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Loyola Marymount University Solidarity and Global Citizenship Collection: Introduction and Overview

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Unless we train [people] capable of warming others' hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoguing with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what hope can we have for our present and future journey?

—Pope Francis¹

Abstract

The Loyola Marymount University *Solidarity and Global Citizenship Collection* centers on an immersion study trip to Costa Rica in 2019 and provides context by considering numerous topics relevant to the theme in general and to the travel program in specific. Through the university's commitment to mission and identity, fellows selected for the program considered these twin goals of solidarity and global citizenship by engaging in one of several opportunities offered through the Office of Mission and Ministry. This article provides an overview of each contribution to the special collection.

Introduction

In May 2019, the faculty and staff fellows selected to participate in the Loyola Marymount University's Mission and Identity Immersion Trip explored the topics of solidarity and global citizenship in Costa Rica. The theme of solidarity and global citizenship was derived from LMU's core values of the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, and the service of faith and the promotion of justice.² We believe that learning is derived from viewing the world as sacramental—that God is in all things.³ We further commit to being persons for others, which is a journey—*in via*—rather than a destination, and begins with us as faculty and staff engaging in same work we expect of our students. Finally, the service of faith and promotion of justice are only possible by being in the world. We seek to demonstrate respect for all religions or none,

recognizing that socially just societies emerge when we engage in the struggle with others.

Prior to departing for Costa Rica, we invited fellows to consider collaborating with us on a special collection to memorialize our work. Beginning on the first day of the immersion trip in May 2019, the fellows engaged in reflective writing. We provided many opportunities to consider and process our experiences both individually and collectively. When the immersion trip concluded, we then invited fellows to join us in writing a special collection to share our experiences with other institutions. We are grateful to our colleagues who gave of their time and energies to extend our work long past



Loyola Marymount
University

Solidarity and
Global Citizenship
Collection

Reilly & Brown,
*LMU Solidarity and
Global Citizenship
Collection: Introduction
and Overview*

Snyder, *In Students We
Trust: The Solidarity
Generation*

Brown & Reilly,
*Mission and
Mundialización:
Solidarity and Global
Citizenship through
Immersion Experience*

Reilly & Brown, *Seeing
with New Eyes: Costa
Rican Pilgrimage as
Transformation*

Sebastian, *Encountering
Grace: A Theological
Framework for Faculty
and Staff Immersion
Programs*

Connelly, *A Long,
Loving Look at the Real:
An Experiential
Ignatian Approach to
Immersion*

Brown & Reilly,
*Solidarity and Global
Citizenship: A Photo
Essay*

the time we spent together in Costa Rica. It truly models our commitment to lifelong learning.

The Collection

This collection includes reflections, scholarship, and praxis. We present here a description of each work in the collection. We recommend that readers begin with three articles that will set the context for the collection—President Timothy Law Snyder’s article, “In Students We Trust: The Solidarity Generation,” and two from us: “Mission and *Mundialización*: Solidarity and Global Citizenship through Immersion Experiences” and “Seeing with New Eyes: Costa Rican Pilgrimage as Transformation.” Readers can then peruse all other contributions in any order they wish.

Loyola Marymount University Solidarity and Global Citizenship Collection: Introduction and Overview

Elizabeth C. Reilly and Katherine Brown

This article provides readers with an introduction and overview to the collection whose content originated with the 2019 LMU immersion trip to Costa Rica. The editors of this collection also participated in the trip, with Elizabeth C. Reilly as a fellow and Katherine Brown as its director. We provide the context for the theme of solidarity and global citizenship and a description of each article in the collection.

In Students We Trust: The Solidarity Generation

Timothy Law Snyder

Loyola Marymount University’s President Timothy Law Snyder opens our collection with a discussion of today’s students, whom he refers to as *The Solidarity Generation*—individuals who exhibit care for one another, clarity of purpose, and the relationship to interconnectivity and access to information in today’s global society. Snyder looks at trends of this generation focusing on social justice activism across the globe that challenge the status quo and demand institutions and people in power to be accountable in unprecedented ways. *The Solidarity Generation* provides us the imprimatur for exploring solidarity and global citizenship as faculty and staff of Jesuit

institutions in order to fulfill our responsibility to meet this transformational moment in history.

Mission and Mundialización: Solidarity and Global Citizenship through Immersion Experiences

Katherine Brown and Elizabeth C. Reilly

Within the Jesuit educational network, each institution’s mission informs not only its curricular and co-curricular offerings for students, but a variety of programs for faculty, staff, administrators, and all community members. In recent decades, the Society of Jesus has spoken with increasing emphasis on the importance of forming whole persons of solidarity for the real world. This paper explores how the call to forming well-educated persons of solidarity intersects with Loyola Marymount University’s specific institutional mission and its formation programs for university personnel, and how this intersection is particularly well-addressed by immersion experiences and especially international immersions. Finally, suggestions for Jesuit educational institutions considering or planning immersion programs are offered in light of these explorations.

