

# A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

This issue of *Partners* focuses on Jesuit formation, the way the Society of Jesus forms (and has formed) its new members to be leaders in service. But there's another side to Jesuit formation. It's the way Jesuits form others—laypeople, non-Jesuits, students, colleagues, and friends—to be leaders in service, too. Most of us know about this second type of formation. Many of us experienced it as we were “formed” by Jesuits who taught us, counseled us, or worked alongside us.

This issue of *Partners* explains the formation of Jesuits in detail, so I won't do that here. There is, though, some historical context to formation I'd like to share with you. Fifty years ago, the Society of Jesus was much bigger and formation for young Jesuits was, in many ways, different. Almost all Jesuit formation took place in Jesuit schools, at Milford for novitiate and first studies, then at West Baden College, where scholastics did their philosophy and theology studies. Those places were large, almost entirely self-sufficient Jesuit communities. The teachers, students, and staff were made up of Jesuits. The food was raised, farmed, and cooked by Jesuits. Remaining expenses were covered by family members of young Jesuits, people who had no financial obligation to the Society, but formed Jesuit Family Clubs that organized raffles, bake sales, and other events to raise money to support the education and formation of their sons.

It's a different world today. The Society is smaller. There are fewer priests, brothers, and scholastics; not nearly enough to operate one of yesterday's big Jesuit houses of formation. The bulk of Jesuit formation now takes place in universities around the country, with the Province, blessed by donor support, paying \$25,000–\$30,000 for each individual Jesuit's tuition and living expenses per year—some \$250,000–\$300,000 per man over the ten years of formation.

Formation, however, remains a priority. Almost 50 years ago, while still in formation, Fr. John P. Foley, SJ, was sent to Peru. After serving for 35 years as a teacher, coach, and principal, he returned to the United States and founded Cristo Rey Jesuit High School. The Jesuits are committed today to forming their new members in the same way, so they're able to go anywhere, and do anything.

What I'd most like to share with you is a remark Fr. Walter C. Deye, SJ, shared with us for this issue of *Partners*. “I want to let the donors know, first of all, that I for one, and my brothers in the Society are very grateful for the opportunities that have been given to us. They've supported real people, doing real things in this real world.”

Jesuit formation makes Jesuit ministries possible and real. As Fr. Deye said, each of you, through your prayers and contributions, have played a role in making Jesuit ministries a reality. And, as they always do, the Jesuits will remember you daily in their Masses and prayers of gratitude, while continuing to serve and form generation after generation of God's people.

Sincerely,




Tim Freeman is provincial assistant for development and public information.



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