

CURA TERRAE: A 5th Care for Excellence in Jesuit Education

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Abstract: Cura personalis and cura apostolica are recognized as important Ignatian virtues in Jesuit education and are now common in mission parlance. More recently, cura studiorum and cura propria have been added to the Latin lexicon of cares. A fifth cura, Cura terrae, meaning 'care for the earth,' is proposed. A model of the interrelated four Ignatian curas, within the all-encompassing ecological dimension, results in a panoramic ecosphere of care. This model of the Jesuit educational mission is comprehensive and reflects Pope Francis' repeated conviction that 'Everything is connected.'

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*Cura personalis (care for the unique, individual person) and cura apostolica (care for the work or institution) are recognized as important Ignatian virtues in Jesuit education and are now common in our mission parlance (see the historical review by Barton T. Geger SJ, 2014). More recently, cura studiorum and cura propria have been added to the Latin lexicon of Ignatian cares.*

*Cura studiorum, meaning 'care for the studies, is a verbal play on the Ratio Studiorum, the plan of study intended to standardize the Jesuit system of secondary and higher education published in 1599. It addresses the intellectual formation of students, including the intellectual environment, courses, the curriculum and the teaching methods and pedagogy employed (Hanycz, McDonald & Mooney, 2022). Cura propria, meaning 'care for oneself' was first coined at the previous Justice in Jesuit Education Conference (Mooney, 2021). It was suggested that in order to fully care for others, serve as justice advocates and care for our institutions, we need to appreciate and value attention to ourselves. Moreover, as we are now in the midst of a post-pandemic psychological pandemic, this care is a major Ignatian virtue.*

These "inseparable and complementary" four curas provide a model of excellence in the Jesuit educational mission.\* However, with Pope Francis' promulgation of *Laudate Deum* (2023) and *Laudato Si'* (2015) on integral ecology and the Society of Jesus' *Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029* and the call for radical environmental stewardship, the 4 cura-model is incomplete. I suggest that a fifth cura be added to the framework: **Cura terrae**, meaning 'care for the earth.' With the addition of Cura terrae, the model reflects an all-inclusive panoramic ecosphere.

In outlining the four Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029, Fr. Sosa underscored the importance of viewing each of them through the 'lens' of our work rather than as a specific item or responsibility. With this in mind, the delegates at the Midwest Province Ignatian Leadership Institute, May 20-22, 2024 were asked to indicate how they express the four cura's in light of cura terrae, a sample of responses:

## **Cura Personalis**

*Teaching colleagues how to compost  
Virtual advising (meeting students where they are) saving on CO2 emissions  
Holding class outside when possible*

## **Cura Apostolica**

*Reduce printing  
Donating  
Turning areas into bee or bird sanctuaries  
Digital class materials*

## Cura Studiorum

*Supporting the student sustainability club*

*Integrating an environmental theme throughout the curriculum*

*Having a curricular component on the impact of global warming on patients for medical students*

