

**Speech at the University of Antonio Ruiz de Montoya**  
**Father General Arturo Sosa**  
**Lima, Peru**  
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I came to Lima for the first time at the end of 1994 to attend a preparatory meeting for the 34<sup>th</sup> General Congregation. Father Ernesto Cavassa then guided me throughout the city. He accompanied me to visit Father Vincent Santuc, whom I could not fail to meet. I had met him a few years earlier in Santiago, Chile, at a meeting of the Latin American Social Apostolate. I was in my regency—the stage of Jesuit formation before theology studies—at Centro Gumilla de Barquisimeto, in Venezuela. In spite of the difference in age and spiritual and intellectual maturity, we established a great friendship at that time. This meeting with a friend, an intellectual, a Jesuit engaged in the mission of serving the faith and promoting justice, also gave me the opportunity to know the outline of the Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University, which was then a School of Pedagogy, Philosophy and Humanities.

Vincent Santuc and Antonio Ruiz de Montoya are two Jesuits who embody what we now call the *intellectual apostolate*, one of the characteristics of the *manner of proceeding* of the Society of Jesus.

Antonio Ruiz de Montoya displayed these two dimensions during his life in an impressive way: a tireless missionary among the indigenous peoples with whom he founded thirteen *reductions*, promoting their quality of life and defending this life from the increasing threats emanating from the Portuguese *bandeirantes* and the Spanish or Creole traders in search of slaves and material wealth. An apostle, driven by an insatiable intellectual curiosity, which urged him to go beyond appearances to understand the territory in which he moved, its flora and fauna, recognizing cultural diversity and establishing intercultural ties. Ruiz de Montoya went to the other, recognizing him as a brother, which explains why he learned the language and inserted himself in the Guaraní culture. He had an insatiable intellectual curiosity, which led him to deepen his knowledge of nature, culture, people and the experience of God on whom his life was anchored. His writings address various fields of knowledge: geography, biology, ethnology, grammar and mystical theology. It is an enormous challenge that this university in Lima takes up by adopting the name of Antonio Ruiz de Montoya.

Three centuries later, Vincent Santuc embraced the Latin American cultures to which he was sent. From his native culture, he encountered other cultural realities, in various parts of Latin America. He became *inculturated* as much among the peasants of Piura as with the intellectuals of Lima or Paris. Originally from a peasant family in the countryside of south-east France (Maylis), he had to perform his military service during the “Battle of Algiers”, an experience which prompted him to trust fully in God and to develop his desire to contribute to the humanization of society. As a philosopher and social scientist, Vincent Santuc recognised that profound changes were affecting the history of humanity. However, he did not limit himself to recognising these changes. He endeavoured to give them meaning, based on the human realities, which nourished his thought and the faith, which animated his heart. His thinking was nourished by his proximity to people, the peasants of Piura, the inhabitants of the urban districts, the students and professors of the universities, and the Jesuit brothers of the universal body of the Society. He knew the importance of political action and thought, in relation to ethics, as a dimension of the humanization of history and the meaning of human life with others.

Vincent Santuc, founder and first rector of this university, lived the spirit that stimulates this institution. He was aware that intellectual work does not begin or end within the walls or programs of the university. Vincent began his academic work after twenty years devoted to the social apostolate, action and social advancement at the CIPCA (*Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado*) of Piura. There he began his intellectual work. His first writings were pamphlets to teach the poor peasants of Piura how to read and write. Popular education as a theoretical proposition would become part of his writings of those years. Almost naturally, he would continue to reflect on rural development by addressing new challenges. Faced with the dilapidation of political structures, he reflected and wrote about the link between ethics and politics. All this would become part of his lectures and publications on language, meaning, and possible freedom. The universal human condition, based on the concrete situation of Peru and Latin America, was the object of his reflection and the inspiration of his action.

In memory of these two people, and inspired by the sense of the task that brings us together this afternoon at Antonio Ruiz University de Montoya, Lima, allow me some reflections on the *intellectual apostolate* as a characteristic dimension of the mission of Society of Jesus.

What we call the *intellectual apostolate* is central to the mission of the Society today, as it has been from its inception. The complexity of the world's problems makes intellectual reflection ever more urgent and central, in order to render quality service to humanity, starting from the mission of the Church. The Society of Jesus, from its birth, has been associated with spiritual depth, the intellectual apostolate, closeness to the poor and an intellectual understanding of human processes. Today, it confirms this way of proceeding, which leads to deepening the commitment in the *intellectual apostolate*.

