an **AΣN** member.

Learn more and register at  
[ignatiansolidarity.net/iftj/](http://ignatiansolidarity.net/iftj/)

### AΣN Next Chapter Program: Discerning Retirement

JANUARY 2021

INFO SESSIONS 11/11 & 11/17 AT 6:30 CT

A guided, virtual journey to assist members approaching retirement in discerning who God is calling them to be, and what God is calling them to do, in their next chapter of life.

For information, email  
[amy.oneil@marquette.edu](mailto:amy.oneil@marquette.edu).





# an old insight about ignatian spirituality

KRISTINA TADEO (*Marquette '15*)  
*Assistant Director, Alpha Sigma Nu*





ometimes a phrase stays with you, begging you to reflect further. During the spring Lunch and Learn webinar, **Michael Sheeran, S.J.** (Regis U '76), created this kind of moment when he said, "It is an old insight that of the different spiritualities, the *Jesuit* spirituality is the one that fits best for most lay people." I asked Father Sheeran to join me for a dialogue over Zoom to explore this topic. As a lay and non-Catholic administrator in a Jesuit organization, I wondered about the history of this "old insight" and if it holds true today.

In Alpha Sigma Nu's 105-year history, the honor society has never required inductees to be Catholic. Just as Jesuit higher education has become increasingly religiously diverse, so too has AΣN inducted members of diverse faiths. [1] Today, fewer than half of the students in U.S. Jesuit universities identify as Catholic. Yet those studying and working in Jesuit higher education find meaning in the teachings of St. Ignatius which form the foundation of Jesuit education.

[2] Marquette University's website explains there are four characteristics of Ignatian spirituality which have their origin in the *Spiritual Exercises* and which enrich the tradition of Jesuit education:

- A vision of God who is alive and active in the world and one's life
- A realization that all men and

women are created in the image of God and are destined for eternal life

- An essential for living a life of faith is to be reflective about one's experiences
- Christ invites women and men to follow him by reaching out to those on the margins of society

While Ignatian spirituality is deeply Catholic, there are aspects with universal appeal that enrich the spiritual and educational journeys of lay, non-Catholic, and even non-Christian people. Like me, many AΣN members of all faith backgrounds might be interested to learn about this wide appeal.

I asked Father Sheeran to begin by sharing the history behind the "old insight."

"Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*... when he was a layman and he had no education.

Ignatius was pre-theological. What he's really doing is taking the attitudes towards Christianity at his own time and in a very non-technical way, simply inviting people to get into Scripture. It was seen to be just as attractive, I think, to people who were not particularly trained in Catholic theology. They might be just lay people who eventually would become a Lutheran... or down the road a Methodist. It doesn't make [them] think, *I do this and therefore I'm a Catholic*... What you are dealing with are the *Spiritual Exercises* written by a layman for laymen and, therefore, much easier to access."

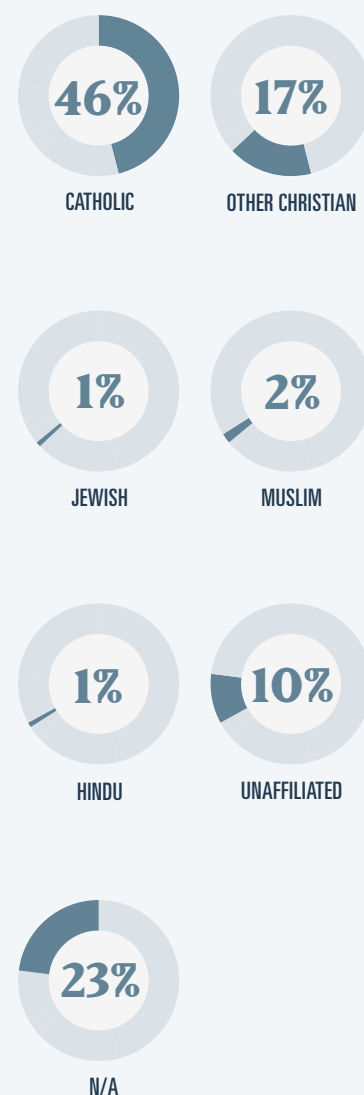
He went on to describe the historical backdrop at the time Saint Ignatius was writing the *Spiritual Exercises* and noted that Saint Ignatius, Martin Luther, and John Calvin were virtually contemporaries sharing the same worldview, that is Christianity in Europe, as they developed their own religious beliefs. [3] Christianity during the Medieval era "was as much a cultural tradition as it was a faith tradition. As Christian culture grew ever more complex, there arose a constant stream of individual reformers who tried to get back to what they thought was its original essence... On biblical prophetic grounds they sought simplicity in the cognitive, moral, and devotional life of Christianity." From the perspective of this backdrop, Saint Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises* as his way of finding the essence of God and Catholicism and making it accessible to others.

