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An Afrocentric Movement



There was once a poor little girl who loved to cook just like her mother. Her shy nature, and the strict nature of her mother never allowed her to ask her mother questions in the kitchen. She was very good at duplicating whatever she saw her mother do in the kitchen. There was one weird thing she observed though; whenever her family could afford sausages for breakfast, she would notice that her mother will cut both the top and the end of the sausage before frying it. This she also learnt without questioning. One day, her beauty and her good house-keeping skills landed her a very rich man, and they got married. In cooking sausages for this man, she did it just like mother had taught her. The rich man on seeing this, found it very strange and asked his wife why she cut off the base and top of the sausages. Her reply was, “I saw mother do it since I was young, so I am also doing it because mother is always right”. The husband then tasked his dear wife to ask her mother the reason for the cutting of the top and base of the sausages. On asking her mother her mother replied, “ My daughter, the reason why I cut these sausages was because we were poor and our frying pan could not hold a full sausage, we also couldn’t afford a full sausage for everyone so we created that impression that sausage ought to be ate in that manner, after you kids had eaten and left for school, your dad and I picked the pieces from what was left, and that was what we ate for breakfast”. The lady realized that her argument and her reason for cutting the sausages the way her mother did it was a very dumb thing to do, because in her rich husband’s house, there were very bigger frying pans, also, they had enough to feed all their children and even people outside. I do not know how the story ended, but what I know is that that young wife learnt 2 lessons;

She learnt some adaptive skills, to adapt herself to her new environment and to also manage crisis in a creative way

She learnt how to fry sausages very well!!!!

One will notice that just like this young woman in the story today, we too fry sausages in our life, learning how to fry them from others. Just like her too, the most important thing we miss is asking vital questions from the people whom we learn hoe to fry from. We would notice that people make comments such as, “Is democracy really for Africa?” and other questions which stem from the same vain. People question policies of our African leaders which were adapted from outside Africa, and I seem to agree with these people. As Africans, even if we adopt such policies, we ought to ask why, we ought to probe them before we implement.

As AJU students, that is exactly what we are being taught, the past UAP’s workshop which was held is in the phase of being ‘Africanized’; adapting them to our African context and looking to maximize its importance in Africa. This edition of the insider, looks at how some Africans see the UAP’s. it also contains some viewpoints of how we see Africa; what it means if an African calls you a friend and how we see ourselves and our home. In this month of October, Nigeria celebrated its Independence Day (1st October), and we had someone describe his motherland in a very beautiful way. There is truly an Afrocentric movement and as students of AJU, we embrace and join this movement of Afrocentrism. As one of the writers of this edition states, this is a great time to be an African!!!

Joseph Ghansah SJ.

THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS OF THE UNIVERSAL APOSTOLIC PREFERENCES



In the Ignatian Identity column this month I have asked a young Jesuit in formation (Evans Okoth) to share with us his personal feelings about the UAPs as they affect him today as a student, and tomorrow as he dreams of the future.

By way of introduction I want to share my own feelings. When the four UAPs were made public by Father Sosa, my heart jumped. They are just the preferences (among others) I would have chosen. Fr General obviously has telepathic powers to read minds!! As I watch the international news each day, I see so much good, but also so much evil. We live in an age of spectacular scientific and technological advances. But at the same time our world seems to be an increasingly unhappy place. People are on the streets protesting in a large number of countries. The gap between rich and poor is growing exponentially. Poverty, violence and injustice are forcing millions to flee from their countries, hoping for a better life elsewhere. But with growing populism and nationalism, they are not wanted in those countries. Like Donald Trump, each president wants to make his/her country (and the powerful classes in those countries) great again, and ‘to hell with those others who are not part of the system’. This kind of ethical egoism affects the young, and their hopes for the future, and it is disastrous for our planet. Why should we take the expensive steps needed to protect our planet when they eat into our profits and slow our short term prosperity?

The older I get the more convinced I become that the first of our preferences is essential for a solution to the problems we try to address in the other preferences. True, improved economic and political policies, structures, and systems are essential to meet the challenges posed by the other three preferences. But on their own they are not enough. We can have the best structures and systems in the world, but as long as we have egoistic, greedy, corrupt and power hungry people running the system, nothing will change. Indeed they will only get worse. We need not only a change of mind but also a change of heart. Until we believe and practice the values propounded by Jesus in his sermon on the mount and in his promulgation of the Kingdom, i.e. a deep respect for the dignity of **every** human being (without distinction), a care and compassion for the poor and disadvantaged, a hunger for truth, justice and good governance, and servant, not ‘master’ leadership, we will never build a world where every person can realize his/her potential, and flourish as a unique human being, and where people can live together in peace, harmony, prosperity and cooperation in a just society. The first UAP helps to provide this. It enables people to change both their minds and hearts, and thus to build a better world.

But enough of my musings. Let us hear what a young Jesuit has to say.

Roland von Nidda SJ

Universal Apostolic Preferences: *Spiritual Path of Our Time*



Most journeys that we make in life entail knowing where we are (the starting point), and where we are going (the destination). This is no different in our spiritual journey, for we can recall vividly that conversion moment which marked the starting point of this journey. And right from that moment, we had the destination set in our minds, that is, to save our souls and that of our neighbor, so that we may be reunited with Him who is our Creator. Sometimes I pose and ask myself many questions in relation to this journey: ‘do I really know the way? Am I on the right track? Do I still have the desire to move on?’ And many other questions.

