

# LETTER

FROM  
THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

In 2003 the Chicago Province will celebrate its 75th anniversary. Throughout the planning of our special anniversary issues of *Partners* magazine, I've thought often of Fr. Jacques Marquette, SJ, the French Jesuit who discovered much of the region that now makes up the Chicago Province.

Fr. Marquette demonstrated great courage when he set out into the unknown to explore the Mississippi River and beyond. He explored as a Jesuit, searching for God, and searching for opportunities to do God's will. He was, I believe, motivated by Ignatius' willingness to send Jesuits to any part of the world in pursuit of God's greater glory and the salvation of souls.

Marquette's willingness to venture into the unknown strikes me as an apt metaphor for the Society of Jesus today, and for me individually. In August of this year, I was appointed provincial assistant for development and public relations, replacing Fr. John Costello, SJ,—my predecessor and mentor for the past seven years—whose 18 years of development work have become a model for Jesuit provinces across the nation.

John's departure from our office for his new ministry at Loyola University leaves us without a day-to-day Jesuit presence in our office. We lay colleagues in the province development office are faced with a situation not unlike that facing many Jesuit schools. In this issue of *Partners*, George Kearney writes about how smaller numbers of Jesuits in schools across the province are working not just to maintain but enhance the Jesuit identity of their institutions. At the heart of Jesuit identity is Ignatius, and his mandate to work "for the greater glory of God." This Ignatian *magis* (the Latin word for "greater") animates every Jesuit



Tim Freeman and Fr. John Costello, SJ

ministry and helps keep Jesuit schools fundamentally Jesuit.

The desire for God's greater glory prompted Marquette to leave the comfort of France and venture into the seemingly endless unknown. Unlike Marquette, I'm not going anywhere in a canoe. I am, however, venturing into figuratively uncharted territory, both in my new position with the province and in my personal life. In September of this year my wife Mary and I welcomed our third child, Kevin, into the world. As I look ahead, into the unknown, as a father and as a professional, I am, like Marquette must have been, heartened by Ignatius' notion that I can find God at every turn. I'm excited, too, about one day sending my three children to Jesuit schools where they can learn, likely from lay colleagues trained and inspired to promote Ignatian spirituality, more about God's presence in their world.

I know Jesuit schools will still be thriving when my children attend them because today the province is partnering with those schools to share the Ignatian "magis" with lay colleagues. As I look back, and now look forward, I'm grateful for that Jesuit ideal in my life and for the many opportunities I have to serve.