

## Padre Arrupe .. San Pedro Arrupe !

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Father Arrupe's message to the Jesuit Alumni/ae at the European Alumni 'Education for Justice' Congress, Valencia, 1973:

### **'Be Men and Women for Others'**

2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the speech given by Father Arrupe at the closing of the Congress of European Jesuit Alumni Association. He asked all of us to **'Be Men and Women for Others'**.

That year he also launched the 32nd General Congregation of the Company. This was a major milestone in the history of the Society of Jesus, reminding us that **our faith in God goes together with the fight against social injustices**.

**Father Pedro Arrupe SJ** was the Father General of the Jesuits between 1965 and 1983, and the twenty-eighth successor of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. **With his signature enthusiasm and contagious energy**, he called on our Alumni to change our **'vision of education'**. He called on us to be **more open, to support social change, and to support the needs of more people across all of society**.

### **'Being Men and Women for Others'**

This famous sentence marked an inflexion point in the history, momentum and direction of the Society of Jesus. It followed the reflections, transformation and new target outcomes of the 'Vatican Two Council' which developed over the 1970s. This simple sentence drove new guidelines to **update our education objectives in line with Ignatian spirituality**.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe SJ was born in Bilbao in 1907 and is considered one of the most important voices in the Catholic Church in the 20th Century.

P. Lamet SJ, in his biography of Fr. Arrupe, named him as **"...a witness of the 20th century, and a prophet of the 21st Century"**:

... Father Arrupe could not understand how all of **society was looking to the future, yet our Church was anchored, looking to the past...**

*"I am afraid that we give answers from the past, to the challenges and problems of tomorrow"...*

*"...and the biggest mistake we make, is not changing anything for fear of making a mistake..."*

**The renewal of religious life following the guidelines of the Vatican Two Council**, was one of his great contributions to the Church. 'Men and Women for Others' ...a key to our humanist tradition in today's world and an outcome of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius; only by 'Being a Man or Woman For Others' does one become fully human. Not only in the natural sense, but also in the sense of being the 'spiritual person' of Saint Paul.

At this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we remember other significant aspects of Fr. Arrupe's life:

- As a **Missionary in Japan**, he lived with the impact of the world's first atomic bomb, and he wrote a book entitled "The Incredible Japan That I Knew"
- He launched **'Dialogue With Other Religions'**
- He was a **prophet of our time: Faith and Justice** ("a faith that does not cry out against injustice...is not a gospel faith",
- **Jesuit Refugee Service**: 'Every Priest must fulfill his prophetic mission against war and in favor of peace.'
- He has been a person **contemplative in action and in the Passion of Christ** ... misunderstood inside and outside the Company.....

*Father Arrupe looked to 'The Jar of Essences' of the Ignatian charism, in identifying the changing circumstances of our time. Today's Company is the same as the one Saint Ignatius created, but renewed by the filter of Father Arrupe who, as a faithful disciple of Ignatius, knew how to put the Company on the path of discernment, the path of listening to reality, and the path of wondering 'What God Wants of Us Today'.*

Fr. Pedro Arrupe was a Man of God, a Man of Christ, and a beacon to us all. **Seven years ago, the beatification process of Fr. Pedro Arrupe started, on the 28th anniversary of his death.** This is a long delay to the start of an already slow process, which is difficult to understand for many active and committed Catholics.

We as alumni and Ignatian community should help and actively contribute with our examples and testimonies to move the beatification process forward ...

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**Juan Carlos Rodriguez- Ovejero – ECJA Vice-President**