In the midst of this doubt and questioning, the Universal Apostolic Preferences surface as

dynamic means which guide me to reach that destination I have in mind. After listening to a couple of presentations on these UAPs, and after a careful reading of them, I discovered that the beauty of this document is in the fact that showing the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment, is the source from which the other three preferences draw their

full meaning and realization. This is more pronounced in the UAPS’ desire that I need to appropriate in my vocation and mission the desire to share with others the most fundamental discovery of our lives, namely the discovery that discernment and the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius show the way to God.

I find it to be for the greater service of God and the universal good that I journey with the poor, the outcasts of this world, and the youths by sharing with them the graces I keep on receiving from the Spiritual Exercises. Among these are: the grace of encountering a merciful, provident and loving God, the grace to shun the negative past, and to confidently look to the future with a clear goal in mind and heart. It

assures me, in the midst of tension and confusion, that I have a guide (Christ) who constantly teaches me how to identify with those who need him most. It is very consoling to know that my most innermost desire to share these graces is highly encouraged by the UAPs.

I love it when the UAPs remind me that effecting this desire is not possible without depth in knowledge and experience. The call for depth and knowledge tells me that to give the best that the UAPs have to offer does not arise from a spontaneous response, but rather from carefully discerned thoughts and imaginations which lead to a right course of action. Having that depth and experience depends on my disposition to welcome new challenges, to give the already known a new and youthful look, and to try that which has already been tried but given up. All in all, an open heart, mind, and will are necessary means which I am convinced can help attain that end which the UAPs desire.

Okoth Evans Okoth SJ

The UAPs as a Path to the Missing Panacea

“Not to live as if you had endless years ahead of you. Death overshadows you. While you are alive and able-be good.”-Marcus

Aulerius, Meditations.

Finally a word on networks. One, two, three, and four afternoons of joy, everybody vibrating with an unbridled enthusiasm, joy, hope, encouragement. After completion, what Arrupeans had been waiting for, reading week, a week for relaxing mind at the same time reading for revision of some philosophies. Some people suggest that a genuine philosopher is the one who is able to internalize knowledge and spark action and facilitate him to take wiser decisions. Reading self-help books will, in that moment, make him feel inspired for a change. The past reading week, which I consider as the most fulfilling period. A week which still sings within me, it sings a magnificent song for everything which God granted, grants and will grant us Arrupeans and the people around us. Hence I am glad to present to you not as a report but as a picture of what has happened during the past four afternoons at Arrupe Jesuit University. I am filled with great joy and happiness recognizing how much seriousness we were and how much progress we have made in our togetherness during those four afternoons of workshop. It would not be an exaggeration if I consider the past reading as an amazing week with great blessings and great privilege. Before continuing, however, a personal note is required. For I did not make this journey alone. I thank all those who participated the workshop; your presence was a really testimonial to the unity, excellent, spiritual and continuity of twentieth first century civilization.

Before going to the scenario of workshop, I invite you to



consider what Saint Ignatius calls the contemplation of incarnation. Ignatius invites us to look upon our world: men and women being born and being laid to rest, some getting married and others getting divorced, the old and the young, young people in despondency, the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer, the happy and the sad, so many people aimless, despairing, hateful, and some people killing each other, so many undernourished, sick, and dying, so many struggling with life and blind to

any meaning; and, some shriveling in the acid of their bitterness conditions crushing them. The earth cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her through our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. With God, I can hear people laughing and crying, some shouting and screaming, some praying, others cursing. One can guess the purpose of UAPs after doing this contemplation. Everybody knows that at some point in the twentieth century the world went through a cultural, economic and social revolution. One has only to glance at the reality described above on contemplation of incarnation. Thinking about it, one just finds himself in a completely vanished world. It is a world ruled by self desires, a world so foreign, so seemingly simple, that we sometimes tend, foolishly enough, to find it comical. It is a period of fearful issues and drastic divisions, and a period surely including the jazz Age, the great depression, a time of competition, and the time of great industrialization and modernization. The Jesuits and the church have begun to realize how urgently action is needed to cope adequately with the new situation. There is an increasingly obvious

need for us to take serious look at the profile of our own works and play a committed part in the process of drawing up adequate overall response to these crises which the world today is facing. The Society of Jesus is trying to help the church in a way consistent with its own special talents. The workshop basically was about the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs). The UAPs is the society's imagination and dreams about the next 10 years. The UAPs as a path to meet the missing panacea. The UAPs are the fruits of a serious and rigorous listening to the will of God. It is the listening of heart not mind. It is a fruit of discernment of what the church want the Jesuits to do for the church. It important to point out that this mission it is not just for Jesuits but for everybody of good will. Hence, the UAPs seek to make concrete the mission which God has given us, which is in fact the God's response to the cry of a wounded world; to the cry of the most vulnerable, who have been displaced and marginalized; to the empty rhetoric that divides and fragments our cultures; to the growing gulf between rich and poor; to the cry of the young who are seeking hope and meaning; to the cry of the earth and its peoples, worn down to the point where their very existence is at risk; and to a world in which entire generations have never heard of Jesus and his Gospel. The UAPs put response to above problems into four categories, the first one is to show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment. The Spiritual Exercises are a compilation of meditations, prayers, and contemplative practices developed by St. Ignatius Loyola to help people to deepen their relationship with God and with people around them. For centuries the Exercises were most commonly given as a "long retreat" of about 30 days in solitude and silence. In recent years, there has been a renewed emphasis on the Spiritual Exercises as a program for laypeople. The most common way of going through the Exercises now is a "retreat in daily life," which involves a month's long program of daily prayer and meetings with a spiritual director. The Spiritual Exercises have also been adapted in many other ways to

