**2019 Report to the Provincial**

By Fr Dan McDonald SJ based on his Nov 2018 visit to Xavier University

**Excerpts with entire Cabinet response**

***On the cover notice to Xavier representatives:***

As you will read, the document shows a Jesuit and Catholic university at high levels of Mission functioning.  Your work is responsible for this and you offer some very important areas which our sister institutions would do well to embrace.  I intend to spread the word about many of your good practices(*see Fr McDonald’s list of Province ‘Best Practices” in the Appendix which he distributed to the six CMO’s ~a week before sending Xavier’s Report).*

**Opening paragraph**

As you read the report for this year, you will come across a variety of themes. To call attention to these is to say that as you read you will discover:

* Experiences, signs, directions and symbols which announce the integration of intention and action.
* *“Where the Jesuit HE schools can best collaborate is by doing the things together that we cannot do alone.”* – Mike Graham.
* Xavier engages Deep Vision Development.
* “*The Mission Office exists to create leaders in the Mission.*” – Joseph P. Shadle in speaking of his hiring interview with George Traub.
* “*What I did in high school was charity work; now I do service informed and engaged by justice and faith*.” – Student from Milwaukee speaking about her formation while at Xavier.
* *“I hold this to be the highest task for a bond between an institution and its people: that each protects and inspires the direction and purpose of the other.” –* Dan McDonald in addressing the Mission effectiveness of Xavier with a group at Xavier.
* The impact of M&I programs at Xavier is strategic and, therefore, compelling while at the same time it calls people to conversion.
* Province Ignatian Educator of Distinction – idea by Debra Mooney for Province-led formation training idea.

**Summary Evaluation**:

Xavier continues to impress with creative approaches to the education project itself and it squarely connects lifelong learning to its Mission Office. Xavier continues to evolve with its Mission Priority Examen priorities, its programs, its internal challenges to all to live the mission and, its continued emphasis on growth and innovation with the mission and identity.

**Students** (invited by Campus Ministry [*DDCFJ*])

It is always a wonderful experience to hear what students think. In this case I had the privilege of listening to their reactions to two questions: 1.) What brought you through the doors of CM, and 2.) Why did you come back? What emerged were experiences which taught me several things about what is meaningful for college students and how they process things in such positive ways.

While the group was made up of only 16 students, they seem to have touched on some deep experiences. Perhaps they also stumbled on how more students might come into the Campus Ministry experience – the idea of an invitation (from upper-level students) seems to have created a universal response via body language (nodding). I wonder if some energy might go into more targeted invitations for students; ones which provide them with a sense of place. There was certainly a sense of growing together; the experience of the community coming together to help one grow was paramount in their minds.

*Two questions posed:*Why did you come through the CM doors?

* In high school there was a value placed on faith. I wanted to continue that.
* The Justice program was tied to diversity.
* The gospel choir. I loved singing about my faith and wanted to continue.
* I wanted to pursue leadership in retreats.
* High school had a faith-based value system; here too.
* Community approach; I wanted to be involved in service with exchange in the city.
* I came to be a leader.
* Faith seemed expressed in action.
* To continue high school formation in faith.
* Faith development. I didn’t have any interest in Catholicism any longer but was able to develop an adult response to the faith and now I live it.
* I wanted to know what justice is.

Why did you come back/stay?

* I learned how to inform justice with my gifts and spirituality.
* I realized I was growing spiritually.
* Music is part of my development and it flowered here.
* In giving to others, I realized I gained support of and by a group.
* I realized that in receiving support I realized more and more about the importance of relationships based on an emerging clarity about service.
* I find myself engaged and able to focus on genuine service.
* I learned that the service I came to engage had changed. “What I did in high school was charity work; now I do service informed and engaged by justice and faith.” It’s a new relationship, one from charity to service.
* The men’s retreat – I learned how to strive to live an honorable life.
* I don’t know, something simply drew me to return. I’m better because I did.
* It is a world in which I can confide; focus on liturgy keeps me engaged.
* These spaces are where you can come together and have genuine conversations; critical thinking is expanded.
* One learns AMDG; it is really the focus which kept me, grasped me.
* I realized this place helped me put myself out there.
* The pestering from others to come really helped me to come back. (Invitation)
* Yes, when the personal invitation comes, you feel that others have invested in you.
* I agree, and this investment allows me to listen more carefully to the stories of others.
* It sustains my soul.