To understand better, I asked Father Sheeran to share some of what he considers the core teachings of Ignatian spirituality.

"At least for me, right at the heart of Ignatius' understanding is that God created a good but imperfect, that is, incomplete world. He made humans to take it the next step.

The idea of humans being God's co-creators is really very important. You are there to collaborate with Jesus. That is at the center of everything... it's what you call a horizontal spirituality.

## Religious Affiliation of Students in Jesuit Higher Education in the U.S.



Data collected via survey from Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. Figures are from 2018-19 academic year. Of note, Wheeling Jesuit is included because it was still Jesuit at the time of the survey. University of Scranton, Canisius College, Saint Joseph's University, and University of San Francisco are not included in the aggregate data.

For Ignatius it's a question of *How do I be a co-creator? How do I love my family? How do I raise my kids? How do I run my business? Am I making the community better or not?* It's a spirituality focused on the world that I find myself in."

I asked Father Sheeran if the core principles of Ignatian spirituality could be understood by a non-Catholic or even non-Christian or if it requires a Christian background.

"That's a really good question, and I don't think I have a general answer for it. I certainly have met a good number of people who are not Christian and who will talk about how this is really significant for [them] because [they] can accept this Christian story as a myth that helps [them] to understand [their] own life.

You'll find folks, especially if they've been faculty at a Jesuit university, who will say, *I'm not a Christian... yet some of this really has meaning in it that I'm looking for.* I think everybody who's human hungers for meaning in their life."

In researching the idea of Ignatian spirituality's wide appeal among non-Catholics, I came across an article by Joyce Huggett entitled, "How Ignatian Spirituality Hooks Protestants," in which she explains how Ignatian imagination allows

Protestants to experience the Scriptures in more profound ways. For Protestants who are well-acquainted with Bible verses, this Ignatian way of experiencing the Scripture allows them to access the feelings in the story, unlocking new depth in meaning. Father Sheeran explains how this can be true.

"For Ignatius, when you deal with Scripture, one of the ways he has you do it is to pretend you are behind the movie camera. You are an observer on the scene... going from face to face. You've got Jesus' face. You've got Saint Peter's face. You've got Thomas and Judas, and they're all kind of scratching their beards and wondering, *What is this guy saying? How is He handling this?* It's so much part of letting yourself get into the scene and asking yourself, *What is it that Jesus is feeling right now?* It's not the analysis that comes from having the verses memorized. It is what comes from getting a feel for the world in which He was living and His worldview."

Drawing on his experience growing the Jesuit Leadership Seminar and Ignatian Colleagues Program for Jesuit university teachers and leaders, as well as launching a formation program for trustees of Jesuit universities, I wondered with the religious diversity of faculty and university leaders today, do these programs

need to adapt their teaching based on religion?

*"As you talk to people about their own faith and what they are looking for in life, they will start telling you that they are looking for meaning."*

They are looking for deeper ways of being in touch with God... with Allah... it doesn't matter what the term is, but everybody in this kind of a frame tends to realize, *It's the same person...* and *I'm not going to find meaning in life without finding a way to say yes to this divine person.* I find it's really not that hard to talk to folks of different traditions. A lot of what you run into, especially with faculty, are people who are very secular... when they get there they discover that this further world of reflection makes them say, *There's something here I think is important to me even though I've never really thought about it."*

One component of the Ignatian Colleagues Program is a week-long retreat. Father Sheeran explains how this retreat experience works for retreatants of all faiths.