During his visit to the 36<sup>th</sup> General Congregation last October, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, confirmed the Society in this dimension of its identity. He invited us to continue to work from the spiritual depth, with the intellectual depth and vision of the processes involved in the people and in the relationships of these people with each other and with nature. It is not a question of occupying spaces, he said, but rather of engendering and accompanying processes of growth and transformation, according to what corresponds to each circumstance, according to *people, times and places*, as Ignatius of Loyola liked to say. A profound vision of these complex processes is not possible without analysis and reflection. The discernment, which leads to choosing the actions to perform, needs this intellectual depth.

This characteristic of the identity of the Society of Jesus since its foundation has been strongly emphasized since the 34<sup>th</sup> General Congregation. In describing the characteristics of a Jesuit and the Society of Jesus itself, the Congregation emphasized that the intellectual apostolate is a dimension of the whole mission: it must be part of everything we do, as Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach urged us on various occasions.<sup>1</sup> The 34<sup>th</sup> General Congregation reaffirmed the importance of the intellectual quality of every work promoted by the Society, thus contributing to the discovery of God's creative work.<sup>2</sup> The subsequent general congregations also insisted strongly on intellectual work as a characteristic of our manner of proceeding and of our commitment to an integral evangelization.

Consequently, the intellectual dimension must be present in all apostolic action undertaken by the Society of Jesus as a body, in each of our apostolic works and in the personal activity of

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<sup>1</sup> For example: *The Intellectual Dimension of Jesuit Ministries*, Krakow, Poland, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> GC 34 D. 16

each Jesuit. The university is undoubtedly a privileged space to deploy this dimension. We know that the intellectual depth does not arise spontaneously and that it is not enough to have the title of university to reach this dimension. Intellectual work requires an effort in commitment. It calls for sensitivity to the situation of people and peoples. It presupposes looking beyond its walls to accompany the complex processes of human history.

For the Jesuit and the institutions administered by the Society of Jesus, it is not enough to reach the intellectual depth. The real challenge is that it is an *apostolate*, that is, a way to more effectively announce the Good News of the Gospel, to learn to grasp the presence of God in the world and the action of Holy Spirit in history, to join in and contribute to human liberation.

Intellectual work is an apostolate:

- a. When it is accomplished *in the world*, that is, when it finds its meaning outside itself, by not being enclosed in its interests but by finding its meaning in people, themes and the problems of humanity, and consequently of the Church.

The apostle listens and heeds, he contemplates the situation of the world. It follows the model of the meditation of the Incarnation in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: the Most Holy Trinity listens to and feels the situation of the world, of so many diverse people, understands what it is and decides to be part of the world to open a path of liberation.

- b. When it has an *evangelical orientation*, because it is affected by what happens to human beings and creation. Intellectual work is apostolate because it is clearly and explicitly directed towards the construction of a world closer to the characteristics of the Kingdom of God: justice, peace and love, a fundamental bond between human beings and God.
- c. When one is aware of the need to carry out this work in collaboration with others. When one knows that intellectual depth requires listening, dialogue, going to meet the other. Intellectual work is an apostolate when it is carried out in the open, not locked up in a cabinet, sheltered from its own certainties. When it is able to interact with other disciplines, enrich other perspectives and visions of the world, science and culture. It does not lock itself up in his own truth.

Intellectual apostolate follows the dynamics of the incarnation, which follows the contemplation of the world. In Nazareth, there is an encounter between the liberating will of the Trinity and humanity. The faith of Mary makes possible the birth of Jesus, who grows up in a family with Joseph, who opens up to the reality of his impoverished and colonised people, who listens to the prophetic word of John the Baptist and calls his disciples to collaborate in the work liberation for which he was sent.

- d. Intellectual work in the Society is apostolate when it is experienced as a received mission, as a sending. As a result, it is performed as a service. It does not seek recognition or glory from people or institutions. It is an intellectual effort made by apostles, that is to say, by persons, Jesuits or others, men or women, who live it as a mission. The frequent aridity of this work or its possible recognition are experienced as a generous response to the call received to put oneself at the service of the liberation of the world.

In short, intellectual work is an apostolate if it keeps alive the link between deep reflection, concern for people's lives and the building of a more human and Christian world. Our intellectual work is an apostolate if it is carried out with depth, openness to the world and an orientation towards social justice and reconciliation between people and creation, always in dialogue with other believers and non-believers, by accepting with joy the richness of cultural diversity. We are thus responsible for what we propose. We also know what we owe to a community of people in society and to a community of researchers and thinkers. We act by looking at people in a particular space, but also by looking at the world: this work is both universal and local. Because of this, it is intercultural: inculturated, in dialogue and universal.

