

Introduction



For those who work in Jesuit higher education, recent events in the United States and around the world call us to assume greater responsibility in helping form women and men for others. Conflicts stemming from decades of discrimination, inequity and systemic injustice are felt daily. To us living in Baltimore City, this is an urgent call. The events that followed Freddie Gray’s death in 2015 seemed like a final cry for justice in the face of ongoing economic and social distress. Added to so many recent and troubling events occurring across our nation, these conflicts represent the long decay of basic human rights – personal safety, healthy living environment, affordable health care, effective education – that we try to uphold as we participate in what we hope is a just society. The events in Baltimore and elsewhere remind us that many of our fellow citizens are still subject to crippling discrimination and move us to reflect and act.

The third edition of *Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education* is an attempt to better understand and heal this fracturing, as well as respond to the troubling events in Baltimore and in other communities across the United States. The book is a discussion about how we might heed the calls

from the Jesuit Superiors in their talks and help address the injustices we witness as we carry out our Jesuit mission to educate women and men for others. In this work, we are guided by principles formed by the Jesuits as they opened their educational institutions to the lay public.

One of these principles in particular, *cura personalis*, or care of the whole person, informs our efforts. We live *cura personalis* as we reach out to one another on campus to form a more caring university, and we live *cura personalis* as we reach out to our communities to form more caring partnerships through civic engagement. *Cura personalis* supports our efforts at Loyola University Maryland and in many ways helps us answer the call for justice from Pope Francis when he addressed the U.S. Congress only a few months after the Baltimore uprisings. He said:

Even in the developed world, the effects of unjust structures and actions are all too apparent. Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good. (“Address of the Holy Father,” 24 Sep 2015)

The third edition of this book responds to this call and extends the goals of the first two editions by opening the discussion to members of the Loyola community who responded to the writing prompt, “how do you live justice at Loyola?” We invited participants to read the talks in the book

before responding, but we did not require it. Most important to us was the honest and insightful reflection our contributors shared as they told their stories. We hope that their stories will inspire others at Loyola and beyond to reflect on and continue striving for justice in their daily lives.

On behalf of Loyola University Maryland's Commitment to Justice committee,

Paola Pascual-Ferrá, Ph.D

Assistant Professor, Communication Department

Allen Brizee, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Writing Department