meet the needs of modern people. It is important to point out that everybody can do spiritual exercise, non-Catholics even those who call themselves atheists, this because spiritual exercises do not just help us to have a good relationship with God but they help us to be *More Human*, that is to say to be sensitive to what is happening around us. The second category is, to walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice; it is sad to see how our modern education is creating division. This division is very evident in the video clips on our television, a rich, a bad-mannered young man surrounded by luxury cars and business girls, a young man who thinks he is an European, a young men who hate the poor because they remind them of their own origin. One must row against all this current. The UAPs are there to create stories where the winner is not the most powerful. The stories in which the one who was chosen was not the most arrogant but the most tolerant, the one who listens most to others. "The men for others". This invitation is not just for Jesuits but for everybody, so everybody is invited in this battle. It is important to put the expression which father Mark used in his presentation and I quote "we should listen the cries of poor around us, the poor from Harare" I am anxious to emphasize this point since, the UAPs emphasize more this apostolate "justice and to live the option for the poor" It is very important to notice the Jesuits are not creating a new response; it is rather a new way of expressing an old response, well anchored in Jesuit tradition. The Jesuits are for MAGIS, they are not satisfied with mere cultural transmission. The third category is to accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future; Pope Francis once said, "Young people are the window through which the future gets into the world" after recognizing this truth, the church and the Jesuits, have always insisted on developing a critical attitude, to equip young people in their schools to contribute to human and cultural growth and to renewal in harmony with gospel values. Hence the UAPs are here in order to help

us in Training young people of every socio-economic class to acquire a permanent state of mind leading them never to take an important decision without having first weighed up its consequences for the poor means being committed to training men and women for others, with Christ as their model. The last category is to collaborate in the care of our Common Home. Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si'* that we all share responsibility for caring for creation, which many people's look on as 'mother earth': "This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her through our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her" This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she 'groans in travail' (Rom 8:22). For years of history Jesuits have taken seriously, the expression of Father Nadal that "Nuestra casa es le mundo" that is to say our house is the world. The Jesuits have had as their sole end the commitment to make the human city, this "mundo" a more just one for lord's sake. The UAPs are inviting everybody to contribute in the betterment of our home, which is being damaged, by the dominant economic system (capitalism greed) which is inflicting intergenerational damage: not only does it affect those now living on earth, particularly the very young, but it also conditions and jeopardizes the life of future generations. We are all invited to take part of this battle.

Finally, I think to make sense of today's astonishing changes propelling us into the 21st, we need more than bits, blips, and lists. We need to see how different changes relate to one another and adapt again the values which bind us together. From the fruit of workshop I strongly believe that this is possible. After having four mornings of workshop, I was interesting to realize that we were speaking the same language, I thank God that, it was not in academics, I think it could be plagiarism. One could realize the brotherhood the same language and every our desire pointing to the same direction. We experienced the grace of experiencing internally that we are indeed one body, and that by growing in indifference and availability, we are becoming more of a discerning community with expanded horizons. With these apostolic preferences, then, we felt that we are once again committing ourselves to continuing on the path that we have begun by taking up this fundamental dimension of our life and mission. A period of rapid changes can never be a calm time. Therefore, our efforts to put the UAPs into practice and respond to a world in flux are urgent. Let us work together in this togetherness; I believe that we will once again make the human city, this "mundo" a more just one and greater for lord's sake.

Bonnifacio Zaccarias SJ

Workshop on the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) of the Society of Jesus for the Next Ten Years: 2019-2029

“If Your Dreams do not Scare you, they are not Big Enough.”



Generally, the Society of Jesus tries to focalise her activities among the many works that she does. This focus is sometimes referred to as Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs). Currently, the Society of Jesus wants to concentrate on: Showing the way to God through Spiritual Exercises and discernment; 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 the youth in the creation of a hope-filled Future; and to care for our common home.



These UAPs are the fruit of a discernment process which took place for virtually two years. All Jesuits as well as our collaborators were invited to thoroughly discern the needs of the world, the calls of the Spirit, and the ways for the Society of Jesus to serve better in next ten years. The process ended with Pope Francis’s approval, thus making it a Papal mission. The UAPs give a prospect and a point of reference to the whole Society of Jesus. They capture our imaginations, rouse our desires, and unite us in our mission. This piece tries to reflect or give an overview about the workshop on the UAPs held at Arrupe Jesuit University. Besides, it attempts to point out some dreams and expectations that the participants, specially scholastics at Arrupe, expressed during the workshop. Additionally, the piece suggests some possible ways of implementing the UAPs.

