



Provincial Edward
W. Schmidt, SJ

A LETTER FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear Friends,

On December 3, 2005, the Society of Jesus kicked off its worldwide jubilee year celebrating 450 years since the death of St. Ignatius Loyola and 500 years since the births of two of his founding companions, St. Francis Xavier and Bl. Peter Faber. When Fr. General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ, announced the jubilee, he said: “The anniversary invites us to examine and intensify our fidelity to the call of the Lord that they were the first to discern and that they followed in such a creative fashion that it continues to challenge us, their companions of the third millennium. We remember especially some aspects of the original spirituality that moved these three companions of Jesus and that continue to challenge the apostolic body of the Society today.”

Guided by the slogan for the jubilee—“a vision, a mission, and a prayer”—this year’s issues of *Partners* will be devoted to the three jubilarians and their unique charisms: Ignatius’s mystical visions and his belief that prayer and apostolic activity should not be separated, Xavier’s mission to the Indies and the East, and Faber’s prayer and work as a master of the Spiritual Exercises.

This issue focuses on the life, vision, and legacy of St. Ignatius, and we are honored to have essays by some distinguished guest writers. Fr. John O’Malley, SJ, offers a historical sketch of St. Ignatius that helps us better understand the founder of the Jesuits as anything but a traditional saint. Fr. James Martin, SJ, explains that Ignatian spirituality calls us not only to “find God in all things,” but also to be “contemplatives in action”—people who pray for the ability to discern where the need is the greatest and to act to serve that need. And Fr. John Libens, SJ, traces how young Jesuits in the First Studies program are following in St. Ignatius’s footsteps by hitting the books and serving others. Also featured in this issue are Fr. James O’Leary, SJ, whose work at Fe y Alegria in Peru is enriching the lives of children who otherwise would not have access to education, and Br. James Small, SJ, whose paintings and kind spirit have enhanced the lives of countless others for many years.

While Ignatius’s legacy lives on through Jesuits young and old, at home and abroad, lay collaborators always have been a vital part of the Ignatian tradition. Our cover story on the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC)—an innovative service program for retirees 50 and older—profiles many of the members in the Chicago chapter, led by George Sullivan, and highlights the impact they are making at host agencies throughout the city. We are happy to report that this winter the Chicago Province opened a new IVC chapter in the Greater Cincinnati area, which is being led by Sam Schloemer. Also featured in this issue are Michael Hugo, who brings great enthusiasm and talent to his role as campus minister at Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL, and John Muething, whose prayerful partnership and generosity have helped enable our Jesuit ministries to serve so many.

In this jubilee year, we give thanks for St. Ignatius and for all the Jesuits and lay partners who keep his vision alive. We hope you enjoy this issue.

In thanks for your partnership,

Provincial Edward W. Schmidt, SJ