

CHALLENGES TO OUR MISSION TODAY

SENT TO THE FRONTIERS

IV. OUR APOSTOLIC RESPONSE

Reconciliation with creation

31.- Following the directive³⁰ of GC 34, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach commissioned a study and invited all "Jesuits and those who share our mission to show ever more effective ecological solidarity in our spiritual, communal, and apostolic lives".³¹ This invitation calls us to move beyond doubts and indifference to take responsibility for our home, the earth.

32.- Care of the environment affects the quality of our relationships with God, with other human beings, and with creation itself. It touches the core of our faith in and love for God, "from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying".³² It might be said that St. Ignatius teaches us this care of the environment in the Principle and Foundation³³ when speaking of the goodness of creation, as well as in the *Contemplatio ad Amorem* when describing the active presence of God within creation.³⁴

33.- The drive to access and exploit sources of energy and other natural resources is very rapidly widening the damage to earth, air, water, and our whole environment, to the point that the future of our planet is threatened. Poisoned water, polluted air, massive deforestation, deposits of atomic and toxic waste are causing death and untold suffering, particularly to the poor. Many poor communities have been displaced, and indigenous peoples have been the most affected.

34.- In heeding the call to restore right relationships with creation, we have been moved anew by the cry of those suffering the consequences of environmental destruction, by the many postulates received, and by the recent teaching of the Holy Father and many episcopal conferences on this issue.

35.- This Congregation urges all Jesuits and all partners engaged in the same mission, particularly the universities and research centres, to promote studies and practices focusing on the causes of poverty and the question of the environment's improvement. We should find ways in which our experiences with refugees and the displaced on one hand, and people who work for the protection of the environment on the other hand, could interact with those institutions, so that research results and advocacy have effective practical benefits for society and the environment. Advocacy and research should serve the poor and those who work for the protection of the environment. This ought to shed

new light on the appeal of the Holy Father that costs should be justly shared "taking due account of the different levels of development".³⁵

36.- In our preaching, teaching, and retreat direction, we should invite all people to appreciate more deeply our covenant³⁶ with creation as central to right relationships with God and one another, and to act accordingly in terms of political responsibility, employment, family life, and personal lifestyle.