The Universal Apostolic Preferences were officially promulgated on February 19, 2019 by Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus. Successively, Fr. A. E. Orobator, SJ, the President of the Jesuit Conference of African and Madagascar (JCAM), invited all Provinces, Regions, and common houses of the conference to come up with ways of implementing the UAPs. So, the four-day workshop, that is, from September 30 to October 3, 2019, that Arrupe Jesuit University held was a response to that invitation. It was facilitated by Fr. John Dadis, SJ, the General’s counsellor for Discernment and Apostolic Planning, and Fr. Mark Ravissa, SJ, the General’s counsellor for Formation. The workshop was satisfactorily attended by members of Arrupe Jesuit Community, students and staff of





Arrupe Jesuit University, and some members of the Zimbabwe/Mozambique Province of the Society of Jesus. Hopefully, through that workshop, the attendants will come up with some rough ideas or draft on how to live out the UAPs as a community, an institution, and a province respectively.

What are these Universal Apostolic Preferences? Fr. Dadis responds to this question in various ways. The UAPs are the Society's traditions of dreaming about the future. Through this way, Jesuits come to terms with the uncertainty challenging humanity today. In other words, the UAPs are four signposts which link us to God's dreams and what He wants to do for and about the world for the next ten years. Besides, the UAPs are missions from the Pope. Indeed, Pope Francis articulates that the UAPs are ways through which Jesuits participate in the Church's mission to the world. Moreover, the UAPs are ways by which we can channel our passions in order to help humanity revive its own dying passions. Furthermore, the UAPs are a worldwide mission of hope and reconciliation. In fact, the UAPs are effective ways of bringing hope and reconciliation to a world not only charged with polarities, bursting with insecurities, sullied with hatred and "-isms" such as secularism and consumerism, but also a world disturbed by leadership and economic crisis. Additionally, the UAPs are ways of relating to the joy and beauty that lie at the depth of nature and humanity. In effect, they are a response to the realities of the current world.

Apparently, the Society of Jesus, through her different apostolates, does already what the UAPs are calling for. So, is there anything new in the UAPs that Jesuits have not been doing? Fr. Ravissa, though conscious of the truth of the question, responds affirmatively, inferring that there is something new in this set of UAPs. The sentiment that there is nothing new in the UAPs may kill the spirit of engagement with the UAPs at a deeper level. The UAPs are a dynamic means and a spiritual route that speak to each person. The first preference is a process of knowing how to work and walk with God and the other three designate cries such as those of the young, of the poor, and of the earth to which we must be attentive and adequately respond. The UAPs are a guide to renewal as well as to unity of life and mission. The centre of the UAPs is conversion which is clearly seen in the verbs 'showing, walking, accompanying, collaborating and caring' present in the UAPs. For instance, the second preference demands our conscious effort to eschew ideologies that breed oppression and abuse – one of which is clericalism. The youth carry seeds of strong dreams in themselves. So, we must learn to listen to the young, reduce the tendency of giving them all the answers or of making



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them do nothing but absorb old wisdom. They bear great energy towards innovative dynamism which ought to be explored.

If our dreams do not scare us, they are not strong enough. The participants, specially Arrupean scholastics, through various spiritual conversations in groups, expressed their dreams. These desires were grouped into three areas: dreams for self, dreams for formation, and dreams for the entire society. Among many dreams for self, the following were the most outstanding ones: to know more about Ignatian spirituality, spiritual conversation, and Ignatian heritage rooted in listening attentively and discernment; to draw closer to the poor, the excluded, displaced, and go through the realities of those we serve, and mend their brokenness. Besides, scholastics desire to be enriched spiritually and academically and to nurture their talents. Moreover, they desire to have a holistic, humane formation that integrates academic, spiritual, communal and human formation in a balanced way. There is a dream of opening to new ways of thinking and to the Spirit – such that ought not be hindered by local challenges. Deep intellectual engagement with the issues and reality of the world. To use Philosophy to transform lives and to open us to the world’s realities. Additionally, scholastics desire to have a joyous and fear-free formation in a safe and trusting environment of free expression and growth. Consolingly, all those dreams reflect the desires that scholastics have for the whole Society of Jesus and are also in alignment with the UAPs.

At this juncture, one may ask: how do we get from dreams and imaginations to reality or how do we implement the UAPs? The implantation of the UAPs might follow or require dissimilar patterns. One needs *equilibrio* in life, for it opens surprises. It is worth accepting our vulnerability, that is, the fact that we are sinners yet called. The UAPs must be implemented with an open mind rather than a voice of cynicism, with an open heart rather than a voice of fear, and an open will rather than a voice of judgement. The implantation of the UAPs is the process of letting go what can no longer continue and letting come a way forward adapted to our reality. Jesus said, “Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, then it produces many seeds” (John 12,24).

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By Timóteo B. Portásio SJ

What a Time to be African!