Seeing with New Eyes: Costa Rican Pilgrimage as Transformation

Elizabeth C. Reilly and Katherine Brown

In summer 2019, eleven faculty and staff members from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California embarked on an immersion study trip to Costa Rica. An integral part of the university’s commitment to mission and identity, it is one of a number of opportunities for its members to explore the mission and its Jesuit identity within a global context. Framed around the Ignatian principle of pilgrimage, this article describes the focus and goals for the study trip, pre-trip preparations, and the trip itself. We highlight some of the activities in which faculty and staff participated and summarize their reflections of the experience. We conclude with considerations for next steps.

Encountering Grace: A Theological Framework for Faculty and Staff Immersion Programs

John T. Sebastian

Many international and domestic immersion programs for faculty and staff at Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States have in common the goal of promoting participants' solidarity with poor and marginalized populations. These programs often understand solidarity as a pedagogical instrument: direct contact with human suffering provokes a desire to think and act differently in order to redress various forms of social inequity. This essay proposes that immersions can and should also be opportunities for engaging faculty and staff at Jesuit institutions of higher education in conversations about, and even experiences of, social grace. The article offers an overview and definition of social grace understood theologically as the remedy to social sin, outlines the characteristics of the faculty/staff immersion programs that identify it as a site for encountering social grace, and argues for the immersion as a privileged opportunity for forming faculty and staff, including those who do not identify as Catholic or Christian.

A Long, Loving Look at the Real: An Experiential Ignatian Approach to Immersion

Joseph Connelly


International travel is a popular and widespread practice among higher education institutions, but the pedagogy and approach to these programs varies widely. The Center for Global Education and Experience at Augsburg University facilitates international immersion programs for U.S. students, faculty, and staff focused on social justice and solidarity; this approach is particularly attractive to Jesuit institutions and has led to fruitful collaborations. This paper offers an experienced immersion facilitator's personal reflections on designing and implementing immersion programs and applies key themes of Ignatian spirituality and pedagogy to the experience of international immersion travel.

Solidarity and Global Citizenship: A Photo Essay

Katherine Brown and Elizabeth C. Reilly

Prior to the trip, we invited fellows to take photographs throughout our travels in Costa Rica and at our many events. We encouraged them to reflect on the photographs' relationship to solidarity and global citizenship. On our return, we provided this prompt with our invitation to address our theme by submitting a photo and brief reflection: "How does this photo express your understanding (or some aspect) of solidarity and global citizenship?" Presented in this essay are some of the fellows' photographs and reflections.

In Closing

In his 2020 encyclical titled *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis shared the story of Blessed Charles de Foucauld, an early 20th century Cistercian Trappist who was assassinated in Algeria in 1916.⁴ Blessed Charles chose to live with the poorest of the poor who were "abandoned to the depths of the desert" and sought to become their "universal brother."⁵ Francis writes that "only by identifying with the least did he come at last to be the brother of all."⁶ During the period of time we produced this collection, our world faced a global health pandemic that brought international travel to a standstill and left us with questions about how to engage with the world. We debated the relevance of our work and came away with an even-greater commitment to immersion travel opportunities. As the world slowly emerges from the pandemic, Jesuit institutions can and should embrace the unique leadership role to revisit our global engagement. We invite you to examine another collection in this journal—[International Jesuit Higher Education](#)—that JHE published in 2019 and 2020.⁷ That collection examines our international connections from additional perspectives. We know our international endeavors will evolve, but we believe that only through the deep engagement with others we can become that universal brother, sister, and sibling. 

Notes

¹ Pope Francis, *Address of Pope Francis, Apostolic Journey to Rio De Janeiro on the Occasion of the XXVIII World Youth Day, Meeting with the Bishops of Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Archbishop's House, July 28, 2013), http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130727_gmg-episcopato-brasile.html.

² Loyola Marymount University, "Our Mission," accessed April 23, 2021, <https://www.lmu.edu/academics/provost/ourmission/>.

³ Michael J. Himes, "Finding God in All Things: A Sacramental Worldview and Its Effects," in *As Leaven in the*

World: Essays on Faith, Vocation, and the Intellectual Life, ed. Thomas M. Landy (London: Sheed & Ward, 2001), 1-17.

⁴ Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship, Encyclical Letter* (Vatican City, Italy: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, October 3, 2020), http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html.

⁵ Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, para. 287.

⁶ Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, para. 287.

⁷ Special Collections Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal, *International Jesuit Higher Education*, <https://epublications.regis.edu/jhe-ijhe/>.