Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus

2019-2029
My Father is still working even now, and so I am working

(John 5:17)

We discern the Universal Apostolic Preferences because we want to collaborate in what God is doing in our world.
All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to Himself, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation

(2 Corinthians 5:18)
Companions in a worldwide Mission of Reconciliation and Justice
We are called to be Pilgrims...
...to start and accompany processes...
“GC 36 asks Father General …to evaluate progress on our current apostolic preferences and, if appropriate, to identify new ones.

Discernment of such preferences should include the greatest possible participation of the Society and of those involved with us in our mission.”

Decree 2,14
Return to our spiritual roots
Discernment in Common
Preferences... Fruit of discernment in common

- They are the fruit of a communal spiritual process launched by letters from Fr General
- July and September 2017
  - Life and Mission
  - Discernment in Common
- October 2017:
  - Letter initiating the Process and establishing the program
Preferences... learning to be guided.

- Nos orientan hacia Dios desde la libertad que nos hace disponibles.
- Se apoyan en el PyF de los EE.: hacernos indiferentes para elegir lo que más conviene es tener claras preferencias.
- Son apostólicas y universales porque expresan la condición del enviado cuya vida es mission abierta a la posibilidad de ir a cualquier parte del mundo (Lc) y hacerse presente en cualquier realidad humana.
- The process of discerning the UAPs was as important as the outcome
  - The Spirit is teaching how to be led by discernment in common
  - We don’t yet know how to do this perfectly, so we must learn

- Kairos moment: We are recovering the communal dimension of our spiritual tradition as a constant dimension of our way of proceeding

- Analogous to how the Society recovered the individual dimension of our spirituality after Vatican II, learning how to give personally directed Spiritual Exercises and to discern the movement of spirits in individual directees
Preferences... getting focus

- They are a dynamic means for us to continue to be led by the Spirit of renewal that inspired GC36.
- They are Vital Orientations to focus all our life-mission in the next ten years.
- They are NOT something to do but an inspiration of how to do.
- They call us to on-going spiritual conversation and discernment in common
- They call each of us to listen to the cries of the poor, the youth, the earth in our context, and to let the Spirit teach us how to respond
Contrast with UAPs of Fr. Kolvenbach

- Specified **static apostolic ends** toward which we wanted to focus our resources
- These are still Society’s commitment.
- Reminded us of **universal needs** that might not be part of our daily life-mission
Preferences... from 2003 to 2019

The new UAPs

- Are a dynamic “means for continuing to be guided by the Spirit”
- They are an unfolding spiritual path
- They will lead us in unforeseen and changing ways
- Need to be part of everyone’s life-mission. Each person, community, & apostolate needs to discern how to embody UAPs in their local context
Preferences... cooperate us God transform us

• 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-mission
  • They call us to cooperate as God transforms us
UAPs are missions from the Holy Father

A Pope who uses Ignatian Language,

...and speaks with Ignatian Passion
UAPs are missions from the Holy Father

Process similar to *Formulas* being approved by
Pope Paul III in 1540 and Julius III in 1550

- Process of discernment in common among companions
- From this discernment a Document emerges that is submitted to the Holy Father
- Holy Father discerns the Document and gives it back approved and carrying the Pope’s authority
- With both *Formula* and UAPS, discernment in common leads to the giving and receiving of a mission by the Holy Father
- A confirmation of our identity as servers of the mission of Christ
A strong call to conversion

• Call to ongoing and continual conversion
  • personal,
  • community,
  • institutional…

• Restructuring of minds…and hearts

• Preferir la luz a las tinieblas (Jn 3,1-8) es reconocer como está Dios en los signos que realiza Jesús y en los actuales signos de los tiempos, exige una conversión tan profunda como “nacer de nuevo”

• These four preferences are not only four orientations… they provoke a conversion of heart and life-mission
Warnings on reading/communicating the UAPs

1. Absorb the entire message and sense of each one of them.
   - The UAPs are the **fruit of a discernment in common**, confirm by the Holy Father.
   - We must respect the Holy Spirit who led us to them
   - **We need to assimilate them entirely!**
   - Please do not try to synthetize or give the core according **your** opinion.
     - Don’t see them as simple nouns: Spiritual Exercises, the Poor, Youth, Environment
     - They are calls to transform our life-mission, so pay attention to the **verbs**:
       - **To walk with** the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice
       - **“To accompany** young people in the creation of a hope-filled future”
2. Each UAP includes three dimensions:

   A. An attentive look to the context... we need to see and feel –as the Constitutions advice us- where we (persons) are (place) in this moment (times).
      
