

May 5, 2017

BY INTERNATIONAL OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

Rev. Arturo Sosa, SJ
Superior General of the Society of Jesus
Curia Generaliza S.J.



Re: Petition for Appointment of Jesuit Visitors to the United States

Most Reverend Father:

I am a lifelong member of the Roman Catholic Church, and a direct descendant of the 272 African American slaves (“the GU272”) who were owned and subsequently sold by the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus to sugar plantations in Louisiana in 1838, in order to rescue Georgetown University from imminent bankruptcy.

I was born and raised in Maringouin, Louisiana, near West Oak Plantation, where our enslaved ancestors were sent by the Maryland Jesuits in 1838. I received my sacraments and was an altar boy at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church, a small mission church in Maringouin. The mission was established shortly after the Emancipation in 1865 by members of the GU272. Several of our 272 ancestors are buried in this small cemetery.

I write to you as a Lead Organizer of the GU272 Foundation, and one of ten founding members of the GU272 Descendants Association. Our Association was established in August 2016. Today, we have registered membership of more than 800 descendants. These two organizations, along with the Georgetown Memory Project, form the pillars of the GU272 descendant community in North America.

Most Reverend Father, I am submitting a formal request that you, as Superior General of the Society of Jesus, appoint one or more Jesuit Visitors to the United States to investigate the unmitigated and enduring harm inflicted upon God’s one human family by the Society of Jesus’ direct, extensive and long term engagement in slavery. A major focus of our request is the Society’s 1838 sale of 272 Black members of the “Jesuit Family” to sugar cane plantations (Hell Holes) in Louisiana.

Broad Mandates Sought for Jesuit Visitor/s

Specifically, Most Reverend Father, we request that your appointed Visitor/s be assigned two distinct and equally important mandates. We suggest that that both mandates are critical to the restoration of the Catholic Church's moral and Christian values, which have been gravely compromised for generations by the Society of Jesus through its willful destruction of the innocent and humble lives of our ancestors. The effects of the impact of slavery on our ancestors continue to manifest themselves in the lives of descendants until this day, and will persist far into the future.

Mandate No. 1:

In 1836, Father General Roothaan, seemingly acting with the intent to preserve some level of moral and Christian values, while still approving the Maryland Provincial's ill conceived decision to use humans as chattel, issued the now famous Roothaan Conditions. Consistent with the Father General's intent, the Visitor/s should be given two charges:

1. Investigate and document, separately and thoroughly, each Roothaan condition and determine, conclusively, if these conditions were met by both the Maryland Jesuits and the Louisiana plantation owners, as intended by Father General Roothaan.
2. Investigate and document the physical, social, educational and economic harm and disadvantages that have resulted from the 1838 sale, continuing down into the present day.

Mandate No. 2:

Taking into account the facts gathered and documented during the completion of both elements of Mandate No. 1, as stated above, the Jesuit Visitor/s should be instructed to organize and lead, or select another to organize and lead, a "Society of Jesus Multi Lateral Advisory Group." This Advisory Group should be composed of a maximum of four Jesuits (or selected representatives); four GU272 Descendants (or selected representatives); and four independent human rights/justice advocates (mutually agreed to by Jesuits and Descendants).

The Multi Lateral Advisory Group should be given three charges:

1. Research, evaluate, and determine what and how much **investment forward** should be made in the lives of those who, after 200 years, continue to be negatively impacted by the enduring and unmitigated vestiges of slavery. For contrast purposes, the Advisory Group should consider how exponentially Georgetown and the Society of Jesus has "fructified" since 1838. The question for all of Catholicism is: what is the moral and Christian thing to do?

2. Consider existing visions, or design new visions, strategies, and methods to effectively invest forward in pursuit of a Common Good within the human family in general, and in the educational aspirations and the family economic security of GU272 descendants in particular.
3. Submit recommendations to the Father General on or before January 30, 2018.

Grounds Supporting Our Request

Most Reverend Father, for eight months, we descendants of the GU272 enslaved people sold in 1838 have humbly, respectfully and repeatedly requested meaningful engagement from the Maryland Province, the Central & Southern Province, and Georgetown University. For more than a year we have literally been ignored. We have thus concluded that our only hope for sincere, open, and mutually respectful engagement needs outside support. Thus, as a component of our petition, we have stated, more extensively, grounds supporting our request for the appointment of Jesuit Visitors to help remove this dark cloud from over the goodness of our Church.

In conclusion, Father General Sosa, we, descendants of the 272 powerless souls, whose human dignity, gifted to them by God’s grace, was discounted and robbed at the hands of the Society of Jesus, beseech you to hear our plea, and respond, in the spirit of God, to our petition.

Pope Francis: “Today the Lord is calling us to search our conscience for it is one thing to talk mercy yet another to live mercy.”

I am, with faith in God,
Most respectfully yours,

[Redacted signature block]

Joseph M. Stewart

[Redacted address line]

United States of America

ATTACHMENTS:

A: *Petition for Appointment of Jesuit Visitor/s to the United States*

B: *Historical Overview of the GU272 & Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland*



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Attachment A:
Petition for Appointment of Jesuit Visitor/s to the United States

Most Reverend Father:

We, the undersigned, place this petition before you, and ask you to heal a great hurt, right a great wrong, and end a great and growing scandal in the Church.

Specifically, we respectfully ask you to order a Visitation to the United States in connection with the matters described below, as soon as possible but not later than October 31, 2017. We pledge to use our best efforts to keep the contents of this petition confidential for at least the next forty five (45) calendar days.

We are the four Lead Organizers of the GU272 Foundation, and the appointed representatives of the GU272 Descendants Association. The GU272 Descendants Association is headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and is composed of more than 800 direct descendants of the 272 enslaved men, women and children who were sold by the Maryland Jesuits to southern Louisiana in 1838 (the “GU272”).

We are joined today (and will be joined in the future) by a great many other persons who have executed written mandates empowering us to act as their representatives or procurators in the vindication of their rights, and the pursuit of justice in this matter. These appointments have been made in accordance with the norms of Canons 1481 1490 and 1738.

Collectively, we are children of God’s one human family, standing firmly together in our belief in God, the Father almighty. We have joined together in full communion with each other and with Christian and moral people everywhere. The community of people supporting this petition includes:

- Catholics in full communion with the Church.
- Persons once in communion with the Church, who have since fallen away.
- Members of the Christian community, other religions, or no religion at all.
- Direct descendants of the GU272.
- Friends, families, and supporters of the GU272 descendants.

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This petition is brought in the name of the GU272 ancestors, and their thousands of direct descendants, both living and deceased. We submit this petition to you on behalf of Christian and moral people everywhere who have either lived or observed the human, moral and Christian deprivation and unmitigated harm that has been inflicted upon the Human Family by the institution of slavery and the shameful involvement of God’s Church in this inhuman institution.