"You can do this if you are a Methodist, if you are a Buddhist,... you are the one who determines how much of this [you] take and translate into [your] own tradition and where this doesn't make sense because of [your] tradition. The important thing there is... the retreat director... is under great orders from Saint Ignatius not to twist the retreatant's arm. [The retreatant] must encounter God through themselves, not through [the retreat director]. This is very much a thing the Jesuits tend to be proud of."

To continue the conversation begun with Father Sheeran, we asked AΣN members of various faiths to reflect on what aspect of Ignatian spirituality resonates with them most. You can read their reflections in this issue. We invite you to reflect on this question in your own life. Ignatius developed these practices for fellow laymen to experience the transformative nature of connecting with God, an experience that changed his life and sent forth a ripple effect that has impacted all of us in the Jesuit honor society. 🙏

*Watch the video of this dialogue to hear more of the history, stories, and anecdotes behind the conversation at [alphasigmanu.org/news/watch-the-full-dilogue-from-an-old-insight-about-ignatian-spirituality-wit](http://alphasigmanu.org/news/watch-the-full-dilogue-from-an-old-insight-about-ignatian-spirituality-wit)*

1 Data collected via survey from Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities in the 2018-19 academic year. Of note, Wheeling Jesuit is included. University of Scranton, Canisius College, Saint Joseph's University, and University of San Francisco did not submit data as requested and are not included in the aggregate data.

2 <https://www.marquette.edu/faith/about-ignatian-spirituality.php>

3 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christianity/Medieval-and-Reformation-views>



# *Do you speak* **ignatian?**

## Consolation and Desolation

Spiritual Consolation consists of any movement of heart and mind that leads to an increase in faith and hope and genuine love of self and others. Spiritual Desolation is just the opposite: any movement that leads to a decline in faith and hope and genuine love, to selfishness, to fear and discouragement that keep one from doing good.

## Discernment

Ignatius called the process “discernment of spirits,” but in the language of today we might call it “learning to read the body’s signals” (Gerard W. Hughes). It can be a great help for making choices, when the option is between several courses of action all of which seem good. It involves prayer, reflection and consultation—all with honest attention not only to the rational (reasons pro and con) but also to the realm of one’s feelings, emotions and desires. A basic

question then becomes “Where is this impulse from—the good spirit (of God) or the evil spirit (leading one away from God)?”

## Examen

A method of prayer that Ignatius taught in his Spiritual Exercises. He considered it the most important thing a person could do each day. As presented by Dennis Hamm, this prayer has five steps: (1) Pray for light to understand and appreciate the past day. (2) Review the day in thanksgiving. (3) Review the feelings in the replay of the day. (4) Choose one of those feelings (positive or negative) and pray from it. (5) Look toward tomorrow.

## Finding God in All Things

Ignatian\* spirituality\* is summed up in this phrase. It invites a person to search for and find God in every circumstance of life, not just in explicitly religious situations or activities such as prayer. It implies that God is

present everywhere and, though invisible, can be “found” in any and all of the creatures which God has made.

## Spiritual/spirituality

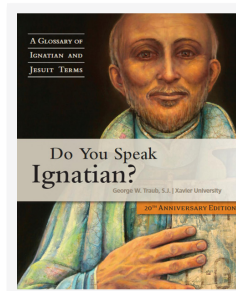
The spiritual dimension of human beings can be recognized in the orientation of our minds and hearts toward ever more than we have already reached (the never-satisfied human mind and heart). We are drawn inevitably toward the “Absolute” or the “Fullness of Being” [see “God”]. Ignatian\* spirituality is one such path among many within Christianity, to say nothing of the spiritualities within other religious traditions, or those more or less outside a religious tradition.

