

Pope Francis receives first copy of Fr General Arturo Sosa's new book, "Walking with Ignatius"



Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ and journalist Dario Menor visited Pope Francis to present him with the book, "En Camino con Ignacio" launched during the Ignatian Year

On Monday, 3 May, Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ presented his new book, "En Camino con Ignacio" ("Walking with Ignatius"), to Pope Francis.

The book, originally written in Spanish with journalist Dario Menor, touches on the current challenges facing the Catholic Church, what it means to lead the Society of Jesus, the situation in his native Venezuela, his relationship with Pope Francis, the first Jesuit Pope in history, and the world revealed by the pandemic.

A public launch was held on 11 May at the Aula of the Jesuit curia in Rome and [livestreamed](#) on YouTube. Besides Spanish, the book is currently available in English, French, Italian, and Portuguese, with additional languages, including Dutch, Tamil, Vietnamese, and Arabic, coming soon.

Its publication falls just at the start of the Ignatian Year, which runs from 20 May 2021 to 31 July 2022, and which marks 500 years since the Jesuit founder's conversion experience at Pamplona. The Society of Jesus have conceived this event as a period of spiritual reflection and renewal.

“The story of St Ignatius has been paradigmatic in my own life” says Fr Sosa. “Initially he was determined to be successful at court and had a road map ready made for himself. A wound sustained in battle changed all of that, gave him time to reflect and to see that God had different dreams for him. Similar processes of change have happened in my own life in different ways and at different times as I have learned to listen to how God is speaking to me. In fact, in this time of Covid, it is happening in the lives of so many people around us as they come face to face with limits of their own life plans. Conversion is being on the path to becoming fuller human beings”.

Fr General Arturo Sosa SJ at the launch of his book, *Walking with Ignatius*. In the book Fr Sosa revisits different stages of his life: from his childhood in Venezuela, political interests and Jesuit vocation, to his social engagements and academic work in the Society of Jesus, of which he became the 31st Superior General in 2016. He goes on to examine the greatest challenges that the Church has to face today, and reflects on the Society of Jesus’ four key commitments, the “Universal Apostolic Preferences” made even more urgent by the pandemic: showing the way to God (which is in high demand in this difficult period), walking with the poor and those who’ve been marginalised by society, togetherness with young people, and sparking greater awareness of care for our common home.

“I wrote the book because I want to share the Risen Christ’s hope and joy with people,” said Fr Sosa. “Every Saturday for about twelve weeks I met with Darío who confronted me with many questions. This led to a very rich interaction about how Ignatian Spirituality can impact our world and about how the questions of the world and the crying needs of humankind can be addressed by the Society of Jesus, by the Church, and by all other faith traditions. It has been an adventure, a journey – at times challenging – in which I have learned so much. I am convinced that facing questions honestly and trying to answer them with our friends, families, and our faith community is the way forward to a deeper and more fulfilled life, to a life of greater solidarity that is more in tune with the dream that God has for our world.”

Menor, a correspondent for the Spanish newspaper, “El Correo”, and the religion magazine, “Vida Nueva”, says of his dialogue with Fr General: “These are conversations which strip you down, they make you stop, take a good look at yourself, think about what you see, and reflect on what could be better and what you could change.” The 24 hours of one-on-one talks with Fr Sosa, “really had that effect on me as I was writing. The transcription of those talks, written on these pages, couldn’t fail to make an impact on any reader.”

The book comes out on the eve of the Ignatian Year. Readers in Asia Pacific may get the English version from Messenger Publications of the Jesuits in Ireland [here](#).

Scholastic Pascal Calu SJ, media coordinator for the Ignatian Year, explains that through the event, the Society of Jesus wants “to invite people to look at their own real truth in a deeper way. St Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus to ‘better men’s souls’ – to help people see that God was working for them in real life and to cherish God’s greater wishes which he calls us to fulfil every day. Each one of us can have a personal and loving relationship with God. Realising this was the biggest turning point in Ignatius’ life; it can also be ours.”