**W.I.S.E. Faculty Group** (Wisdom and Integration through the Spiritual Exercises)

This turned into one of the most interesting and touching experiences this year. The group was completely diverse and were very committed to their prayer and understanding of the Spiritual Exercises. Because of their diversity, I wanted to see if they had a sense of inclusion. I asked the following questions:

Why did you come to Xavier?

* I experienced Xavier as having a humanism, education is important, compassion seemed lived.
* I was recruited by the psychology department. It was a clean hire.
* For economic reasons. I could have the American dream of a family. The interviewers were believable.
* I came as a student. I felt people treated me personably.
* 25 years ago I came to teach/raise a family and even then people were speaking about social justice.
* I was at BC but had learned that God can be found in all things and here philosophy was taught from a holistic perspective; here I was promised to be part of transformative education.
* I believed the values Xavier put forth.
* Oscar Romero is my hero. Along with the Dorothy Day Center it was clear to me that class diversity was valued. I took the job.
* I knew nothing about social justice nor the traditions here. I came because people wanted me to do well here; excel with my talents.

Why did you stay? (given that many people of color have not stayed)

* It has been a good match; there is a shared philosophy of education here.
* The faith and mission values match mine. The Jesuit aspiration for diversity have touched me.
* Xavier is part of my life; it is my family.
* After I was hired, I came in contact with and participated in Ignatian programs. I’ve been able to remain connected to those experiences.
* I stayed for students, their intellectual development, these are those who need our formation and who will grow into people of justice. Yes, that is a huge reason, the students.
* I saw the professional values, the glue and paste of Xavier.
* Xavier gives me time to reflect on values and the development of the students.
* I stayed because of the values.
* The Ignatian Mentoring Program. Xavier received me and accommodated my family during a very difficult time. Mom is now accommodated as a student here.
* The strength of the social justice.

One final note: as the group continued, we discussed why some leave. The general reason stressed was that those who leave don’t feel supported.

**BOT JMI Committee** (John Maydonovitch, chair)

I was honored to be invited to attend this arm of the BOT. I communicated the following to them when asked to provide some narrative:

*Four things I want to cover:*

*1. Fr. Brian Paulson’s thankfulness for your Board Service*

*2. Fr. Sosa’s understanding of intellectual apostolate and your new Strategic Plan.*

*3. Jesuits and the Future.*

*4. Higher Ed in Chicago (Oct. 29) BOT chair, Presidents, Mission Officers, Rectors*

*and Provosts.*

1. *Meeting*
2. *Committee of Mission Officers - Postulata*

Following this presentation, I experienced the engagement of the Committee with many of the above ideas. They spoke of deepening student understanding of the mission through asking faculty to teach in light of the mission and Jesuit/Catholic identity.

**Faculty Group**:

We discussed what faculty saw as important for Jesuit and Lay leadership.

* Continue retreats with Jesuit/Ignatian values and understandings.
* All of us need to walk the talk.
* Our core mission values are profound. All leaders need to engage these.
* The Ignatian Mentoring Program works to develop leadership.
* Is there a way to make certain things/activities required of all in leadership positions?
* Mini grants for courses tied to important aspects of the Mission is a good.
* I would keep pushing expectations early on. Chairs and Deans need to do this.
* We need to talk about faculty alignment with the Mission. It needs to be part of our meetings.
* Seeing Jesuits and Lay leaders working together, presenting together, thinking together gives a felt sense of leadership collaboration; it models this for all.
* Can we create a cocoon for faculty to talk about Mission?
* How can we become more prophetic with the Mission?
* Our classes should help students understand the Ignatian heritage.
* If Jesuits and faculty engage in learning to read the signs of the times, that would help.
* Yes, and social analysis should be part of reading the signs of the times; can’t stop at just listing.
* We need action parts. We need to think globally.

