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## Review: Come to Believe: How the Jesuits Are Reinventing Education (Again) by Stephen N. Katsouros, S.J., Dean of Arrupe College

Tyler De Shon  
tyler.deshon@slu.edu

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**Review: *Come to Believe: How the Jesuits Are Reinventing Education (Again)*  
by Stephen N. Katsouros, S.J., Dean of Arrupe College**

Reviewed by Tyler De Shon

Assistant Director, Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards  
and Doctoral Student in Higher Education Administration  
Saint Louis University  
[tyler.deshon@slu.edu](mailto:tyler.deshon@slu.edu)

*Come to Believe: How the Jesuits Are Reinventing Education (Again)*. By Stephen N. Katsouros, S.J. New York: Orbis Books, 2017. xxi + 181 pages. \$24 (paper).

Just as Stephen Katsouros reflects in one of his opening chapters, I write this review recognizing the immense privilege I have in my life. This includes a great deal of higher education, from which I continue to benefit as I enter the dissertation stage of my doctorate. Attaining higher education has been a consistent part of my story; however it's a story shared by so few in our country and our world. Working at a Jesuit institution, I see first-hand the exceptional education my students attain through the shared-vision and strong mission of Saint Louis University. Although having just had the opportunity to learn about Arrupe College at Loyola University Chicago in Stephen Katsouros's *Come to Believe: How the Jesuits Are Reinventing Education (Again)*, I am informed of the greater mission Jesuits undertake as they bring affordable, high quality education to those with the greatest need.

*Come to Believe* is so many things. It is a reflection, a journal, a guidebook, an escape, and a brief glimpse into the immense work it took a small group of people to bring affordable and rigorous higher education to a deserving group of young people in Chicago. Fr. Katsouros wrote this text throughout his journey of planning and implementing Arrupe College at Loyola University Chicago. He details the path he took to achieve such a wonderful educational opportunity, the great number of influential and generous people to help support and sustain the college, and the incredibly motivated students he met and sought to influence in the inaugural class. *Come to Believe* provides a wonderful illustration of Fr. Katsouros's thinking and drive as he undertook such an "impossible" mission with Arrupe College, while at the same time not discounting

the perseverance and dedication needed to really affect change for our most deserving and hard-working students.

I will admit that I have a soft-spot for this text as I spent two years with Teach For America in Newark, NJ, teaching at a public K-8 school in the south ward. I taught science and social studies to eighth-graders, many of whom held similar identities and socio-economic circumstances to the students Fr. Katsouros seeks for enrollment at Arrupe College. Knowing first-hand the struggle of being a privileged white man stepping into a system built to oppress racial minorities, I empathize heavily with Fr. Katsouros, his team, and the work they are doing.

Stephen Katsouros, like many Jesuits, has had rich experiences in education that prepared him to take on Arrupe College. As a leader with a "dominant" leadership style, Katsouros served in many leadership roles, including president of Loyola School, a Jesuit high school in Manhattan. As displayed throughout the book, Katsouros is an innovative and charismatic leader, and someone appropriately identified to undertake the challenge of building a new college within Loyola University Chicago. It is easy to see, despite the foreseeable challenges, that Arrupe College will be one of the most successful two-year colleges providing access to higher education for low-income, minority students in the country. It was not an easy path; however, it was and still is an effort worth pursuing, and one that truly could only be completed by the Jesuits.

This book is broken into five parts. The first section sets the stage for Jesuit education through Katsouros's explanation of how he came to attain

this mission of building Arrupe College. He describes the “mission is *being with* our students, learning about and from them, sharing our stories and the gift of Jesuit higher education” (p. 7). The Jesuit concept of *Cura Personalis*, or care of the whole person, is a primary tenet of the text and beginning of Arrupe College. This came out as Katsouros describes multiple students throughout the book, their circumstances, and how Arrupe College sought to support them. Katsouros describes one example where he drove a student to get a new pair of glasses so she could complete her statistics work, all of which was covered by the college.

The second part of the text explains the context behind the mission to make Arrupe College achievable, accessible and affordable to the students who attended. Ultimately this meant graduating students with nearly no debt. The chapters show how Katsouros thought innovatively to fund the college and set it up for success. Later in the text Katsouros identified the state of Illinois’ budget issues as a challenge to his college, and one that will need to be continually considered moving forward.

The third and fourth parts of the text can truly serve as a guidebook for how to build a self-sustaining, ultimately free college for low-income, underrepresented students, and to retain those students at significantly higher rates than similar schools. Throughout the chapters, Katsouros names nearly every major player who supported the development and implementation of Arrupe College, a litany of names that also shows how well-connected one must be to pull off such an incredible feat. Further, he describes the unique Jesuit-“ness” of how to support these specific students and get them to their graduation. He spends a great deal of time honoring the immense undertaking of the students who made up the inaugural class and the altruistic motivations they hold in pursuing their associate’s degree. The students are truly the highlight of this book.

The text wraps up with a look ahead, recognizing that as it was published, the first class had not yet graduated. I was particularly interested in Katsouros’s undertaking a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to present to the new president of Loyola University

Chicago. Arrupe College has a bright future, but like all higher education right now, is not without its challenges. I would argue that Arrupe College’s student population has quite a few more challenges than others, but feels great support in the passionate and dedicated staff and faculty of the college.

The real strength of this text lies in two areas. One is that it was written as Katsouros was doing the work. It offers a unique insight into his mind as he trudged through the weeds of developing a new college. The other is the style of how it is written, richly illustrating real-life examples of how Arrupe College came to be, intertwined with Jesuit wisdom and scripture. At times the text seems to lack focus as he bounces back and forth between pragmatic needs of the college with stories of students or meetings with donors and conflicts with Loyola University Chicago. However, this is ultimately what makes it such a quick, enjoyable read. It is a testament to Jesuit education and the students who are a part of it. I would be remiss to end this review without expressing my absolute love of this book and the hope it espouses for a future of attainable and rigorous education for all individuals, regardless of their initial academic preparation and racial/socio-economic background. It will be a thrill to see the progress of this great institution led by Fr. Stephen Katsouros. 卐