Historical Events Underlying this Petition

In 1838, the Maryland Jesuits sold 272 baptized men, women and children to three sugar plantations located in southern Louisiana, in the United States. This sale was undertaken for the economic benefit and salvation of the Maryland Province and Georgetown University (located in Washington, DC).

The 1838 sale was carried out in direct violation of specific conditions and obligations imposed on the Maryland Province on December 27, 1836 by Father General Jan Roothaan, for the care and protection of the GU272 and their families. It was also undertaken in violation of the pastoral duties and obligations owed by the Maryland Jesuits to the GU272 and their families, a community of believers placed in their care by the diocesan bishop.

These breaches have resulted in serious harm to the GU272 and their descendants that continues unabated into the present day. For more information about the Roothaan Conditions of 1836 and the sale of the GU272 in 1838, please see *Attachment B: Historical Overview of the GU272 and Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland*.

Canonical Basis for Presenting this Petition

This petition is brought by members, friends, and supporters of families who have suffered (and continue to suffer) great harm caused by the Maryland Jesuits.

In addition, this petition is placed before you by Catholics in full communion with the Church, in accordance with the rights, duties and obligations of the Laity and the Christian faithful under the 1983 Code of Canon Law, including (without limitation) our:

- Obligation to maintain communion with the Church. (Canon 209)
- Duty to promote the growth of the Church and its continual sanctification. (Canon 210)
- Duty and right to work so that the divine message of salvation more and more reaches all people in every age and in every land. (Canon 211)
- Right to make known to the pastors of the Church our needs, especially spiritual ones, and our desires. (Canon 212, §2)

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- Right to manifest to the sacred pastors our opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church. (Canon 212, §3)
- Right to receive assistance from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church. (Canon 213)
- Right to promote apostolic action by our own undertakings. (Canon 216)
- Right to legitimately defend and protect the rights which we possess in the Church. (Canon 221, §1)
- Obligation to promote social justice. (Canon 222, §2)
- Duty to imbue and perfect the order of temporal affairs with the spirit of the gospel and this to give witness to Christ. (Canon 225, §2)

Exhaustion of Remedies at the Provincial Level

This petition is placed before you with the greatest reluctance, and only as a final resort.

American Jesuit slavery is a uniquely American evil, and one that has never been successfully addressed by American Jesuits acting without guidance and input from Rome. We have no choice but to turn to the Jesuit Curia for redress of the abuse and neglect we have suffered at the hands of the American Jesuits.

As described in detail below, the undersigned have recently spent *months* seeking a meaningful and constructive dialogue with the heads of the Maryland Province and the US Central & Southern Province, regarding the subject matter of this petition. To date, these efforts have been fruitless, and have been met with nothing but artful stonewalling by the respective Provinces.

Stonewalling by the Maryland Province

On September 21, 2016, the Maryland Provincial (Father Robert M. Hussey, SJ) and the President of Georgetown University (Dr. John J. De Gioia) jointly met with three designated representatives of the 800+ members of the GU272 Descendants Association: Ms. Cheryllyn M. Branche; Mr. Joseph M. Stewart; and Mr. Richard J. Cellini. All three individuals are signatories to this petition.

The express purpose of this meeting was to commence a substantive dialogue between the Maryland Jesuits and the GU272 descendant community on the topics of reconciliation and restorative justice. Specifically, the Maryland Jesuits and Georgetown University were invited to join the GU272 Descendants Association in exploring the creation of a GU272 Foundation dedicated to the promotion of racial reconciliation and healing in America. This topic was introduced at some length and in some detail at the September 21, 2016 meeting.

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On October 25, 2016, Father Hussey and President De Gioia co signed a letter to Ms. Branche, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Cellini, stating in part:

“We agree that we should convene a series of working sessions as soon as possible to continue the conversation we began on September 21st. These sessions should include participation from the descendant community, the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus, and Georgetown University. A series of working sessions at this time will provide a forum for all participants to discuss important issues.

...

Perhaps the most appropriate next step is to schedule a call/meeting at which we can discuss this in more depth and determine together the best way to get our working sessions underway.”

More than *six months* have now passed since the date of this letter. On more than a *dozen occasions* since October 25, 2016, Mr. Stewart has requested a firm date and time for the promised meeting involving the joint participation of both the Maryland Province and Georgetown University. Not a single one of these communications has produced the desired result. In fact, several of Mr. Stewart’s communications have been simply ignored. As of the date of this petition, no firm date has yet been scheduled for the resumption of substantive discussions between the GU272 Descendants Association, the Maryland Province, and Georgetown University.

Stonewalling by the Central & Southern Province

The Central & Southern Province includes within its boundaries the American states of Missouri and Louisiana. As noted in Attachment B (*Historical Overview of the GU272 & Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland*), the Central & Southern Province has played its own role in the story of Jesuit slavery in America (both as a subsidiary part of the Maryland Province and later as a stand alone entity).

Specifically:

- Jesuit slaves were sent from Maryland to Missouri in the 1820s and 1830s, where they built the Jesuit seminary at Florissant and the Jesuit university in St. Louis;
- The Maryland slaves sent to Missouri were closely related (in some cases as brothers and sisters) to the members of the GU272.
- Just a few years after arriving in Missouri, the Maryland born slaves were sent on to Grand Coteau in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, where they built St. Charles College and the Academy of the Sacred Heart.
- In 1838, Louisiana became home to the GU272 members as well.

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- For the past 175 years (down into the present day), the Central & Southern Province has been home to thousands of direct descendants of Jesuit slaves (including the descendants of the GU272, and the descendants of Maryland slaves sent to Florissant, St. Louis, and Grand Coteau).

Since November 24, 2016 (i.e., a period of more than *five months*), a representative of the GU272 Descendants Association (Richard Cellini) has been actively seeking an appointment to meet with the Provincial for the Central & Southern Province, Father Ronald A. Mercier, SJ. As of the date of this petition, no such meeting has been scheduled.

Indeed, on multiple occasions since November 24, 2016, Father Mercier has expressly declined to meet or even speak by telephone with Mr. Cellini. Father Mercier's replies have included the following explanations and excuses:

- *January 31, 2017*: "I'm sorry but my schedule is hectic this year with the Congregation."
- *February 1, 2017*: "We're still in the stage of gathering information."
- *February 2, 2017*: "We are still early in the process of knowing how much information we can glean from the sources and what would be possible."
- *March 13, 2017*: "I want to know what we know – and what we don't –before we proceed in reaching out to other partners."
- *March 27, 2017*: "It is unfortunate that the initial emails came during and in the immediate wake of the General Congregation when the pressures of dealing with the backlog of governance were heavy. A threat to go over my head in an email did not set the conversation off on a good footing."

On April 16, 2017, Father Mercier held out the prospect of an initial telephone call with Mr. Cellini in the first half of May 2017. As of the date of this petition, even this introductory telephone call remains unscheduled.