## Spiritual Exercises

An organized series of spiritual exercises\* put together by Ignatius out of his own personal spiritual experience. They invite the “retreatant” to “meditate” on central aspects of Christian faith and especially to “contemplate”

(i.e. imaginatively enter into) the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Ignatius wrote the Spiritual Exercises as a handbook to help the guide who coaches a person engaged in “making the Exercises.” The goal is a kind of spiritual freedom, the power to act—not out of social pressure or personal compulsion and fear—but out of the promptings of God’s spirit in the deepest, truest core of one’s being—to act ultimately out of love. 🙏



Fr George W. Traub SJ  
Entries on-line and hard copy booklet, including a Spanish language edition, available at [JesuitResource.org](http://JesuitResource.org)





# AΣN's Newest Chapter

## A Conversation with Universidad del Pacífico

CECILIA MONTES (*U del Pacífico '20*)

*Director of International Relations, Universidad del Pacífico*

ANDREA KANASHIRO TOKUMURA (*U del Pacífico '20*)

*President, AΣN Universidad del Pacífico Chapter*

KATE GAERTNER (*Marquette '04*)

*Executive Director, Alpha Sigma Nu*



**Cecilia, what motivated you to pursue an Alpha Sigma Nu chapter?**

The former president of the Universidad del Pacífico (UP), Elsa Del Castillo, PhD, heard about AΣN at the 2018 International Association of Jesuit Universities meeting in Bilbao, Spain. When Elsa returned, she asked me to find more about the AΣN network. We realized that this was a way of keeping the Jesuit values alive in our university, and at the same time, recognizing UP students who not only excelled academically but who were actively involved with the community.

**How do you think a chapter will benefit the Universidad del Pacífico?**

Our founding chapter members already have plans to make AΣN known on our campus. As word of this new network spreads, so do the words "Ignatian values". Having a chapter at our university will help strengthen our university's foundational Jesuit values.

**How do you think the students will benefit?**

The chapter will focus on the AΣN values of scholarship, loyalty and service. With the establishment of the UP chapter, more students will participate in community service projects. The chapter will gather students who share these same values to work together—as students and later on as alumni—to make the world a better place. Chapter members also join AΣN's international community of students, sharing the same Ignatian values.

**Cecilia, have there been challenges in starting a chapter?**

Being the first chapter in Latin America was indeed a challenge. There was no other partner university in the region that could share their experience with us, but Kate and the team at Loyola Andalucía definitely guided us. Our second challenge came

with COVID-19, which forced us to have our first induction ceremony online. Even though we were a bit nervous, it turned out to be an incredible experience, and the ceremony was absolutely beautiful.

**Andrea, thank you for sharing the student perspective. What has been the response to the new AΣN chapter?**

The student body is actually very curious about our chapter. This is the first honor society in our university, so many are not sure what it is or how it works. We've been working this first semester to reach as many students as possible to inform them about AΣN. The university's social media and mailing system have been incredibly helpful in this process.

**You took a further step and chose to lead the chapter.**

I like being involved in new programs and taking on new challenges. When I first heard about AΣN, I was excited to join because I think we can serve as a link between our university and its students to encourage them to become involved in service. Volunteering has always been important in my life and now is part of who I am. It has made me aware of not only how privileged I am but has called me to use that privilege to help those who were not as lucky as I was. This is a great opportunity to inspire more students at UP to become change agents within our society.

**Despite the pandemic, the chapter is already busy. What are you planning?**

This first year we have decided to focus on raising awareness about our chapter. We started with a small number of inductees, and we want to welcome more new members soon. We have organized a "thank you note" project, encouraging students to send thank you notes to the university's staff and faculty recognizing their work. We are planning to reach out to different project leaders in our



First induction of UP held via Zoom in a bilingual, virtual ceremony

university to collaborate on programs that were born in our university and raise awareness about how they have changed lives.

**The second newest AΣN chapter, Loyola Andalucía, reached out to the UP chapter.**

When we first started the chapter, everything was rapidly shifting to the online platform, making it difficult for us. However, the members of the Loyola Andalucía chapter were very helpful and solved a lot of the questions we had. This is all new, so we definitely need some guidance. They have even given us ideas on activities we could organize. We look forward to continuing the conversation.