**President’s Direct Reports**

Each first spoke of their work, refreshed me on the challenges they have and then we turned our attention to how they feel they have been formed in Mission and Identity at Xavier. They spoke of the formation programs they have participated in, the ways they have imparted that learning to those they work with, the clarity of focus on new ideas and programs. They said they feel comfortable talking about Mission. They also indicated how significant the Mission Moments have been for them and how these experiences at every group meeting they have with the president and others in the cabinet function to make them more focused. In speaking about the effect of the Mission Moments they said:

* Functions to center us.
* Deepens the level of trust.
* Makes us more open.
* Makes us more collaborative.
* Everyone now speaks because of the comfort level.
* We can take this experience with us and replicate it in our areas.
* Sets the tone by making us realize that this is why all of us are here.
* A moment of vulnerability comes first because you are asked to share; then trust follows.
* It clears everything and you can be focused.
* It is OK to sit with silence.

**Student Programs** (GOA, 1st Year Experience and Road Through Xavier)

Xavier might just have come across a way of effectively resurrecting what historically was experienced as A Jesuit Education and what was meant by Jesuit Pedagogy and the development of not just the academic but the person as well. As this evolves over the next few years it can and should be shared with other Jesuit higher education institutions. I could not be stronger on this point. Parts might also be of benefit to juniors and seniors of our high schools and definitely to Arrupe College at LUC.

**Staff Committee**

This meeting became one of the highlights of my visit. From the start it was clear that this Staff Committee was energized and alive with many thoughts and perceptions about the Mission, values and reflections occasioned by their formation.

I focused on three questions with them: 1.) What are your reflections on Jesuit leadership and what do you need from Jesuits; 2.) What do you need from Lay Leadership; and 3.) How can better collaboration emerge with Jesuits and Lay people.

Preliminary ideas people tossed out:

* Jesuit education is a huge educational model and vision for the USA.
* What does Jesuit leadership mean? How can we live the mission without a Jesuit?
* Jesuit leadership has showed us the value of discernment.
* Jesuits have taught us the value of Mission values and the Mission Office has taught us how to deepen those and be more intentional with these.
* The Manresa Experience was noted as a high mark for many.
* We should develop a course, Jesuit 101 that everyone takes.
* An art tour of campus makes us understand the values.
* They must hold us true to what we are.
* We need refresher courses; need to revisit Manresa after some years. The overnight Manresa experience is better than the day one.
* I think that we need to expand our pool of people who inspire the mission. E.g., Greg Boyle is a modern-day story.
* What are our deeper aspirations for Lay leadership?
* AFMIX has taught me so much.

**President’s Cabinet**:

Again, one of the most interesting groups for responding to the questions:

What do you see as needed from Jesuit Leadership?

* We need more Jesuits involved in campus.
* We need Jesuits to empower the lay leadership with goals.
* We need structures and opportunities for this.
* Mechanisms to ensure that accountability continues, e.g., the Mission Priority Examen.
* With Jesuit influence on the students, that impact is tangible. Same with how we learn to treat our staffs.
* Jesuits needed to maintain the sacramental life of the university.
* Can there be a travelling group of Jesuits who visit the campus each year and have an impact.

What do you want to see from Lay leadership?

* More Ignatian leadership for supervisors. There are opportunities but we need more intentionality.
* How to bring these things we learn about Mission and Identity back to our area?
* Insuring Lay formation for leadership through financial resources.
* How do you incentive people to stay? We need to highlight our Mission to show how it makes a difference.
* The Montessori experience did not die with Maria Montessori. Same at Xavier; it won’t die with a lesser Jesuit presence. We need to be creative and intentional with Ignatian ideas, pedagogy, history and values.
* We need to take advantage of the Jesuit network. How do we leverage that for the good?
* Invest in lay people through the Ignatian Colleagues Program
* Leadership must know what Jesuit and Catholic mean.

