faith of which the promotion of justice is an absolute re-
requirement” (Decree #4) as a benchmark for all Jesuit works.
This caused some universities to circle the wagons even
closer for more protection. But the most recent general
congregation—the 34th in 1996—reaffirmed the faith/just-
tice challenge and integrated it a profound concern
for culture as the environment in which faith and justice
are lived out. Valentin Menendez, S.J., the assistant to the
superior general of the Jesuits for northern Latin America
spoke to the rectors about how this faith/justice/culture
theme should influence the universities entrusted to the
Jesuit Order: serious research, dynamic teaching, and a sig-
nificant impact on the societies the universities serve.

A complementary theme—the August 1996 letter of
the Latin American Jesuit provincial superiors on the ef-
effects of neoliberalism—was developed by Francisco de
Roux, S.J., the coordinator of social concerns for North-
ern Latin America. He challenged the universities to go
beyond the clichés that simply attack neoliberalism and
propose viable alternatives.

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erty, its causes, and proposals for solu-
tion. Each university will encourage its scholars to tackle
the problem in different ways and then pool their results
for continent-wide solutions. It was clear to the delegates
that an unbridled market without ethical norms would lead
to further gaps between the tiny rich minority and the vast
poor majority, and the measurement of economic growth
on the basis of financial speculation instead of increased
production and employment.

Several rectors mentioned that this integration of ef-
forts by the universities and the social apostolate is a sign
of the maturing of the Jesuit Order itself—an indication of
the ability of its institutions to see their purpose as lying
outside themselves and in the community beyond its walls.
Preparation of personally successful professionals will not
guarantee that the universities will have achieved their mis-
sion; success will be measured by the impact these profes-
sionals have on “shipwrecked societies.”

Although most of the rectors are Jesuit priests, they
clearly affirmed the Thirty-Fourth General Congregation
decree on the laity as crucial colleagues in a joint task. They
stressed the idea that the laity are not merely helpers in a
Jesuit “mission”; some even said that the role of Jesuits was
to help the laity in their role. By sheer numbers we see that
the institutions for which the Jesuits are given responsi-
bility are administered and staffed largely by lay women
and men. Although the rectors hoped there would be more Je-
suits available for the university vocation in the future, there
was no pining for the good old days of the “long black line”
or seeing the laity as a “necessary evil” that had to be toler-
ated because of the diminishing number of Jesuits. But real
involvement of the laity in integral responsibility for the
universities is still a goal of the future in some institutions
that tend to identify Jesuit “power” as a prerequisite for
Ignatian “influence.”

E-mail will guarantee that the dialogue on common
projects will increase over the next few years—especially
the faith/justice/culture challenge, a greater role for lay
women and men, and programs in Ignatian spirituality. It
will be important to study the development of these sig-
nificant trends over the next few years to see what happens
on the ground. Will lofty ideals be confined to mission state-
ments or will they lead to the transformation of universi-
ties which will truly transform societies?

A Training Program for
Teachers at the Royal
University of Phnom Penh
A Joint Project among Jesuit Universities

Daniel G. Ross, S.J.
Daniel G. Ross is secretary for tertiary education at the Jesuit Confer-
ence of East Asia and Oceania. Address: Faculty of Theology, Fu Jen
University, Hsinchuang 24205, Taiwan, ROC.

General Background
There are 10 institutions at the tertiary level in the
Jesuit Conference of East Asia and Oceania. Two of
these are colleges and the others, universities. Of the lat-
ter, two—Sophia in Tokyo and Elisabeth University of
Music in Hiroshima—are on the island of Honshu in Ja-
pan. Sogang is our university in Seoul, Korea. Fu Jen Un-
iversity—near Taipei in Taiwan—is jointly run by the Society
of Jesus, the SVD fathers, and the diocesan clergy. Five of the 10 schools are in the Philippines. In Manila there is the Ateneo de Manila University, while two other universities—Xavier in Cagayan de Oro and the Ateneo de Davao in Davao City—are on the southern island of Mindanao. In the Bicol region of Luzon, the Ateneo de Naga and—one on the southwestern tip of Mindanao—the Ateneo de Zamboanga are two colleges that will soon become universities. Further south—in the city of Yogyakarta on the Indonesian island of Java—is Sanata Dharma University. A quick look at a map will remind us that these ten schools are spread over a vast, culturally diverse geographical area. Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Indonesia all represent different Asian languages and cultures. The Philippine schools in themselves represent another five different subcultures and dialects or languages.

Fr. General has emphasized the need for our universities and colleges to collaborate more than they have in the past.

They decided that they would provide financial support for this project and bring Cambodian teachers to the Ateneo de Manila for a six-month retraining program. This was deemed a better solution than spreading the teachers out over different schools in different cultural and language areas. English could be used more easily in Manila, and the Cambodians would more easily form a group that could work together when they returned to Phnom Penh if they went through retraining together.

Scholarship money was provided by the different schools. It should be noted that Cambodian teachers are forced to supplement their salary of U.S.$20 to U.S.$25 a month by various part-time jobs in Phnom Penh. They would be without this income during the six months in the Philippines. For this reason the scholarships have to include a stipend for the families of the teachers.

As a result of this cooperation, the Ateneo de Manila was able to broaden and formalize its program. The first six Cambodian teachers began the program in September 1995 and returned to Phnom Penh in early 1996. As a result of an evaluation at that time, we decided that the project should continue for another year. The same schools repeated their contributions, and a second group of six teachers is now finishing up its six months at the Ateneo.

Plans are now under way to continue the program for next year. It has turned out to be an invaluable contribution to the upgrading of the faculty at the Cambodian University. We judge the second year of the program to have been even better than the first. This is because those running the project have been able to build on their experiences. Teachers from the Royal University of Phnom Penh will soon be chosen and begin a special English-language training course in Phnom Penh before leaving the country. The third year of the program will begin in September 1997.