**What are you hoping to gain from being members of the AΣN international network?**

We are really looking forward to meeting fellow members of the AΣN international network. There's always something new to learn from others, especially if they come from different backgrounds. We would love to share experiences, knowledge, and practices with other members from around the world. 🍷



## Loyola University Andalucia is our Chapter of the Year!



**GONZAGA UNIVERSITY**  
*Best Scholarship  
Programming*



**SPRING HILL COLLEGE**  
*Best Loyalty  
Programming*



**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY**  
*Best Service  
Programming*



**MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY**  
*Best  
Alpha Sigma Nu Day*

# Chapter Notes



**MARIA MEYER**  
*(Boston College '18)*



**FRANCISCO SÁNCHEZ CUÉLLAR**  
*(Loyola Andalucia '17)*

While our second year of leading Alpha Sigma Nu chapter officers certainly did not go as planned, we can report the AΣN spirit is alive and well, as seen in the commitment, innovation, and camaraderie of our chapter leaders and members.

At the 2019 fall Leadership Summits at Fordham and Loyola Chicago, two fantastic groups of leaders immediately connected as we presented on AΣN basics and chapter management and brainstormed programs reflecting the Universal Apostolic Preferences. Dinners out together surely coalesced the group, allowing leaders to return to campus with program plans and friendships that translated to collaborations throughout the year. These Summits laid the foundation for all to feel comfortable sharing about their unique events, strengths, chapter changes, and opportunities for improvement on our monthly calls and through the presidents' group chat.

The Summits' outcomes included innovative programs and best practices for connecting with chapter members, shared on our monthly calls. Because of these discussions, online newsletters were widely implemented last year thanks to the knowledge on platforms and techniques shared by Fordham Chapter President, **Dan Groff** (Fordham '19). After our January call, we were very excited about all the plans for the semester ahead.

And then came the pandemic. Chapter planning was stopped in its tracks. Spring induction ceremonies, planned at 17 of AΣN's 32 chapters, were cancelled. Students were feeling a myriad of

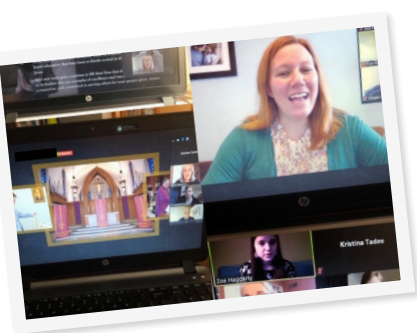


emotions, without adequate time to process, as the end of their in-person university experience came too quickly. Most chapter leaders, as well as a majority of student members, are seniors, and many led other organizations in addition to AΣN. Rather than enjoying their last semester, leading year-culminating programs and savoring the last few months with friends, these students found themselves at home adjusting to online learning and, frankly, online leading.

*For the Jesuit-educated, being nimble and learning to pivot are two valued skills.*

We continued to meet monthly, sometimes to commiserate, but also to determine the path forward. The “SU Experience Dinner,” for example, went virtual, gathering Seattle U’s university and student leaders online rather than around a dinner table. Universidad del Pacifico held a virtual thank you note event, and Xavier University collaborated on a Dear Xavier Campaign, sharing letters from students to the Xavier community about their experience during the pandemic.

Inspired by our chapters who share a tradition of a senior send-off ceremony, we hosted a virtual senior send-off including guest speakers Michael Rossmann, SJ, and **Lena Chapin** (John Carroll ’09) of the Ignatian Solidarity Network. Student participants came away with resources for living Jesuit values post-graduation—and even some AΣN giveaways!



Along with many chapter presidents, we planned a virtual induction that included the AΣN ritual and pledge, led by several student leaders. AΣN Board President **Thomas Nolan** (Saint Louis ’01) addressed inductees, as did former Board member **Annie Selak** (Santa Clara ’04),

both urging new members to live the AΣN pledge.

A highlight of the year was certainly the virtual induction ceremony for our newest chapter, Universidad del Pacifico. We wanted to make these new members feel welcomed and connected. Happily, the staff and new advisers at UP, **Cecilia Montes** (Pacifico ’20) and **Magaly Rubina Espinosa** (Pacifico ’20), along with former and current



Michael Rossmann, SJ, addressing students on the virtual Senior Send-off.

leaders from the Loyola Andalucia chapter, planned a bilingual virtual ceremony. It was such an emotional moment as our first European chapter, Loyola Andalucia, welcomed our first Latin American chapter. What a tangible reminder that Alpha Sigma Nu is a global network, and that we can work together to promote the AΣN values. 🙌

We were especially happy to celebrate our five Chapter of the Year award winners last spring. The award was redesigned to highlight more of the wonderful work taking place at our chapters.