The bloom of jacaranda flowers all over the African continent ushered in the month of October in all her splendour. The ingeniously planted trees especially in the major cities of Africa such as Harare made for a sight to behold. In the midst of the allure of the purple petals across Mother Africa, the charm of her children gave her more reasons to rejoice in her magnificence. From the North of the Mediterranean Sea, the Noble committee honoured Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Mr. Abiy Ahmed Ali with the Nobel Peace prize on 11th of October 2019. In an interview, Prime Minister Abiy quipped "Peace is a very expensive commodity in my country" and by extension the continent. The Nobel Prize Committee honoured Mr. Abiy

"for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea." The committee considered PM Abiy's efforts as the most significant contribution to peace in the last year, thereby becoming the first Ethiopian to be awarded a Nobel Prize. In their press release, the Norwegian Nobel Committee noted that the Prime Minister "spent his first 100 days as Prime Minister lifting the country's state of emergency, granting amnesty to thousands of political prisoners, discontinuing media censorship, legalising outlawed opposition groups, dismissing military and civilian leaders who were suspected of corruption, and significantly increasing the influence of women in Ethiopian political and community life. He has also pledged to strengthen democracy by holding free and fair elections." In his very august efforts, PM Abiy personifies the great African dream that peace is possible within our lifetime.

An equally illustrious son of Africa engaged in a global sporting cum scientific experiment dubbed by the social media hashtags #NoHumanIsLimited. The experiment entailed a 42Km marathon race run in Vienna, Austria, conducted in scientific running conditions that aimed to break the prevailing assertion that a 42Km marathon race cannot be run in less than 2 hours. On the 12th day of October 2019, Mr. Eliud Kipchoge, a Kenyan Athlete, run the marathon in a world first record time of 1:59:20. Christened the Ineos 1:59 challenge, it was the second attempt by the Mr. Kipchoge to run the race in less than 2 hours. In May 2017, he failed in his first attempt by 26 Seconds in the experiment dubbed the *Breaking2 Project* in the city of Monza, Italy, where he clocked a time of 2:00:25 hours. The athlete has won 11 out of 12 marathons and is also the reigning Olympic marathon champion. He had arrived in the Austrian capital city approximately a week earlier ready to create what he termed as his "moon-landing" moment. Mr. Kipchoge had set a stunning new world record time of 2:01:39 in the Berlin Marathon in 2018 and thus the current event was in the spirit of him competing with his own self. Though his victory came with numerous material benefits and social status recognition, the athlete emphasized that his main motivation for taking on the challenge was to motivate human beings to strive to conquer all their limits. Before engaging in the race, he was quoted saying that "(the race) is about making history that no human is limited and about giving positivity to the world and making sure every human being smiles." Indeed no human is limited, Africa is unlimited.

The 3rd Youth Connekt Africa Summit brought over 8,000 youths in a three-day sequence of activities held in Kigali, Rwanda from 9th to 11th October 2019. The Summit is an annual convention that connects

youth from across globe with the aim of providing a platform for all partners involved in youth development to synergize around policies, programs and partnerships that will connect youths for continental transformation. This year's summit targeted to gather the youth and high-level delegates to engage, discuss, design, and accelerate youth empowerment efforts at the continent level under the theme of "Boosting an Industrious Young Africa." Numerous activities such as panel discussions on different issues, motivational speeches from influential people and exhibitions were undertaken with youth innovators being awarded. The youths in attendance were encouraged to have the right vision to steer the continent's transformation agenda. The President of Rwanda, Mr, Paul Kagame, who graced the event, reminded the gathered youths that their devotion and hardwork was key in societal transformation. He urged them to embrace right values and character in transforming their respective countries.

As October comes to an end and as the purple flowers diminish, may we keep close the inspiration of this month. May the inspiration of PM Abiy bring us to the altar of peace. May the commitment and endurance of the long distance athletes resonate with our desires for a better world, a greater Africa. May their determination for the finishing line inspire us to get out of our comfort zone and to give ourselves for the hard labour that lie ahead of us. May the whispers, conversations and echoes of the discussions from Kigali resonate all over the land of Mother Africa. Like the purple jacaranda flowers that line her vast landscape, may the elusive petals of economic, social and political progress take shape. It is indeed a great time to be African.

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Victor Mureithi, SJ

A Conference at the Italian Embassy – A Forum for my Internalization of the UAPs

“Which one of these Preferences speaks personally and directly to me?”



Have you ever felt a nudge to commit yourself to a particular task without really knowing how to go about accomplishing it? Even at instances when such commitments have easily embraced their ‘eureka’ moments, have you ever experienced a situation wherein the desire in you towards a particular commitment is not just externally or rationally motivated (perhaps, like a sense of duty or compulsion), but rather, ‘interiorly’ motivated (that is, when it feels more like a vocation)? We could take some time to ponder on these questions before reading further as the responses you get from them will key you into the perspective from which I give this reflective report.

On the 19th day of February, 2019, the Jesuit Superior General, Fr. Arturo Sosa, sent out a letter to the entire Society of Jesus, announcing her universal apostolic preferences for the next ten years – the fruit of a 16-month discernment process. From that day, a central invitation to all provinces, works, individual Jesuits and their mission partners (collaborators) has been to come up with an implementation process. On a personal level, a question which I, as well as every other Jesuit or Jesuit collaborator, have had to deeply ponder upon from the very moment the General’s letter hit my mailbox has been: “Which one of these preferences speaks personally and directly to me?”