Futility of Further Engagement with US Provinces Alone

The undersigned wish to acknowledge that, on April 17 18, 2017, the President of the Jesuit Conference of the United States, the heads of the US Jesuit provinces, and dozens of US Jesuits gathered at Georgetown University to publicly apologize for the sin of Jesuit slaveholding in America. In conjunction with this apology, approximately forty Jesuits celebrated a private mass with many of the living descendants of the GU272.

These steps are welcome and appropriate. However, they are not an acceptable substitute for substantive dialogues with the Maryland and Central Provincials about concrete proposals for reconciliation and restorative justice.

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In particular, we invite Your Reverence to consider that celebrating the Eucharist with the GU272 community is not an adequate solution because withholding the Eucharist has never been the problem. On Sunday, June 23, 1838, the Maryland Jesuits almost certainly celebrated mass with their slaves. And yet on Wednesday, June 27, 1838, the Maryland Jesuits loaded more than 50 members of the GU272 onto a brig bound for Louisiana. And the Maryland Jesuits no doubt celebrated mass with their remaining slaves once again just a few days later, on Sunday, June 30, 1838.

After enduring months of stonewalling and neglect by the American Jesuits, the undersigned have reluctantly concluded that any further attempt to engage the Maryland and Central & Southern Provinces alone (i.e., without the direct involvement of Rome) would be futile. We urge Your Reverence to recognize that the leaders of US provinces, by themselves, are not capable of resolving the great scandal that they themselves have created, and from which they themselves have benefitted and continue to benefit.

Pastoral Obligations of the Maryland Province

This petition is predicated upon the existence (and subsequent breach) of important ongoing *pastoral* obligations owed by the Maryland Jesuits to the GU272 community.

The Maryland Jesuits were entrusted with the pastoral care of the GU272 and their offspring, a community committed to them under the authority of the diocesan bishop. For decades prior to the 1838 sale, the Maryland Jesuits did in fact serve as pastors to the GU272, and baptized and married a great many of them.

This pastoral relationship was not (and could not have been) terminated by the 1838 sale. At no time has Canon law ever permitted pastors to terminate their relationship with parishioners by selling them into slavery in distant lands.

At all relevant times, the Maryland Jesuits were obligated, and continue to be obligated, to do the following things for the benefit of the GU272 and their offspring:

- Exercise the pastoral care of the community committed to them under the authority of the diocesan bishop. (Canon 519)
- Be outstanding in sound doctrine and integrity of morals and endowed with zeal for souls and other virtues, and also to possess those qualities which are required by universal or particular law to care for the parish. (Canon 521, §2)
- Make provision so that the word of God is proclaimed in its entirety to those living in the parish. (Canon 528, §1)

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- Take care that the lay members of the Christian faithful are instructed in the truths of the faith. (Canon 528, §1)
- Foster works through which the spirit of the gospel is promoted, even in what pertains to social justice. (Canon 528, §1)
- Have particular care for the Catholic education of children and youth. (Canon 528, §1)
- Make every effort, even with the collaboration of the Christian faithful, so that the message of the gospel comes also to those who have ceased the practice of their religion or do not profess the true faith. (Canon 528, §1)
- Strive to know the faithful entrusted to their care. (Canon 529, §1)
- Visit families, sharing especially in the cares, anxieties, and griefs of the faithful, strengthening them in the Lord. (Canon 529, §1)
- Act with generous love to help the sick, particularly those close to death, by refreshing them solicitously with the sacraments and commending their souls to God. (Canon 528, §1)
- Seek out the poor, the afflicted, the lonely, those exiled from their country, and similarly those weighed down by special difficulties. (Canon 529, §1)
- Work so that spouses and parents are supported in fulfilling their proper duties and to foster growth of Christian life in the family. (Canon 529, §1)
- Take care that their ecclesiastical community offers the Christian faithful the assistance by which the matrimonial state is preserved in a Christian spirit and advances in perfection. (Canon 1063)
- Offer help to those who are married, and faithfully preserve and protect the conjugal covenant. (Canon 1063, §4)

Special Obligations of the Maryland Province

In addition to the pastoral duties described above, the Maryland Jesuits have a special set of ongoing duties to the GU272 community. These obligations were imposed on the Maryland Jesuits by Father General Roothaan in a letter dated December 27, 1836, and include the following (translated here from the original Latin):

- In order to satisfy the gravest debt of conscience, every care should be taken that the slaves have the free exercise of the Catholic religion, the opportunity of practicing it, and the assistance of a priest.
- Husbands and wives must in no way be separated, nor should parents be separated from their children.

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- Those afflicted with old age or incurable illness must be provided for as justice and charity demand.
- The money raised from the sale absolutely must not be spent in making purchases, nor in the paying of debts, but it must be invested as capital which fructifies.

Later in 1836 (or perhaps early 1837), Father Francis Vespre SJ (the Procurator of the Maryland Province) added an additional twenty obligations to be observed with respect to the GU272 and their families. These additional duties included, among others, the following (translated here from the original Italian):

- Not only should the married couples that are both ours not be separated one from the other, but neither should parents and children be separated from each other insofar as possible, particularly in cases involving already elderly parents or children of tender age.
- Buyers should be advised that the primary condition of the contract is this: they promise not only to not impede their new servants from following the exercise of their religion, but also to give to them everything necessary to practice it particularly on feast days, to provide for the servants in case of infirmity, the assistance of the nearest catholic priest.
- Since the amount of the sale of the servants is coming from real capital, so it should remain completely intact in its type of capital, even different from cash.
- The cash proceeds of the said sale of the servants should never be reinvested in any of our establishments to pay their debts or other objectives, nor in new establishments, although of evident utility or necessity. (emphasis in original).

Your Reverence is invited to consider several important things that are self evident from Father Roothaan's December 27, 1836 letter:

1. The conditions were imposed by the Jesuit Curia upon the Maryland Province. Both entities have enjoyed a continuous existence, without interruption, from the date of Father Roothaan's letter into the present day.
2. The conditions were expressly imposed for the benefit of a specific group of persons (the GU272 and their offspring), a great many of whom have been identified by first name, last name, and year of birth. This community of people has also continued to exist, without interruption, from 1836 into the modern era.
3. The conditions create a set of obligations between the Maryland Jesuits and the GU272 community that stand separate and apart from the pre existing master/slave relationship.
4. The obligations are ongoing ones which, by their very purpose and nature, were intended to survive (and did in fact survive) the 1838 sale transaction.
5. The obligations have no expiration date.

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6. The obligations were imposed by the Father General himself, and can only be revoked or revised by his successors or superiors.
7. The conditions have never been revoked or revised, and remain in effect today.