Read more about the winning schools at [www.alphasigmanu.org/news/chapter-of-the-year-award-winners](http://www.alphasigmanu.org/news/chapter-of-the-year-award-winners).

WHAT THE **Jesuits** ARE THINKING NOW**MICHAEL GARANZINI, SJ** (*Saint Louis U '71*)*Secretary of Higher Education for the Society of Jesus**President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities*

The global pandemic is having a major impact on all of the 200 Jesuit universities and our 800 high schools. As the pandemic hit, most had to close prematurely. Where the internet and technology were well developed, classes went on-line. Where they were not, students had to cope with the loss of their education. The US and Europe schools have extensively prepared for an uncertain fall start of classes. Will a return to school initiate another outbreak? Are young people vulnerable? What will the cost be for extra health and distancing measures? Will teachers and students feel safe enough to return? The questions are the same for both the global north and the even more stressed global south and developing world. Everyone agrees that the most immediate challenges are about safety and a return to what has been the normal.

While university administrators and faculty yearn for the semblance of “normalcy,” they know that the post-Covid-19

world will be anything but that. **Jesuit educators are already saying that this generation will be deeply impacted by this pandemic. It will likely be THE defining event of their youth, as significant a “marker” of Generation Z as were previous historical events such as WWII and 9/11.** How is this impacting the next generation of young people passing through the university now?

What we are hearing from them is very interesting and encouraging from an Ignatian point of view. Many Jesuit educators believe that, after the initial hardships, the impact will be mostly positive. Why so? The pandemic’s impact on education, family security, health and safety, and the economy of our local, national and international communities has been dramatic and unsettling. Some say it has revealed a VUCA World: volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The consequence of all this is a new awareness of our fragility and the inter-dependent nature of

our existence. The Black Lives Matter movement, coming as it has in the midst of all this, has revealed yet another serious challenge, institutional racism and indifference to the poor. These unconscious biases are built into our social assumptions and institutions.

**The hope and expectation is that young people now see, perhaps more clearly than previous generations, the fault-lines in our social structures.** When it comes to tackling problems like disparities in health care, educational opportunity, and income security, governments that do not cooperate and collaborate have difficulty digging their way out of the problem. **Gen Z students are more eager to examine and advocate for changes that will address the underlying disparities that lead to the disenfranchisement of too many in the US and around the world.** The pandemic has driven these lessons home in sometimes startling ways as they have seen first-hand that many who are already suffering from inadequate security and access to these basics fall easily into desperation. This generation will be more aware of the false myths that our throw-away culture is built on, myths like equality of opportunity, the ability of science to solve all problems, and the myth that we can go it alone when it comes to protecting ourselves or insuring our future.

What might we then expect from Gen Z? In a recent discussion with Jesuit university presidents, one president speculated this way: When we finally get moving again, I don’t expect the classroom will be the same for a long while. The students will want to process what they are seeing and experiencing, comparing family stories and asking deeper questions. The fact that some things are broken, like the health care system, or the fact that many families are barely making it economically, or that we have great disparities in educational opportunity, will be clear and beyond question. The urgent question will be “How do these things get addressed in our democracy?” She concluded her remarks with: “This is a great time to be with young people. It’s what we are built for.”

**This is precisely what Jesuit education was built for. Asking the big questions—about basic fairness, about the hold of the past on the present, about human agency and responsibility, about what is necessary for a full human life, about the role of the arts in awakening the soul to beauty and truth, and many more critical questions—is what the core curriculum will be doing and has always done.** This time, we are hoping we can anticipate an even more dynamic learning environment—for those on both sides of the desk. Stay tuned. 📻



# Magis Medal

The Magis Medal is awarded annually to lay Alpha Sigma Nu members who best exemplify scholarship, loyalty, and service in their work to better the world. The award serves to highlight the exemplary work AΣN members are doing as they live their AΣN pledge out in the world and to inspire new members to carry that flame with them as they graduate. *Read full bios of this year's winners on the AΣN website.*



**HALEY BULEN**

*Loyola Marymount '20*

Nominated for the Magis Medal by her professor/mentor, **Ms. Bulen** answers the call for social and racial justice in her academic and professional work. As a filmmaker and screenwriter, she creates content that celebrates diverse voices, including those of women, LGBTQ+, and the neurologically diverse. She produces films using storytelling as a tool for education, empowerment, and striving for justice. With several mentors and collaborators, she has written a children's television pilot titled "Camp Hero," which follows a transgender protagonist. Her film, "Fasting with Family," is a story about a Jewish family learning to forgive one another during Yom Kippur. She creates art that celebrates human connection and makes the world a more just, equitable, and empathetic place.