Notice the choice of words and the entire question formulation. It is quite a different ballgame from inquiring: Which of the preferences can I most effectively engage in? What makes the difference? Most importantly, the UAPs are meant to lead us through a conversion process more than we are to engage them through an action plan. This explains the use of the phrase, ‘implementation process’, rather than ‘implementation plan’. Then comes the tougher ones: How on earth would a set of preferences which appears like priorities for mission placements or service projects convert me? And what am I to do to ensure that this conversion takes place? Surely, I would have fairly escaped these mind muggers if I only had to think of which of these preferences accommodates both my interest and capacity. At an initial glance at the UAPs, I was able to point out two most preferred areas of interests – the poor and the environment. And with a bit of analysis based on my capacities, the poor emerged as the most preferred. But even at this, I was sure deep within that I had only made some rational choices without satisfying the demands of the implementation process of the UAPs.

First, during the ANW province assembly held in Nigeria on July 25, and more expressively, during the workshop on the UAPs held at AJU between September 30 and October 4, Fr. Abuchi Muoneme and the partnership of Frs. John Dardis and Mark Ravissa (all SJs) were bent on giving the assurance that an openness to the spirit of the

UAPs would make the difference. That is, openness to the promptings of the spirit would engineer the expected conversion that ought to accompany the internalization of the UAPs. With this, a last resort for me was openness and grace amidst clouds of uncertainty.

Did that work? Yes, of course... at least, so I felt. And how did that happen? It was through a reminiscence that fitted within the plane of prayer, of listening and of discernment. Led by Frs. Dardis and Ravissa, Arrupe community (of which I am a member) and a couple of others from the Zimbabwe/Mozambique province spent the first day of the workshop on becoming familiar with the 'spirit' of the UAPs. On the second day, we had personal, and then, communal reflection on dreams for ourselves, the university and the society as part of going through the implementation process of the UAPs. On the third day, each individual had to choose a preference or issue that resonates with his inclination and figure out in prayer, "what actions and process would move that issue forward". I dare to say that this was my eureka moment, although quite paradoxically, I spent a greater chunk of the prayer time walking down memory lane of a conference I attended a couple of weeks prior to the workshop. What Conference?

On the eve of September 20, the PVC academics of AJU, Dr Ekwueme Evaristus, and a couple of students – a near-equal distribution between students from the University of Zimbabwe and Arrupeans in whose company I was, set out for a conference at the Italian embassy. It was a conference in preparation for a course to be offered on International Law and Relations by the Italian Ambassador to Zimbabwe, His Excellency, P. Carlo. My first wonder was at the number of Italian dignitaries present as guest speakers in the conference. Together with His Excellency, in our midst were the renowned Italian public prosecutor, Nicola Gratteri; Antonio Nicaso, an expert and best-selling author of several books on organized crime and the Calabrian mafia; and the Rwandan-based Italian Carabinieri, Colonel Stefano Dragani, who has devoted almost his entire career life in the analysis of organized crimes and terrorist groups, especially within Africa. I easily sifted out what need there was for such a course as nothing of little importance would have gathered such personages before a bunch of undergraduates and graduating students.

Gratteri started off by insisting on the reality of international and transnational illicit activities, especially within the domain of illegal drug dealings. The presence and high demand of these plants across nations necessitates and creates these dealings. On his part, he is currently undertaking a research on how to get at least, two of these drugs of the market and as such, minimize the overall intake and effect of drugs on a number of those whose destinies are shattered through their effects. Nicaso was keen on the influence of Mafia 'dynasties' and the alarming level of wealth and power they control. He never ceased reiterating that these power and wealth they wield are the constituent elements of their continuous existence on the one hand, and a core foundation of social inequality and impoverishment of the masses in a lot of countries on the other hand. The most difficult aspect of it all as he held, was that the network of operation of these self-centered proponents of social and economic inequalities is fostered on licit grounds through members disguised into very influential societal professions such as law and accountancy.

Colonel Dragani saw it expedient to convince us on how easily crimes such as terrorism and inter-tribal clashes are capable of spreading across nations just as a little ignition can take out an entire concession if not timely or adequately attended to. A glaring example is the Islamic extremist group, popularly known as Boko Haram, which though began with the claim of sanitizing Islam in Borno State of Nigeria, proclaimed itself the Islamic State's West Africa Province after thirteen years of its establishment with a network of violent insurgencies in countries including Tchad, Cameroon and Niger. Thus, his was a sensitization on the need for awareness of, and activism

towards quelling uprising disputes or violence-driven ideologies in nations within Africa for such could spread endemically to other nations to the overall detriment of the continent.

Definitely, I saw this conference as a tip of the iceberg which would be fully uncovered through the course. I was at once thrilled and a bit intimidated at the vastness and depth of knowledge I could gain from the course. And I had a genuine enthusiasm to put the knowledge into good use for the benefit of the poor who have the worst share of the rippling effects of these international crimes. Indeed, on that day, I felt both energized and ambitious.

But the reminiscence during prayer on the third day of the workshop on the UAPs offered a whole new kind of energy. In the deep recesses of my heart within those few minutes of prayerful recollection, I was not really very enthusiastic, thrilled or intimidated. Instead, I felt *consoled*. It was a consolation that arose from knowing that through the channel of International Law and Relations, I could be more empathetic to those who have been robbed of their dignity and wellbeing through transnational crimes. It was a consolation from my very own willingness to know and feel the injustice the poor suffer through these crimes; a willingness to bring to their awareness the operations of some of these structures that perpetrate these injustices and a willingness to work with them in disempowering these structures.