Specific Breaches & Violations Committed by the Maryland Province

From 1838 to the present day, the Maryland Jesuits have completely and utterly neglected their duties and obligations to the GU272 community, causing untold and unmitigated harm to a community entrusted to their pastoral care. Specifically, and without limitation:

1. The Maryland Jesuits are in longstanding breach of their ongoing pastoral obligations to the GU272 and their descendants, imposed on them by canon law as priests charged with the care of a community committed to them under the authority of the diocesan bishop.
2. The Maryland Jesuits are in longstanding breach of their ongoing spiritual, economic, and social justice obligations to the GU272 and their descendants, imposed on them by order of Father General Roothaan in 1836.
3. These breaches have resulted in the destruction of entire GU272 families, the effects of which remain ongoing and unmitigated to the present day.
4. These breaches have caused ongoing and unmitigated spiritual harm to the descendants of the GU272, and have caused a great many individuals to become separated from the Roman Catholic faith.
5. These breaches have caused ongoing and unmitigated physical, economic, and social harm to the GU272 and their descendants, who since 1838 have received from the Maryland Jesuits none of the care that justice and charity demand.
6. These breaches have been widely known and discussed among the faithful for more than one year now, without the benefit of an adequate and proportionate response from either the Maryland Province or Georgetown University, causing a great and growing scandal in the Church.

We express to you grave concern that our rights as baptized Catholics and offspring of the GU272 have been violated by these acts and omissions of the Maryland Jesuits. These violated rights include (but are not limited to):

- Our right to be free of any kind of coercion in choosing a state of life. (Canon 219)
- Our right to be free of illegitimate harm to our good reputation. (Canon 220)
- Our right not to be punished except according to the norm of law. (Canon 221, §3).

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Relief Requested by Petitioners

In view of the foregoing, we petition you to exercise your authority as Superior General of the Society of Jesus to appoint at least one *Visitor cum potestate superioris* (i.e., a Visitor with the power of superior), and send him to the United States (including, but not limited to, the Maryland Province and the Central & Southern Province) for the purpose of investigating this matter further, and presenting you with his written conclusions and recommendations.

Specifically, we request that your appointed Visitor/s be given two broad but distinct mandates:

Mandate No. 1:

As noted in detail above, on December 27, 1836, Father General Jan Roothaan granted the Maryland Province approval to sell the GU272 to planters in Louisiana, subject to four carefully articulated conditions. In this connection, the Jesuit Visitor should be given two charges:

1. Conduct a separate and thorough investigation into each of the four Roothaan Conditions, and conclusively determine and document the degree to which these conditions were met by the Maryland Jesuits and the Louisiana planters in connection with the 1838 sale, as Father General Roothaan had plainly intended.
2. Investigate and document the physical, social, educational and economic harm and disadvantages that have resulted from the 1838 sale, continuing down into the present day.

Mandate No. 2:

Taking into account the facts gathered and documented during the completion of Mandate No. 1 above, the Jesuit Visitor should be instructed to organize and lead (or designate another to organize and lead) a "Society of Jesus Multi Lateral Advisory Group". This Advisory Group should be composed of: a maximum of four Jesuits (or selected representatives); four GU272 Descendants (or selected representatives); and four independent advocates drawn from the fields of human rights and social justice (to be jointly selected and appointed by the Jesuit and Descendant members of the Advisory Group). The Multi Lateral Advisory Group should be given three charges:

1. Research, evaluate, and determine how much investment forward should be made in the lives of those who, after 200 years, continue to be negatively impacted by the enduring and unmitigated vestiges of slavery. For contrast purposes, the Advisory Group should consider how exponentially Georgetown and the Society of Jesus has "fructified" since 1838. The question for all of Catholicism is: what is the moral and Christian thing to do?
2. Consider existing visions or design new visions, strategies and methods to effectively invest forward in pursuit of a Common Good within the human family in general, and in

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the educational aspirations and the family economic security of GU272 descendants in particular.

3. Submit written recommendations to the Father General on or before January 30, 2018.

In requesting the appointment of one or more Jesuit Visitors in connection with this matter, petitioners understand and acknowledge that Visitations of the sort requested may be regarded by some within the Society as a rare and infrequently used form of relief in the modern era. Nevertheless, petitioners consider this particular remedy to be appropriate in the current situation, and superior to potential alternatives, for at least the following reasons:

- Official Jesuit Visitations have been ordered in connection with the plight and fate of the GU272 community on at least three separate occasions in the past (i.e., in 1819 1820; in 1830 1833; and 1859 1863).
- Whilst the appointment of a Jesuit Visitor may be rare in the modern day, such an appointment can be no less rare and unusual than the circumstances giving rise to petitioners' request (i.e., a literally unprecedented opportunity for the Society of Jesus to reconcile itself with its historical practice of slaveholding, and achieve some measure of reunion with more than 10,000 direct descendants of its former slaves).
- If petitioners' request is granted, the office of Jesuit Visitor is likely to be vested in a member of the Society of Jesus whose roots and ties are located outside of the United States, and who is not a member of either the Maryland or Central & Southern Province.
- The likely modern day alternative to the appointment of a Jesuit Visitor (i.e., referral of this matter to Your Reverence's Regional Assistant for Canada and USA, Father Douglas W. Marcouiller) would by necessity place the requested investigations into the hands of a member (indeed, a former Provincial) of one of the Jesuit provinces involved in the original historical wrongs complained of in this petition.
- The appointment of a Jesuit Visitor is likely to be viewed by the overall GU272 descendant community as the remedy with the greatest legitimacy and potential efficacy.

Specific Instructions Requested by Petitioners

In addition to the general mandates described above, we respectfully request that the Jesuit Visitor be given the following specific powers and instructions:

Visit GU272 Descendants

- Travel to Louisiana and other places, and visit in person with GU272 descendants.
- Make earnest inquiry into their circumstances and experiences since 1838.

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- Receive accounts of their spiritual, pastoral, and material needs and desires today.

Inspect Financial Records

- Inspect all book and records relating to the temporalities presently owned by the Maryland Province and the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Clergymen, wherever situated.
- Examine all books and records relating to the Carroll Fund, and all other funds administered by the Maryland Province in connection with, or in atonement for, Jesuit slaveholding in Maryland.
- Publish a detailed and accurate accounting of the use of proceeds from the 1838 sale, including the names of all recipients and amounts received.
- Publish a detailed and accurate accounting of the investment and distribution of funds from the Carroll Fund and all similar funds, including the names of all recipients and amounts received.
- Publish a detailed and accurate accounting of the current assets and liabilities of the Maryland Province, the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Clergymen, and their affiliates.

Examine, Appoint & Confirm Personnel

- Receive an account of conscience from members of the Society, especially as relates to the present day obligations of the Society toward the GU272 descendants.
- Nominate consultors to the Superiors of the Maryland and Central & Southern Provinces.
- Appoint a suitable procurator for the Maryland temporalities.
- Restrict the power and authority of the Superior(s) in temporal matters as he judges fit.
- Remove the Superior(s) if necessary or advisable, and suggest replacement(s).