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**Recommendations for positive enhancement**:

1 One of the most interesting moments of my visit was with the students. They collectively seemed to indicate that the critical moment for **participation in campus ministry and other campus mission** **opportunities was the central place of a** **personal invitation from another student**. Might it be worth considering this and reflecting on some creative approaches to engaging students in participation? Another approach is to consider the whole world of targeted invitations for students; ones which give them a sense of place.

2 In my conversation with those involved in the Road Through Xavier, the desire to help students put into action what the Mission Statement says was stressed. Perhaps something worth building on that has proven successful in other parts of the university is the **regularized use of the Examen**, but targeted by individual interest (themes: the people I’ve met; the thoughts I’ve had; Matthew 25; Moments of my life). Might it be worth considering how the Examen can be used by students to open their world and God’s action to the hopes of this important program?

3 I think one of the most important moments of this visit was when I was listening to those lay people who continued to utter their dependence on the Society of Jesus for leadership in the Mission. I told them to trust themselves more. They have learned the Mission, participated in it, have grown to love it, have studied it and have lived it. It might be good to **have a campaign on campus for people to trust themselves with what they have learned and to lead with that belief**. Perhaps a way to frame this is to begin with the comment of one of the staff: “How can we get out of the bubble of looking always to the Jesuits for our leadership”?

4 Perhaps some energy can be used by the cabinet to clarify how they can bring these very positive **Mission Reflections experiences in the cabinet to their area of oversight; a real multiplier effect**.

5. Support student Admissions tour guides in offering informed and invitational **information on religious offerings, opportunities and experiences** (Catholic and other faiths).

**Assets/Strengths**

1 See the “Province Best Practice List”   
  
2 The continued emphasis on **growth and innovation with the mission** and identity.

3 The new **tag lines (Gifts of Our Ignatian Heritage) in the residence halls**. Quite beautiful and located by the elevators. These are all more elaborate statements and explanations about Jesuit heritage….There is a call in each of these for students to go deeper into the meaning of each. It is another form of learning about Jesuit and Catholic identity. These are part of the signage on campus and I would put these alongside the religious art on campus and the ways those call students to reflect.

4 Jill Segerman’s work with incorporating Jesuit ideals and understandings into **online learning** is, frankly, very important. I want to promote her work at the other UMI schools. She has discovered some of the missing variables in a Jesuit educational approach to online learning.

5 I continue to be engaged with what Xavier may have discovered in their GOA First Year Experience and *Road Through Xavier*. I find that they have employed a concrete way of **redefining Jesuit Pedagogy for the modern age**. They are intentionally working on not just the academic formation but the personal formation of students. As this evolves over the next few years, it can and should be shared with other Jesuit higher education institutions. This will be a significant contribution to student formation through teaching and learning. It will also provide Xavier and other institutions which see the value of this with a strong advertising campaign. Parents and students will embrace this clarity; they will desire this educational experience. It might just help clarify parent and student discernment about where their child or self will go for university.  
  
  
Ideas Fr McDonald wants to pursue at the Province-level

The conversation with Barbara Howard underscored the value of pursuing teaching and learning **collaboration for Jesuits**. It might be good for us to consider this for Province Days in 2020. Personally, I believe that would be a really helpful exercise, one that is timely and one that is necessary.

I plan on pursuing the question from Barbara Howard: “What would Fr. Sosa say about **Board formation**?” Is there anything he wants to see us do?

I want to pursue the ideas of moving a video project on mission and establishing a type of summer school for M&I formation at Xavier (eg **mission education across the Province network.)**. At the moment, I want to build on the positive response from Mike Graham and create some greater clarity about this with a contained group.

The Debra Mooney idea of creating a **Province Ignatian Educator of Distinction** is moving along as you saw in the copy of her proposal I forwarded to you. This seems worth pursuing for UMI and then for the Assistancy.