Notice again how this differs from the former enthusiasm which was basically action oriented. At that moment of prayer, I was brought to the awareness and acknowledgment of how the second of the four UAPs was interacting with my inner self through the desire to engage in International Law and Relations. Therein, I sensed how that UAP was leading me into a subtle conversion from the mere willingness to do something for the poor, to a willingness to feel their pains, reach out to them and work with them towards every possible restoration. This point of the workshop gave me a new dream of being a friend to the poor, rather than a (distanced) helper. Moreover, the fact that my consolation came from an awareness of a deep-seated ‘willingness to be’ affirms the consolation as the starting point of my conversion process – a process which will hopefully transform the willingness to be into an actuality of being.

But why have I decided to enthuse or perhaps bore you with such a lengthy write-up, most of whose details should have been conveniently limited to the pages of a personal journal? I have a two-fold reason for doing so, both of which I hope will jointly justify what risks to be termed an “extravagant display of pious achievements” from my part. The first is gratitude. On the one hand, I offer my sincere appreciation to Frs. Dardis and Ravissa, the General’s Assistants for Discernment and Apostolic Planning, and for Formation respectively, who facilitated the workshop on the implementation process of the UAPs at AJU. Same goes to the Rector of Arrupe Jesuit University, Fr. Gibson Munyoro, SJ, and the university’s team of administrators who thought it wise to invite Frs. Dardis and Ravissa to facilitate the workshop.

On the other hand, my thanks go to the PVC Academic of AJU, Dr. Evaristus Ekwueme, SJ, who was the brain behind planning for the network program on International Law and Relations whose first step towards actualization was the conference. More so, much appreciation goes to the Italian dignitaries whose presentations ignited in me the flame that has effervesced in resonance with the UAPs. The truth which I cannot fail to acknowledge is that the contributions of all mentioned above knit together in a seamless weave of what I can call a graced experience for me. And I know of no other way to extend my deepest gratitude to them all and to God who has given me a share of his love than by offering this testimony.

Secondly and perhaps more importantly, I share this experience to all with the intention that it may serve as a means of encouragement to some. If nothing else, by the mere fact of your engagement with this text till this point, I am of the assumption that you have, at least, the slightest positive interest in the Society's mission of service to God and humanity either through AJU as a Jesuit institution of higher learning or any other apostolate of the Society. And by virtue of that interest, you are a collaborator in God's mission for humanity through the Society (that is, if you are not already a Jesuit). If these assumptions hold true for you, then it is also the case that you share in the invitation to internalize the spirit of the UAPs either as a Jesuit or as a collaborator in the Society's mission for the world. Then comes in the relevance of this write-up for you, especially if you are a collaborator who has not had the privilege of undergoing the process of internalization of the "spirit" of the UAPs. It is my hope that by being conscious of the questions reflected upon, the initial confusions, subtle movements of motives and indications of conversion contained in my own experience of internalizing the spirit of the UAPs, you may engage in your own very experience of the same internalization through a sincere openness to God's spirit at work in you. Thus, having shared my experience of the introductory question, I now pose the same question to you: *"Which one of these Preferences speaks personally and directly to you"?*

The Youth and Climate Change Discourse



Scientists have repeatedly warned that climate change, manifested by unpredictable weather phenomenon and global warming, is destroying livelihoods through devastating droughts, flooding, and destructive cyclones. These devastations have been attributed to human activities manifested in unfettered, unrestrained and unsustainable exploitation of the ecosystem rendering a detrimental blow to the environment including the air we breathe and the water we drink and so forth. In this paper, I am going to give some possible voluntary and formal global actions that could help

the youth to respond to climate change and create awareness.

In reading chapter III of Global Environmental Governance, there is something deeper which is important; The idea of helping the youth to change. To change the attitude, behaviour, the way of doing things in order to protect the environment through implementing regulations and treaties. During the UN Conference on Climate Action in Harare on 22 October 2019, the persons who gave the talks at the conference had a common message to the youth: Change. We need to change first and that change starts with the change of mind; being aware that we are destroying our common house, our earth. Yes, human beings are very difficult to control because of liberty and for that reason there is a need



to implement the national and international regulations for global environmental issues. One of the persons who gave a talk at the conference said: “We need to change by the light from international conferences where they came up with agreements, conventions. Yes, the change begins from our level” (Lenin T.Chisaira: environmental Lawyer oct.2019). Many countries also have policies about environmental protection, and the youth have the responsibility of implementing the regulations and policies, after being taught about it. That change means also to take actions.



The youth have to make a plan for actions. In that regard young people have to be informed about their crucial role in climate change. By talking about being informed; it is important to create a radio or at least to have a talk, or a discussion on the public radio twice a week in order to make others aware and see what they can do in unilateral action or multilateral action as the Stockholm conference suggested.