Consider & Implement Measures of Restorative Justice

- Work closely with members of the GU272 descendant community (including, without limitation, the Lead Organizers of the GU272 Foundation and the leadership of the GU272 Descendants Association) in connection with all aspects of the development, consideration, implementation, and oversight of any and all acts of reparation and restorative justice undertaken in response to this petition.
- Explore meaningful and workable proposals relating to reparations and restorative justice specifically directed toward the descendant community, specifically tailored to the historical facts, circumstances and extent of Jesuit slaveholding in Maryland (including, but not limited to, the 1838 sale of the GU272).

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- Consider, adopt & implement acts of reparation and restorative justice specifically directed to the descendant community that are appropriate and proportionate to the underlying evil and harm suffered by the descendant community.
- Take special care to recognize that, just as the underlying injury itself has extended over a period of more than 300 years, so too acts of reparation and restorative justice may require extended periods of time to implement, and may involve extended payments, burden sharing, and mutual protections designed to avert any possibility or suggestion of institutional impoverishment or bankruptcy.
- Distribute a just portion of the temporal assets of the Society of Jesus in the United States to a properly constituted charitable foundation dedicated to the pursuit of racial reconciliation and healing, to be jointly designed, staffed, managed and controlled by duly appointed representatives of the Society of Jesus, Georgetown University, and the GU272 Descendants Association.
- Enter into other agreements and partnerships for the benefit of GU272 descendants, through their representative associations and affiliated organizations.

Regulate & Reform Educational Institutions

- Appoint a suitable procurator, overseer or regent for Georgetown University.
- Create regulations for the governance of Georgetown University, and other educational institutions in the United States conducted by the Society of Jesus (including, but not limited to, institutions that benefitted directly from the Society's historical involvement in human trafficking and slavery).

Act as Justice, Charity & Equity Require

- Investigate and establish the truth of all relevant matters, historical and contemporary.
- Correct what needs to be corrected.
- Improve everything and neglect nothing that would promote a union of hearts.
- Prepare a *memoriale* commenting on the situation as he found it and leaving instructions for the future.

Replies & Requests for Additional Information

In connection with this matter, we respectfully request your most immediate attention, and the favor of an interim reply confirming your receipt of this petition.

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Please direct your replies (and any requests for additional information) to the following individual on our behalf:

Mr. Joseph M. Stewart



If it pleases Your Reverence, we are prepared to send one or more representatives to Rome to meet privately with you and your consultors as an interim step, for the purpose of discussing this matter in greater detail.

Conclusion & General Prayer for Relief

In conclusion, we earnestly beseech Your Reverence to remember, when weighing this petition, the unparalleled brutality of more than 300 years of Jesuit slaveholding in North America. And in particular, we ask you to keep uppermost in your mind the egregious and shocking circumstances of the 1838 sale by the Maryland Jesuits of 272 baptized men, women and children into further slavery in Louisiana.

The 1838 sale is stained with evidence of brutality that has shocked the conscience of religious men. Even in 1838, the sale of the GU272 was considered outrageous, sinful and immoral by the leadership and members of the Society of Jesus in both North America and Rome.

Since 1838, the sale has been the subject of a multitude of learned books, essays, and commentaries – many written by professed members of the Society of Jesus itself. In more than 175 years, not a single one of these commentators has ventured so much as a positive or exculpatory word about Jesuit slaveholding in Maryland or the 1838 sale. Nobody says it was right.

Your Reverence, the 1838 sale of the GU272 is universally recognized as a sinful act that has yet to be redeemed. When confronted with the shameful facts of the atrocious mistreatment of GU272 and their descendants by the Maryland Jesuits, members of the Society of Jesus throughout history have expressly acknowledged an obligation to help these poor souls. And yet to date, no one from the Society of Jesus has actually done so.

The Society of Jesus has already passed up two separate opportunities to make genuine reparation for their centuries of involvement in human trafficking in North America. The first time occurred in 1838, when the Maryland Jesuits considered and rejected the possibility of

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freeing their slaves. The second time occurred in 1840 52, when the Maryland Jesuits were repeatedly advised of the spiritual and physical privations suffered by their former servants in Louisiana, yet chose to do nothing in response.

God has heard the prayers of the Jesuits for a third chance to redeem themselves in this matter.

If the Holy Spirit leads you to it and your conscience will allow it, we invite you to immediately make a public declaration to the faithful that the Maryland Province and Georgetown University have no unfulfilled debts or obligations to the GU272 and their descendants.

In the alternative, we respectfully request Your Reverence to grant us the relief requested, and issue an order appointing one or more Jesuit Visitors to the United States in connection with the matters described above, as soon as possible but not later than October 31, 2017.

We are, respectfully, your brothers and sisters in Christ,

Joseph M. Stewart

[Redacted]

Lead Organizer, GU272 Foundation

[Redacted]

Cheryllyn M. Branche

[Redacted]

Lead Organizer, GU272 Foundation

[Redacted]

Karran Harper Royal

[Redacted]

Lead Organizer, GU272 Foundation

[Redacted]

Richard J. Cellini

[Redacted]

Lead Organizer, GU272 Foundation

[Redacted]

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Attachment B:

Historical Overview of the GU272 & Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland.

Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland (1634-1864)

The Maryland Mission (and later Maryland Province) of the Society of Jesus (together the “Maryland Province”) engaged in the practice of large scale slaveholding on an uninterrupted basis from at least 1717 to at least 1838. See T. Murphy, SJ, *Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland: 1717 1838* (Routledge 2001). Jesuit slaveholding in Maryland may have started as early as the 1630s. Without question, the practice continued until 1864. It is possible that involuntary servitude continued in the Maryland Province in some form or fashion until the earliest years of the 20th Century.

Virtually all of the slaves owned by the Maryland Jesuits were baptized as Roman Catholics. Many people enslaved by the Jesuits worshipped on a regular basis in Jesuit churches and chapels alongside their Jesuit masters. Throughout history, these enslaved individuals were known as “the family” by the Maryland Jesuits themselves.

All told, the Maryland Jesuits owned approximately 1,000 enslaved people between 1634 and 1864. Collectively, these individuals provided the forced, uncompensated labor necessary to sustain five Jesuit temporalities located in southeastern Maryland near the Chesapeake Bay:

- St Inigoes Plantation (founded in St. Mary’s County, circa 1637).
- Newtown Manor (founded in St. Mary’s County, circa 1661).
- Bohemia Manor (founded in Cecil County, circa 1704).
- White Marsh Plantation (founded in Prince George’s County, circa 1728).
- St. Thomas Manor (founded in Charles County, circa 1741).

These five slave plantations generated the funds necessary to build, operate and sustain Georgetown College (known today as Georgetown University). In addition, they provided financial support for a great many other Jesuit works in this period.

Jesuit slaveholding in North America was not limited to the Chesapeake Bay region of Maryland.