**APPENDIX**

Strengthening and Integrating Mission

**Best Practices of the Six Jesuit Universities: A Synopsis**

Midwest Province

Focus on Trustees

* Active Trustee subcommittees on mission and identity
* Trustee involvement in creation and regular review of mission statement and strategic plan
* Targeted educational program on Jesuit history and Ignatian commitments and guiding principles for new Trustees.
* Ignatian agenda item for each Trustee meeting: reports on mission- related programs and activities, brief readings, videos, reflections, etc.
* Opportunities for Trustees to participate with faculty, staff and/or students in mission-related events and programs: ICP, seminars, speakers, retreats, pilgrimages, community discernment, etc.
* Efforts to engage Trustees with Jesuit board members in order to forge personal friendships.

Focus on Administration

* Encourage and support participation in structured programs on Jesuit/Catholic higher education: ICP, Institute for Administration in Catholic Higher Education, AJCU Leadership Seminar, locally developed programs, etc.
* Structured workshops/programs each year for new administrative employees with testimony on the importance of Jesuit higher education from administrative leaders who stress the role of administration in fulfilling the promise of a Jesuit education.
* Office of Mission and Identity and Campus Ministry have clear mandates to include administrators in their agendas and offerings.
* Encourage administrative leaders to include a mission moment, a reflection on mission, a prayer, etc. at the beginning of each meeting or event.

Focus on Faculty

* Attention to the importance of Jesuit values and traditions in the core curriculum and ongoing review of the articulation of these values and traditions in coordination with the faculty.
* Ongoing encouragement, recognition and financial support for faculty participation in structured external and internal programs focusing on the history and critical themes of Jesuit and Catholic higher education. Many of these programs have been identified previously in this document.
* Targeted programs on Jesuit higher education for new faculty.
* Instructional programs on teaching in Jesuit universities covering topics such as Ignatian pedagogy, teaching a diverse student body, gender and identity issues in teaching, the meaning of cura personalis in teaching, and education for leadership in the servant leader tradition.
* Provision of seed grants for mission-related research and community outreach and involvement as well for as new courses with Ignatian underpinnings.
* Great care given to recruiting materials given to prospective faculty and to interviews of prospective faculty in order to ensure that the mission of the institution is clearly articulated in order to attract faculty who desire to contribute to mission and discourage those who would not be comfortable at the institution.
* Institutional support for classroom based service learning opportunities.
* Tiered, ongoing opportunities for faculty to explore in a deep way aspects of teaching, learning and discovery in the Ignatian tradition.

Focus on Staff

* Many of the internal mission and identity programs are open to staff as well as faculty and administrators. Some external programs are also available to staff, such as the AJCU Ignatian colleagues. Some special programs focus on staff as companions in mission. Some are extensive, spanning an entire semester. Mission leave awards can free up staff to participate during work hours.
* The staff handbook invites staff to be full partners in creating an authentic Ignatian experience for students and for one another.
* The staff council has resources to fund mission related programs and to formally recognize staff who are exemplars in mission delivery.
* The Mission and Identity Office may have a staff member who focuses directly on staff involvement in mission. It is not unusual for staff in general to participate more in mission events than any other group.
* Involvement of staff in mission delivery in strongly emphasized at new employee orientation and continues thereafter.

Focus on Students

* Strong mission statement that makes clear promises to students regarding Ignatian values and commitments.
* A core curriculum that is regularly reviewed in order to deliver on the promises of the mission statement. Also a first year seminar to introduce new students to the themes and principles of a Jesuit university and an annual mission week featuring speakers and events that speak to a Jesuit commitment for individuals, the community and the world.
* A rich variety of service learning opportunities for students including local, regional, national and some international venues.
* Strong campus ministry programming for worship, retreats, reflection, servant leadership and the like.
* Special programming in mission-related areas such as social justice, solidarity with the poor, disaster assistance, global engagement, peacemaking, and leadership offered through centers, institutes and the mission and identity office.
* Targeted financial assistance and ongoing support for minority students and first generation college students.
* Support for students of other faiths in the form of chaplains, prayer rooms, special programs, etc.