Just as all intellectual work is not necessarily an apostolate, it is also not guaranteed that a university, by the mere fact of being a university, carries out this work as an apostolate that responds to the characteristics of the way of proceeding of the Society.

Discernment, collaboration and networking are three characteristics of the Society's *manner of proceeding*, highlighted by the 36<sup>th</sup> General Congregation. From these three elements, the Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University and all the apostolic works of the Society are invited to examine their own *manner of proceeding*. I therefore invite the University to discern its intellectual apostolate, its themes and its way of carrying it out.

The first question is whether the university has places for discernment that helps guide its intellectual mission and whether these are adequate for such a task. Secondly, it is important to ask, as the starting point of this discernment, where God is in the present situation of Peru, Latin America and the world, where we encounter signs of his presence and of his action.

To ensure that we are making an intellectual effort in collaboration with others, we must first examine the actual degree of collaboration that exists within the university community of Ruiz de Montoya. To examine whether a mission and a shared vision unites us and leads us to carry out this mission, each one from his position. Examine if we feel part of a larger mission, the mission of the Society of Jesus in Peru, Latin America and the Caribbean. Consider whether research, teaching and exchange programs with the university community are nourished by joint reflection with other apostolic groups inserted popular zones, the indigenous world, the Amazon zone or those who manage everyday problems of education. The question arises as to whether the university is a collaborator in the efforts of individuals, institutions, movements and groups of various types who are striving for justice, reconciliation and peace in Latin America and the world.

Collaboration easily leads to the need for increased networking. Examine to what extent Ruiz de Montoya University is part of the network of universities entrusted to the Society of Jesus in Latin America and to what extent it contributes to this network and to other university networks in Peru or the continent. Ask whether contact with other apostolic works or collaboration with individuals and groups can be better organized through networks that make collaboration more effective and help to shape, strengthen and direct the university's intellectual work.

All this also has specificities depending on each region of the world. In Latin America, there is a particular tradition of carrying out apostolic work as an "apostolate" and as a "collaboration", which can bring something to the whole of the Society, just as the Society in Latin America can incorporate and develop elements of the manner of accomplishing this mission under other latitudes.

At the heart of Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University, there is a way of accomplishing the intellectual apostolate of the Society of Jesus in Latin America which is characterized by:

- a. *Responding concrete problems and situations*: Frequently we have succeeded in formulating theoretical and more universal questions from the urgency of solving the concrete problems of individuals and communities, from the concern to build better living conditions for them, from the urgency to reconcile, defend, and accompany people and communities.
- b. *Personal engagement*: The intellectual apostolate has engaged us as missionaries. Theoretical contributions from theology, sociology or even other disciplines - such as linguistics and art - in the Latin American Jesuit tradition have not only engaged the reflection but also the life and even the security of our missionaries. We have martyrs of the Latin American intellectual apostolate, for whom we thank God and those who have embarked on this difficult path.
- c. *With others and inter-sectoral*: Our tradition is a tradition of working groups ranging from biblical think-tanks to social think-tanks or work of popular educational innovation, academic and social as a whole. A characteristic of the Latin American intellectual apostolate is that it has developed creatively in diverse institutional settings - academic, social and spiritual centres, educational institutions, parishes, and indigenous missions.

Such is the intellectual reflection which is apostolic and which the Society wishes to pursue and promote. An intellectual reflection, which by seeking to respond to concrete situations in people's lives, goes to the depth of the problems and collaborates in the search for solutions.

An intellectual reflection that is nourished by the sincere friendship of the people with whom it shares the situation and the search for transformation. An intellectual work that is accomplished by participating and sharing in the life of the community. It is not the work of isolated individuals, but of people in dialogue, communities, teams, institutions that think together, seek to formulate common proposals and understandings on issues and problems that affect the community.

An intellectual apostolate that brings us out of our buildings and institutional security, committed to justice, reconciliation, democracy and the sustainable development of our peoples as a path to lasting peace. A reflection that leads us to take a position in situations that are unacceptable, rationally and evangelically, at the risk of suffering persecution and death, aware of the fact that reflection is strengthened and mission is confirmed in difficulties.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to share these ideas and, above all, your desire and willingness to journey together in the exciting task of making a reality what today seems impossible to us.