In the 1820s or early 1830s, the Maryland Province sent enslaved people to Missouri to help establish Jesuit missions there (including the Jesuit Seminary at Florissant, founded in 1823; and St. Louis University, placed under the care of the Jesuits in 1827). This expansion in human trafficking by the Maryland Jesuits was documented in a March 19, 1823 concordat between Rev. Louis William DuBourg (who was Bishop of New Orleans at the time); and Rev. Charles Neale, SJ, the Superior of the Society of Jesus in the United States (i.e., the Maryland Mission).

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In the early 1830s, Jesuit slaveholding in America expanded yet again. The Missouri Jesuits sent some of their Maryland born slaves to Grand Coteau (St. Landry Parish), Louisiana, to help found St. Charles College. In addition, the Jesuits of St. Charles College regularly provided slaves to the sisters of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus located at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau (founded in 1821, and still in operation today).

Today, both Missouri and Louisiana are part of the USA Central & Southern Province of the Society of Jesus (the “Central & Southern Province”).

Active Involvement of the Jesuit Curia (1820-1836)

Jesuit slaveholding in Maryland was not a renegade practice, hidden from the supervision and oversight of the Jesuit Curia in Rome. Jesuit slaveholding in America was closely governed and regulated by the Jesuit Curia in Rome.

From 1820 1838, the Jesuit Curia was actively involved in determining whether, when, and under what circumstances enslaved persons owned by the Maryland Jesuits could and would be sold. During this period, the Maryland temporalities and the Jesuit slaves were the subject of two official Jesuit Visitations initiated by the Jesuit Curia in Rome:

- 1819 1820, under the generalship of Father Tadeusz Brzozowski, SJ.
- 1830 33, under the generalship of Father Jan Roothaan, SJ.

In both instances, Rev. Peter Kenney SJ of Dublin, Ireland, was appointed to serve as Visitor. On the second occasion, Father Kenney was vested with the powers of *Visitor cum potestate superioris*.

In 1835, the First Congregation of the Maryland Province conducted a heated debate on the future of the Maryland temporalities and slaves. At least one postulatum on the subject was forwarded to Rome: the Maryland Jesuits requested permission to sell their slaves and turn the Maryland temporalities over to experienced farmers. Upon receiving this request, Father General Jan Roothaan requested time to deliberate on the matter.

Still deliberating on the matter in 1836, Father Roothaan warned the Maryland Provincial that “pereant potius omnia emolumenta temporalia, quam ut per nos animae pereant!” (i.e., “it would be better to suffer financial disaster than suffer the loss of our souls with the sale of the slaves!”). However, near the very end of 1836, after much deliberation and some additional pressure from the Maryland Province, Father General Roothaan finally granted permission for the sale of Maryland slaves.

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Father General Roothaan's Conditions (1836-1837)

Father General Roothaan's response to the postulatum of the First Congregation of the Maryland Province was set forth in a letter addressed to the Maryland Provincial, Father William McSherry SJ, and dated December 27, 1836. Permission to sell the Maryland slaves was granted subject to certain conditions that included the following (translated here from the original Latin):

- In order to satisfy the gravest debt of conscience, every care should be taken that the slaves have the free exercise of the Catholic religion, the opportunity of practicing it, and the assistance of a priest.
- Husbands and wives must in no way be separated, nor should parents be separated from their children.
- Those who cannot be sold or transported on account of old age or incurable illness must be provided for as justice and charity demand.
- The money raised from the sale absolutely must not be spent in making purchases, nor in the paying of debts, but must be invested as capital which fructifies.

Later in 1836 (or perhaps early 1837), Father Francis Vespre SJ (the Procurator of the Maryland Province) added an additional twenty safeguards to be observed in the sale of the GU272. These additional safeguards included, among others, the following (translated here from the original Italian):

- Not only should the married couples that are both ours not be separated one from the other, but neither should parents and children be separated from each other insofar as it will be possible, particularly in cases involving already elderly parents or children of tender age.
- Buyers should be advised that the primary condition of the contract is this: they promise not only to not impede their new servants from following the exercise of their religion, but also to give to them everything necessary to practice it particularly on feast days, to provide for the said servants in case of infirmity, the assistance of the nearest catholic priest.
- Since the amount of the sale of the servants is coming from real capital, so it should remain completely intact in its type of capital, even different from cash.
- The cash proceeds of the said sale of the servants should never be reinvested in any of our establishments to pay their debts or other objectives, nor in new establishments, although of evident utility or necessity. (emphasis in original).

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Mass Sale of the GU272 to Louisiana (1838)

On June 19, 1838, the Rev. Thomas Mulledy SJ (Superior of the Maryland Province) entered into a written agreement for the sale of 272 enslaved men, women, and children to Dr. Jesse Beatty and Mr. Henry Johnson of Louisiana. Here's some of what we know about the 272 people sold by the Maryland Jesuits that day:

- Half of the people sold were children under the age of 18
- The youngest was just 6 months old (William)
- The oldest was 80 years old (Daniel)
- The average age among adults was 39
- The average age among children was 8
- The most common name amongst women was "Mary"
- The most common name amongst men was "James"
- Betsey was married to Sam
- Robert and Bill were idiots
- Len was sickly
- Stephen was lame

An authentic photograph of one of the 272 Jesuits slaves was recently discovered in the archives of a university located in southern Louisiana:



This photograph (taken in southern Louisiana in 1906) depicts Mr. Frank Campbell. Mr. Campbell was born and baptized in approximately 1814, at St. Inigoes Plantation in St. Mary's County, Maryland. He was approximately 24 years old when he and several members of his family were sold by the Maryland Jesuits.

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All 272 Jesuit slaves were marked for sale and transportation to sugar plantations in southern Louisiana. Over the course of six months and multiple voyages, the GU272 were transported from Maryland to the following locations in Louisiana:

- Ascension Plantation, near Donaldsonville, in Ascension Parish
- West Oak Plantation, near Maringouin, in Iberville Parish
- Batey & Thibodaux Plantation, near Houma, in Terrebonne Parish

In the modern era, the first two places are under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. The last is part of the Diocese of Houma Thibodaux. All three communities are presently part of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, and within the geographical boundaries of the Central & Southern Province of the Society of Jesus.

As a matter of historical fact, each and every one of the Roothaan conditions was broken either at the time of the 1838 sale, or in its immediate aftermath. And since 1838, neither the Maryland Province nor Georgetown University has ever done anything of substance to bring themselves into compliance with the Roothaan Conditions. Specifically, and without limitation:

- No ministry has ever been undertaken by the Society of Jesus to assist the members of the GU272 community in the exercise of their Catholic religion, or to repair the spiritual damage and alienation occasioned by the breaches of 1838.
- No effort has been made to strengthen and preserve the families of the GU272, or to locate, identify and reunite families divided and destroyed by the breaches of 1838.
- No provisions have ever been made for members of the GU272 community afflicted by old age or incurable illness, as justice and charity demand.
- The proceeds of the 1838 sale have never been properly accounted for, much less invested as “capital which fructifies.”

