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JECSE Formators Conference 2019, Manresa, Dublin

Educating Magis – Between Academic and Human Excellence

This Wonderful Experience of bringing together Formators of the Jesuit Schools has enriched us once again and reminded me of the value of JECSE as a platform for widening our perspectives while building on our common purpose. The stakeholders of the Jesuit Colleges of Europe will all benefit from the enrichment of its Formation Personnel, after these special days when we spent time considering our commitment to the Magis.

We came from 10 different Provinces with so much to share; rich experiences, common vision and curiosity, in a spirit of comradeship, companionship and fun. Having our European colleagues in Dublin was so special for the Irish Province and we were grateful to return the hospitality we have enjoyed in Drogenen, Milan and Manresa for other JECSE gatherings.

On the first evening the tone was set in a relaxed and cheerful manner as different Formators gave us their context, by telling a story of a picture they had chosen. These stories varied from the richness of our work with our students, to 'sleep out' stories to 'reality TV'. The following morning, **The Keynote Speaker, Nikolaas Sintobin S.J gave us Three Characteristics of Excellence.**

- Magis is strictly Personal
- Magis = Personal Desire
- Magis is an Invitation to 'Decentration' – lose yourself.

Nicholas' intriguing style of illustrating the points using Youtube clips brought humour and clarity to his words.

We were especially proud during our Conference, to showcase beautiful Glendalough, Co.Wicklow, one of the most important Monastic sites in Ireland, a deep immersion in Celtic Spirituality. Fr. Michael and Fr. Pat in their different styles guided us through the pathways, towards the round towers and amidst the lakes in this overwhelmingly beautiful place. With the Irish sunshine, this monastic site convinced us to sit in deep wonder and awe, 'because the only time is Now and the only place is Here.' This day came to a highpoint with Outdoor Mass in the Women's Church. Bernard Peters S.J ensuring at every chance that we raised our voices in song.

The third morning brought us to 'Educate Magis'. With his Galway based team, Gellert Merza brought us on a virtual tour of this exciting (more than a) Website with opportunities for classrooms from around the world to meet each other and discuss common themes. Thus giving us a tool for connecting and talking.

Krizan Vekic, Justice Co-ordinator for the Irish province challenged us to Define 'Global Citizen's and quickly reminded us that you make Global Citizenship Ignatian when you are in relationship with God. Of course, this is what makes us better, more committed, Global Citizens.

The typical style of JECSE is to share the leadership of the Conference and this was no different. Members led us in prayer and reflection to set the tone of the day while keynote speakers inspired us on the topic of Magis. And yet informal conversations had a richness and sharing we could not have expected. As I discovered more about the programmes which colleagues are directing in their schools the words of Nikolaas resonated with me, 'There is no point having *all these experiences*, if there is no Reflection. (On Reflection, I agree!)