      Secular Society/Structural Injustice/Youth environment/wounds of the planet.

   B. A strong message to the Apostolic body: a direction to move on, to change

   C. Orientations to our life-mission: a call to evaluate our way of proceeding
Show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment
We desire to...

• Engage with *Secularisation as a sign of the times*, a chance to be present in the world in a new way.

• Live the *Spiritual Exercises* more deeply so that they bring us to a deeper personal and community relationship with Christ and to transformation.

• Offer the *Spiritual Exercises* with more creativity.

• Use *spiritual conversation* and discernment.

• Share the Spiritual Exercises and discernment with others.
To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice
We desire to...

• Make ourselves more and more companions of Jesus from our *closeness to the Poor.*

• **Work with them** for social justice and for a *change* in economic, political and social policies and causes.

• Understand better the *processes that generate injustice*; help develop alternative models.

• Propose a globalisation process that is based on *multiculturality.*
We desire to...

• **Take care of** migrants, the displaced, those who are trafficked.

• Defend the culture and rights of **indigenous peoples**.

• Strengthen **democracy** by forming citizens and promoting vocations to public service and politics to take care of the Common Good.

• Help to **eliminate all kinds of abuses** inside and outside the Church.
To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future
We desire to...

• Accompany young people in their situations. These are crucial places from which the Church seeks to perceive and discern the movements of the Holy Spirit in and through these moments in human history.

• The poor and the young are a complementary and interwoven locus theologicus.

• Allow ourselves be helped by young people so that we understand better the epochal shift that is taking place today and the new hope that it brings.
We desire to...

• **Create spaces** in our apostolic works, the Church and the society so that young people are protagonist and they can grow in discernment and commitments

• Live **coherent lifes**, deeply spiritual and open to sharing who we are and what motivates our lifes
Collaborate in the Care of our Common Home
We desire to...

• Work with others to develop alternative models of life based on respect for creation, to overcome the causes of environmental destruction that is inflicting an intergenerational damage.

• Investigate and analyse, make a discerned reflection leading to decisions that can stop the deterioration process and heal the planet.

• Take special care of areas such as Amazonia, Congo basin, India, Indonesia and the oceans.
We desire to...

• **Modify habits** of life which are currently based on an economic model of unsustainable production and consumption of goods.

• Promote **new small actions** daily.
Intellectual Depth
a dimension of our way of proceeding

• This is our tradition and part of our charism, our way of proclaiming the Good News

• A unique contribution we can make to the service the Church renders to people

• It is meant to be an integral aspect of all areas of our work, not just an apostolic sector

• Intellectual depth needs to be present as we embody each UAP in our life-mission
Collaboration *(minima Society of Jesus)*

- We are all collaborators in the unique mission Christ has entrusted to his followers and to the People of God.
- 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.
Collaboration (*minima Society of Jesus*)

- When we fully share this mission with our lay and religious partners, we find grace, vision, creativity, and abundant help.
- We need to be sure these partners in mission are included as we begin to pray together, share spiritual conversation, and listen to the cries of the Preferences in our local contexts.
- If the Preferences truly are to change how we live and work together as one people of God, then a spirit of collaboration must inspire every stage of implementation right from the start.
Networking (a growing collaboration mean)

• Globalization is giving us an unprecedented chance to network
• To BE a universal body for mission
• To realize something truly universal
• To journey with Christ as a universal body
The Universal Apostolic Preferences: Current Mission and Future of the Society

• The transmission, assimilation and implementation of the UAPs opens the opportunity for us to experience the U-process which we looked at in the June 2019 session of the Enlarged Council.

• To design a process that leads from the reception of the UAPs to the three stages leading to conversion and implementation of a renewed life-mission.

  ✓ Sensing our reality together…

  ✓ Presencing what God is asking us, as a universal –unique- apostolic body…

  ✓ Realising the evolutions framed by the UAPs as applied to our reality
Diagram of U-Process – a reminder

U THEORY

Past → Future

1. listening beyond frame of mind and ratings of the past
2. observe reality beyond the prejudices
3. sensing the particular in its entirety, starting to act
4. presencing the deepest source of the self: Who am I? and my job?
5. crystallizing the energy around the renewed working group
6. prototyping practical applications
7. performing together to create newness and get results

OPEN YOUR MIND
OPEN YOUR HEART
OPEN THE WILL

bright intelligence, intuition
Conversion

- Open Mind: Curiosity
- Open Heart: Compassion
- Open Will: Courage
Some specific actions

• 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.

• 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.
Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21)