Ongoing Ownership of the GU272 by the Maryland Jesuits (1839-1862)

The relationship between the Maryland Province and the GU272 did not terminate with the 1838 sale transaction. To the contrary, the Maryland Jesuits continued to own the GU272 for the next twenty five years.

At all times between 1838 and 1862, the Maryland Jesuits retained the legal right to repossess, reclaim, and re sell the GU272 and “their issue and increase,” until such time as the purchasers made full payment of the \$115,000 purchase price demanded by the Maryland Province in 1838. This right was a condition of sale specified in the 19 June 1838 Purchase Agreement, signed by all parties. As both a legal and factual matter, the Maryland Jesuits continued to own the GU272 and their offspring until such time as the purchasers were able to pay the full \$115,000.

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Shortly after the 1838 sale, mortgage papers were recorded in both Louisiana and Maryland, listing members of the GU272 by name, gender, and age; and granting Father Thomas Mulledy SJ the right to reclaim them in the event of non payment of the purchase price. These mortgages were renewed and extended in a subsequent legal agreement made between Father Mulledy and Governor Henry Johnson on February 17, 1844, in which the Maryland slaves were once again listed by name, gender, and age.

These ongoing ownership rights were by no means theoretical or *pro forma*. The slave mortgages were expressly mentioned in no less than 21 different documents and letters exchanged between Maryland and Louisiana during the period 1838-1859. Father Thomas Mulledy himself understood and exercised his ongoing ownership rights in the enslaved people transferred from Maryland to Louisiana. In a March 31, 1844 letter written from the College of the Holy Cross, Father Mulledy reminded Governor Johnson in Louisiana: “[W]ith respect to the disposal of the negroes whom you purchased from me, ... those negroes were mortgaged to me in Maryland and the mortgage was duly recorded in Louisiana and would not therefore be properly disposed of by you.” (emphasis supplied)

In actual fact, the full purchase price was not paid to the Maryland Jesuits until May 20, 1862, when the Maryland Province received payment of a final note of \$11,918 plus \$980 in interest. The Maryland Jesuits continued to own the GU272 until the day that final payment was made, and the slave mortgages were released.

Ongoing Pastoral Obligations of the Maryland Jesuits to the GU272 (1839-1852)

Senior members of the Maryland Province acknowledged and affirmed their continuing spiritual and pastoral obligations to the GU272 community, after the 1838 sale.

In 1838, Father Fidele de Grivel, SJ (a European Jesuit assigned to Maryland in the 1830s) wrote a letter to Mr. Charles C. Lancaster SJ (Assistant Procurator of the Maryland Province). In this letter, Father Grivel assessed the likelihood that the GU272 and their families would be permitted to practice their religion in Louisiana.

On May 30, 1840, Father Grivel revisited this subject, in another letter addressed to Mr. Lancaster. In this second letter, Father Grivel reported that the Jesuit slaves sold to Henry Johnson in Ascension Parish were 12 miles distant from any church, and he expressed hope that a small chapel might be built for the slaves on the slaves on Governor Johnson’s plantation.

In February 1848, Rev. James Oliver Van de Velde SJ (a professed member of the Maryland Province) visited Governor Johnson’s plantation in Ascension Parish on unrelated business, and unexpectedly found himself in the presence of “a great number of the colored people that once

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belonged to the Province of Maryland” (i.e., the same people who had been the subject of Father Grivel’s letters to CC Lancaster in 1838 and 1840). Upon meeting these people, Father Van de Velde promptly made enquiry into their condition and circumstances.

In a letter to Father Thomas Mulledy dated March 28, 1848, Father Van de Velde wrote (emphasis in original):

“[T]hey have scarcely any chance to attend to their religious duties, and the children, several of them not yet baptized, grow up without any religious instruction whatever [The] plantation is about 10 miles from Donaldsonville, where there is a Catholic Church attended by the Lazarists, and to reach it, they have to cross the Bayou Lafourche. Some of the stoutest can walk it, and do so sometimes, but very seldom, as the distance is so great, and their services are generally wanted at home. The women & children have a cart at their disposal, but they scarcely ever use it; and the cart, after all, could accommodate but a very small number. Then all they can do is to hear Mass, the sermon being always in French, of which they do not understand. Some of the women told me weeping that they had not been to Church for more than a year, and these women appeared strong and healthy, but they either have to attend to their children, or to household work, and cannot absent themselves so long. Hence you may judge how it fares with the aged, the infirm, the children, etc.

....

It seems that one of the conditions of the contract Your Reverence made with Mr. Johnson was that they should have a chapel and that they should be permitted to attend to their religious duties. The above account must convince Your Reverence that this condition is not complied with. Besides, at least one half, probably two thirds of the colored people that have come to Louisiana from the Maryland Province live on two other plantations, far distant from any church – one on Bayou [Terrebonne], the other on Bayou [Maringouin], where they never see a Catholic Priest.

....

To tell you the truth, I am of opinion that the Province of Maryland is in conscience bound to ... provide for the salvation of those good people who are now utterly neglected, and whose children grow up without any notion of Religion. Justice as well as Charity require that their former masters should step in and aid other well disposed persons to procure them the means of salvation.

I therefore entreat Your Reverence to lay the subject before the Provincial and his consultors, and to lose no time in providing for those poor abandoned people, who, though neglected, are still firmly attached to their Religion.”

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On November 27, 1848, Father Van de Velde raised this topic a second time, this time with Father Ignatius Brocard SJ, the Maryland Provincial (emphasis supplied):

“I take the liberty of writing a word to you again in order to plead the cause of the poor negroes, said to belong to your Province, and who are now found destitute of nearly all religious succor in Louisiana.

I may be mistaken, but it appears to me that the Province of Maryland is obligated by conscience to procure them succor and to make some sacrifices on this matter. The text of the Holy Writing, “Qui suorum, maxime domesticorum curam non agit &c” comes to my mind continually when I think of these poor people, particularly the children, who, bit by bit, lose religion. It is an extreme case. If justice does not demand it (although I am of the opinion that it demands it in this case), at least security asks it.”

....

All that is asked is that the Province of Maryland contribute \$1,000 [for the construction of a chapel in Ascension Parish], the neighbors will contribute the rest; and what is that \$1,000 for the province that has the income from so many of its farms, and which has already received one so large for these poor exiles. The Good Lord will compensate for it; will return it with interest, and who knows if the refusal of coming to their aid will not attract misfortune on the Province. I am myself fully uneasy, and if I seem tiresome to you, I am sure that you will pardon me for it, since it is for the good of these poor abandoned children that I importune you.”

If Father Van de Velde received any kind of response from either Father Mulledy or Father Brocard, no record of it exists. Nevertheless, the spiritual well being of the Maryland slaves remained a topic of some interest to the Jesuit leadership in Maryland for several more years.

