Jesuit Tradition

The Jesuit tradition at Saint Joseph's borrows from over 450 years of Jesuit history, but even more importantly, is very much alive today as the University prepares men and women for leadership and service in the twenty-first century.

Jesuit education began in the United States in 1789 at Georgetown, where a visionary Bishop John Carroll opened a school that would educate students to take advantage of the nation's newly-won freedom. Founded in 1851 as the seventh oldest of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, Saint Joseph's shares its proud history not only with Georgetown, but with Boston College, Fordham, St. Louis, Santa Clara and other distinguished Jesuit colleges and universities. Each has its own distinctive characteristics, while sharing the same basic educational vision.

Once known as the "schoolmasters of Europe," the Jesuits are known for excellence in a highly personalized education in the liberal arts, complemented by pre-professional and professional education. That education pursues the growth of the whole person toward responsible freedom, competence and compassion. Jesuit graduates are to be "men and women for others," committed to using their carefully-honed talents in lives of leadership and service.

Today, this ambitious task is pursued in partnership with diverse and ecumenical colleagues who share their experience and insights with Jesuits in forging a highly contemporary version of the Jesuit tradition. The core experience is enriched by diversity, a diversity that is increasingly found in students, faculty and staff.

Because of this increased diversity, Jesuits and their colleagues are engaged in various efforts to rediscover the dynamism of Jesuit education in the experience of the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola. Especially in his Spiritual Exercises, we find the basis for the personalism, the concern for leadership and excellence, the commitment to service, and the generous reading of the signs of the times that characterize Jesuit education at its best.

A survey of Saint Joseph's alumni shows that this description of Jesuit education works. An impressive array of women and men are leading lives of leadership, creativity, intelligent concern, and service -- largely due to their experience at Saint Joseph's.

- Rev. Joseph J. Godfrey, S.J.
The Society of Jesus is a Roman Catholic international religious order of some 23,000 men on six continents and in 112 countries throughout the world. Members of the Society of Jesus (or Jesuits) might be priests, brothers or scholastics who are studying to become priests. A man becomes a Jesuit after a two-year novitiate program at the end of which he pronounces perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Jesuits work in parish and retreat ministry, in high schools and colleges. They may be found working as lawyers and doctors, psychologists and counselors, writers and journalists, theologians and philosophers, researchers and scientists. In short, Jesuits do all kinds of work. Their mission is everywhere and always the promotion of faith in Jesus Christ and the justice demanded by that faith. Jesuits seek to make Christ's Kingdom available to our times. They are men with a singular passion: to do the world a world of good.

**Considering a Jesuit Life?** There are many ways to begin to explore a vocation to religious life or the Jesuits. Prayer, conversation with a spiritual director, spiritual reading, and regular reception of the sacraments are helpful practices in listening to God's call and responding with freedom. It is also helpful to get to know the members of the religious community, its ministries, its history and tradition.

**For More information**

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Or any other Jesuit at Saint Joseph’s University. Connect to the following sites for more on Jesuit vocations:

http://www.jesuitvocation.org

http://www.calprov.org/vocations/vocationeducation.html

If you have any questions regarding this information please contact: Father Daniel Joyce, S.J.; Office of Mission Phone: 610-660-3291, e-mail: djoyce@sju.edu
Jesuit Resources Online:

Saint Joseph's Jesuit Community
Association of Jesuit Colleges & Universities
Brief History of the Life of St. Ignatius
Brief History of Jesuit Education
American Conference of the Society of Jesus
Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus
American Magazine
Company Magazine
Jesuit Volunteer Corps
Jesuit Vocations