**WILLIAM BRANDT**

*Saint Louis U '71*

The confluence of **Mr. Brandt's** work at the Illinois Finance Authority, a state entity engaged in making loans for business, nonprofits, and local governments, and his service as a Loyola University Chicago Trustee, makes him a worthy Magis Medal recipient. In 2013, he learned that Dreamers applying to Loyola's medical school could not obtain tuition loans because they are not U.S. citizens. He created a tuition loan program where Dreamer students could have the entire interest forgiven on one condition: following residency, they return to Illinois to practice for three years in a medically-underserved area. While Loyola was the first, now all medical and dental schools in Illinois are authorized to accept Dreamer students, and the first group of Dreamers has already graduated and gone on to serve needy patients.



**GABRIEL MARÍA PÉREZ ALCALÁ**

*Loyola Andalucía '16*

**Dr. Pérez Alcalá**, President of Universidad Loyola Andalucía, is a lay collaborator in the Jesuit mission. As founding president of Loyola, he has formed the university as a proyecto social, in solidarity with the marginalized, seeking solutions to the deepest issues of southern Spain. With a focus on the Universal Apostolic Preferences, he ensures that main research lines of the university address economic and environmental justice. He employs Ignatian discernment in his decision making and teaches that living cura personalis makes the community stronger. Under his leadership, the university founded the first AΣN chapter in Europe, recognizing that a chapter would promote the university's Jesuit values, and its members would inspire other students to live the values. He continues to promote AΣN worldwide and uses his platform to encourage engagement in the global Jesuit network.



**LENNIS ECHTERLING, PH.D.**

*Rockhurst '70*

**Dr. Echterling** is a Professor of Counseling at James Madison University who has always involved his students in providing thousands of hours of service. He has served as an intervener, consultant, and trainer following traumatic events, including natural disasters, the India tsunami, the 9/11 attacks at the Pentagon, the shootings at Virginia Tech, and landmine explosions in the Middle East. His programs have promoted landmine safety and support for survivors of war-related violence. He was also a volunteer therapist for the children of National Guard members serving overseas, created nationally-distributed guidelines on promoting psychological resilience for schools, mental health professionals, faith group leaders, and parents, and provided crisis services to first responders, law enforcement, mental health and social workers, clergy, and those working with immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.



**Alpha Sigma Nu, Inc**

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## AN Alpha Sigma Nu DAILY EXAMEN



**T**

ake time to be still and be aware of God's presence.

**H**

ave a grateful heart as you review the day:

- *How did I use or not use my intellectual and other gifts to promote God's kingdom here on earth, especially for those least respected by society? (scholarship)*
- *How did I engage or not engage with my sisters and brothers in the service of faith and the promotion of justice? (loyalty)*
- *What were the actions I took or did not take to contribute to building a just and decent world? (service)*

**A**

ppreciate the feelings, both positive and negative, that were aroused as you went over your day, examining actions you took or failed to take.

Are these feelings affirming, troubling, energizing, challenging, deflating, etc.?

**N**

arrow down on one of your actions or inactions from your review that you need to address to become a more authentic follower of the ideals of AΣN.

**K**

now that you can rely on God's help, so seek the grace that you need for the day ahead.

**S**

urrender to God's will, confident that God cares for you.

*Loving and gracious God, I give you thanks for the day that has gone past. As I move towards tomorrow, help me to continue being committed to intellectual integrity and the pursuit of wisdom. Help me to be loyal to the moral, social and Ignatian ideals of my Jesuit education. And, help me to continually strive to be genuinely committed to the well-being of others. Amen.*