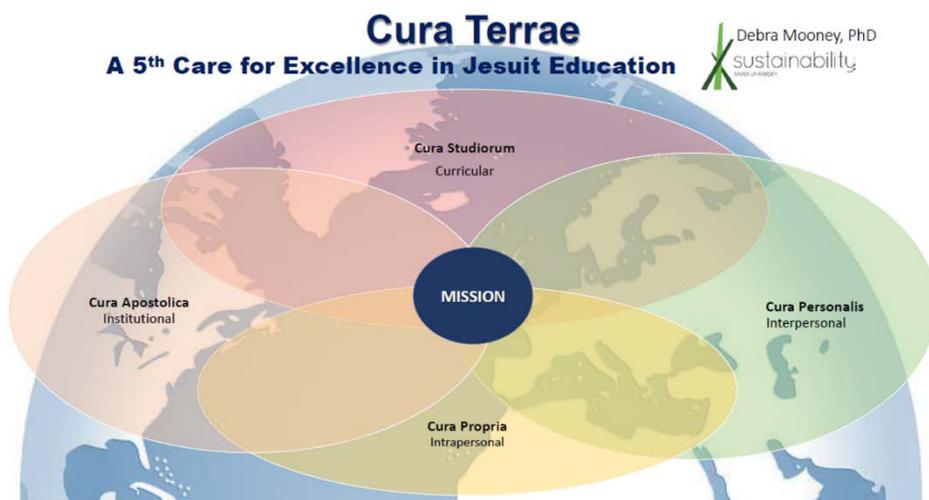
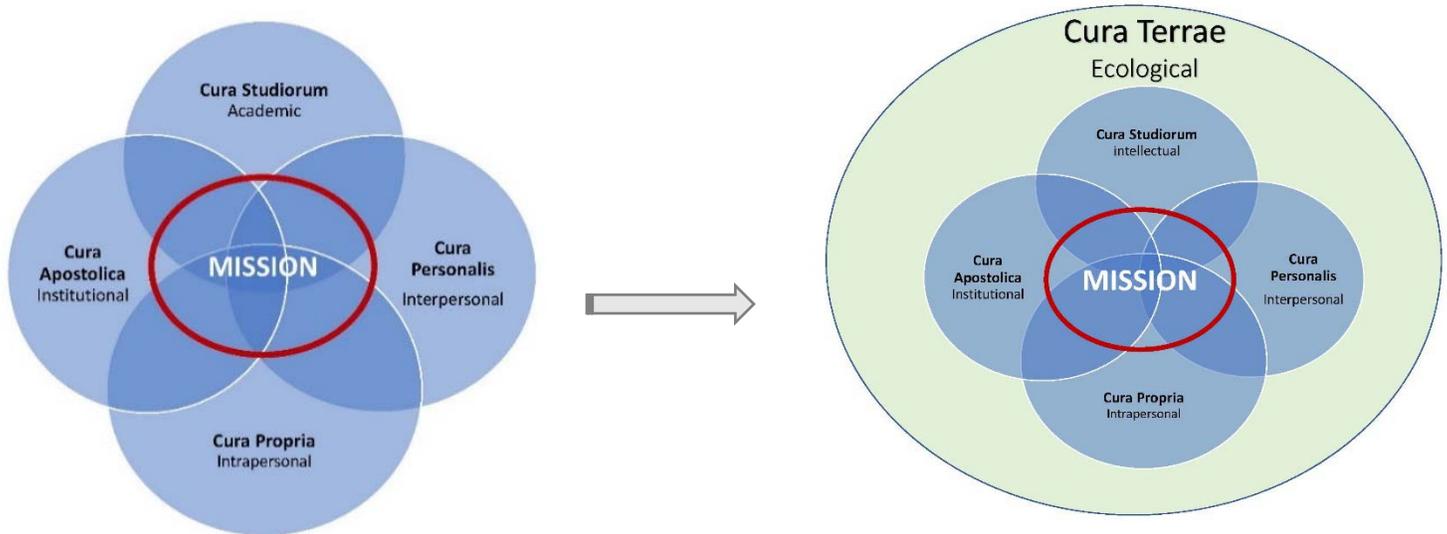
## Cura Propria

*Keep a plant in the office*

*Encourage faculty to work from home certain days of the week*

*Talking a mid-day walk while notice the natural campus environment*

In summary, this new model and highlights the interaction of Cura terrae with the 4 cura's in activating the mission at our Jesuit Catholic universities, including effective structural, curricular, health and relational examples. Furthermore, the inspiring and hope-filled model is comprehensive with the inclusion of an ecological dimension and clearly reflects Pope Francis repeated conviction in *Laudate Deum* that 'Everything is connected.'



\* In a 2020 Letter to his Jesuit brothers, Superior General Fr. Arturo Sosa SJ, noted that the dimensions of cura apostolica and cura personalis are "inseparable and complementary." In the 2022 article, we noted that the four cura's are inseparable and complementary.

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