By talking about information, young people nowadays are more vibrant on social media. That platform is very efficient to reach out to more young people in the country and is also a very good avenue to



share information about climate change and discuss about it, thus learning from the past and building the future. We need to be creative and innovative in that aspect. It was very regrettable to see people dying during the Cyclone Idai, most of these victims were not aware of the cyclone, those that were aware of it were probably not aware of its devastating effects. If there was that social media platform used every time by youths, the information would have been expanded, propagated, and spread very fast. During the UN conference, we agreed that we have to use these means

(social media platforms) to make the youth aware about climate change and its impacts. They can exchange information about the many aspects of climate change, especially in pollution, not only in own country, even outside. The youth can make good cooperations in creating awareness and educating the ignorant. Almost in all treaties, they have agreed about that aspect of creating awareness. In that regard, they identified international problems such as air pollution, etc. In the London Dumping Convention, 1972 we can read “following concerns that emissions of sulphur and nitrogen oxides were spilling over national boundaries and causing acid rain.....they decided to cooperate regarding the monitoring and exchange of information on such pollutants” (61-62).

In addition, the young people who represent the majority and the future must lead the way in the collective effort of ensuring environmental sustainability. Governments, the UN, NGO’s and other partners must include the youth in planning, implementing and reviewing environmental programmes. Moreover, another important point is about education because climate change cannot be separated from education. It is important to have a course about climate change in the education system. To teach this in different schools and at the universities is a good way to

help the young people who are the future of the society to be aware of the dangers and to know that if they do not act against the destruction of environment sure doom is spelt for the existence of humans. From there, they can learn the sensitive areas to protect such as forest, oceans, rivers, and animals. This will aid the youth to also avoid pollution which damages the atmosphere and destroys the ozone layer. In Africa, there is another factor which can be handled via education: poverty, and see how to speak to the people who live in poverty stricken areas. That element, I think is very necessary because it is linked to the economy and the livelihood of these individuals. In that regard, during the Stockholm conference, they, at the conference emphasized on those issues concerning poverty and economic development and learning how to speak also to the young poor people(they are many) and how to work towards development without damaging the environment, in fact it is not easy to improve the environment when one lives in poor conditions . Further, we can read “how can we speak to those who live in the villages and slums about keeping the oceans, rivers and the air clean when their own lives are contaminated at the source? The environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty (James 58).

Another voluntary and formal global actions that could help the youth to respond to climate change and create an awareness should be about agriculture. Agriculture is one of the most vulnerable sectors when it comes to environmental degradation. Particularly in Zimbabwe, as it is largely rain-fed and dominated by a single crop, maize for food security. Most of the population in rural in particular women, depend on the agriculture sector for their livelihood.

So, it must be the fundamental priority to safeguarding food and ending hunger and addressing the vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change by taking practical measures for environmental sustainability. Indeed, I think it is now the time for action and the youth must lead the way through green- innovations and green-creations.

Another important part is from the government. The young people are the ones who are strong for work. In Africa, they represent a high percentage in comparison to the other categories of the people. The government through the Minister of youth or the Minister for environment depending on where we are, has to fix one Saturday per month for cleaning and planting trees. After that action, it is a good time to discuss about those issues, and study the way forward. That way can be efficacious in making those young people to be more aware and make more actions for the better world and for the future generations.

In conclusion, in this paper, I have tried to show that the first thing for advocating climate change awareness among the youth is about change. Change begins by changing the mind. There is a great need to help young people for that purpose. That is a task and responsibility to everyone. This paper also has mentioned different voluntary and formal global actions that could help to respond to the youth climate change awareness. The important ones are education which cannot be separated from climate change as it has been explained above. To create the platforms for information sharing, creating awareness, and discussions on radio. Social media platforms should help the young people to be aware and act against climate change. Agriculture, linked to the issue of environment, is also an aspect which is non-negligible, the youth have a lot of role to play in this regard. Finally, I have not missed mentioning the importance of bringing together, by the government, the young people through cleaning towns, etc. It would be also interesting to make a research and see how young people who are in bad economic situation can affect the climate change.

Guillaume Semugisha SJ

POETRY

The Cry of a Suffering Nation

Beauty and integrity, I uphold to its fulness
Great fruits I have begotten to their fullness
Nourishing and nutritious diets I have made available

Why have you made me feel so incapable?

I have made efforts to settle your disputes
But everyday you bring up new problematic imputes

Do I really deserve all these problems?

Why have you made me feel so incapable?

I provide all you need to survive

But you take them away and sell to your enemies

They take my fruits and nourish their own nations

And you keep crying calling me a failed nation.

I give you knowledge and you use it against your neighbours

You destroy your successful neighbour because of your selfishness

You don't know how I have been selfless

Just to make sure you not become hopeless.

You say you are tired of me and you run away

You get to a new destination and destroy my

name

You make my younger ones look down on me
And when they start destroying you, you still run back to me

It is my diversity that makes me who I am
Stop trying to break me and destroy who I am

You have injured me enough that I can't even feel some parts of me

You call me mother please listen to my wise words.

I am Nigeria, I am brave, I am unique, I am diverse, I am fertile, I am humble, I am talented, I am beautiful, I am Your mother, please preserve my image. Show the world that I am the giant of African. Wipe my tears my child, I deserve to be treated with dignity.
I am Nigeria.

By Anthony Otah Kalu SJ

The ARRUPÉ INSIDER team would like to thank all those who contributed articles for this edition and invites more contributions from all members of Arrupe Jesuit University for the upcoming edition.

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CLUBS PROGRESS REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES
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