On April 24, 1852 (i.e., almost fourteen years after the 1838 sale), Charles Lancaster SJ (still Assistant Procurator of the Maryland Province) dispatched a letter to Louisiana, in which he wrote: “We are much gratified to learn that it is your intention to carry out Gov. J[ohnson]’s engagements by erecting a chapel for your servants.” Sadly, there is no evidence that such a chapel was ever in fact built.

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Post-Sale Involvement of the Jesuit Curia (1838-1863)

Between 1838 and 1863, the Jesuit Curia in Rome remained actively involved in matters relating to the GU272 as well.

In the immediate aftermath of the 1838 sale, Father General Roothaan sought either to remove Father Thomas Mulledy, dismiss him, or force him to resign as provincial. Father Mulledy travelled to Rome to defend himself, and did not return from Europe for three years. See E.F. Beckett, SJ, "Listening to Our History," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, pp. 148 at 41 (November 1996). See also T. Murphy, SJ, *Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland: 1717-1838* at p. 204 (Routledge 2001).

On March 4, 1839, Father General Roothaan addressed a letter to the Maryland Provincial, conveying his displeasure that the Province had failed to comply with the sale conditions established by the Jesuit Curia in December 1836. The Father General wrote in part (translated here from the original Latin): "I am pained that part of the capital that was raised from the sale has been alienated; for only the income ought to have been spent, never the capital."

In 1843, Father General Roothaan sent another letter to the Maryland Provincial, enquiring about the proceeds resulting from the 1838 sale. He wrote: "Your Reverence must remember that the money received from the sale of negroes could not be spent for various uses, but had to be preserved as an investment. Please tell me whether that has been done."

As late as 1851, Father General Roothaan again asked the Maryland Provincial about the "negro fund." And the Maryland Provincial was expressly told that he could not spend it.

According to Father Joseph Zwinge SJ (Procurator of the Maryland Province from 1904-1921), the Maryland Provincial sent answers to Rome in both 1843 and 1851. However, the substance of these answers is not presently known to anyone outside of Rome. See J. Zwinge, *Woodstock Letters*, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp. 275-291 at p. 285 (1912).

Rome's interest in the Maryland Province's "negro fund" survived Father General Roothaan's death in 1853.

In 1859 or 1860, Father General Pieter Jan Beckx, SJ, sent yet a third Jesuit Visitor to the United States (Father Felix Sopranis, SJ) to investigate and resolve certain matters relating to the Maryland Province's ownership of the GU272, and the capital resulting from the 1838 sale. According to Father Zwinge, Father Sopranis determined that Georgetown College owed the Maryland Province \$14,000 from the 1838 sale, and ordered the sum to be repaid. This decision is memorialized in at least two letters written by Father Sopranis: one dated March 8, 1863, and addressed to Father John Early, SJ, Rector of Georgetown College; and the other one dated March

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9, 1863, and addressed to Father Angelo M. Paresce, SJ, the Jesuit Provincial for Maryland.

After 1863, the GU272 and their families simply disappear from the publicly available records of the Society of Jesus, with just one notable exception. Between 1910 and 1914, Father Zwinge published a number of historical essays in *Woodstock Letters*, at least three of which discuss the slaves owned and later sold by the Maryland Jesuits.

In 1912, Father Zwinge wrote: “It might be interesting to know what became of our negroes in Louisiana.” See J. Zwinge, *Woodstock Letters*, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp. 275–291 at p. 285 (1912). Even so, more than 100 years (i.e. 1912–2016) would pass before anyone from Georgetown University and the Maryland Province would discover the truth about what became of their former slaves in Louisiana.

“The Secret Apology” of the Maryland Province (1963-2015)

Between 1912 and 1962, there is no evidence whatsoever that the GU272 and their families received any additional thought or consideration from Georgetown University, the Maryland Jesuits, or the Jesuit Curia in Rome. However, an important change occurred in 1963 – exactly one hundred years after the Visitation of Father Felix Sopranis to the Maryland Province.

In 1963, the Maryland Province sold a portion of its property in White Marsh, Maryland – the Jesuit plantation in Prince George’s County, Maryland, that had been the birthplace of a great many of the enslaved persons sold to Louisiana in 1838. According to Father Sean Toole SJ, the Maryland Province decided to use the proceeds of the 1963 real estate sale “to offer private and unrecognized restitution for its history of slaveholding.” See S. Toole, SJ, *Institutional Peculiarity: Jesuit Slave Trading in Maryland*, pp 1–102 at p. 78, unpublished master’s thesis submitted to the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University (May 2015).

And so came into existence “the Secret Apology”: a fund (called the “Carroll Fund”) established by the Maryland Province to support the education of low income, predominantly African American, students in Jesuit schools. According to Father Toole:

“The endowment, christened the Carroll Fund after Archbishop John Carroll, has taken different forms over the years. As recently as 2004, the Carroll Fund benefited 22 different organizations, among them an institution in the Maryland Province mission territory of Jamshedpur, India. In 2005, a new funding formula benefited the province’s high schools, which at that time were all primarily white institutions. Today, the fund provides annual lump sum payouts (\$27,500 in Fiscal Year 2014) to each of the province’s ten secondary and pre secondary schools. (Five of these institutions primarily serve students of color.) All of the schools pledge to use the funds in support of students in need, although monies have been used for a broad array of purposes over

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the years. Among these ten institutions is Georgetown Preparatory School, which in 1838 was still unified with Georgetown College. This means that the school continues to reap annual benefits from the very instance of slave trading which ensured its financial footing nearly two centuries ago.”

See Toole, *Institutional Peculiarity* at pp. 78 79.

According to Father Toole, the “Secret Apology” was problematic and deficient from its inception, in a number of important respects:

“The money remains exclusively at institutions operated by the Maryland Province, which represents a decided conflict of interest. It would seem fairer to direct the money to residents in Louisiana, the destination of the people on whose backs, literally, the money was earned. Because sixty percent of the recipient schools only enroll boys, female students are disproportionately excluded. More significantly, true freedom to spend this money does not exist. The usage is limited and determined by Jesuits. Any students or families who receive funding are required to use this money for tuition purposes. They are not made aware of the funding source, and neither do the schools understand from where these donations originated. These monies typically represent the majority of the funding provided by the province to each school. The scholarship fund cannot be considered truthful, reparative atonement if it allows the Jesuits to be thanked as generous donors, as is presently the case. This usage also neglects to consider that scholarship recipients, by mere virtue of their race and class, offer a tremendous asset to their Jesuit schools of predominantly white students, which seek to benefit from and publicize their diversity.”

See Toole, *Institutional Peculiarity* at pp. 79 80.

It is unknown how much money was placed in the Carroll Fund at its inception, and how much (if anything) was added to it over the years by the Maryland Province and other donors. It is equally unknown how much has been disbursed by the Carroll Fund over the years to its intended recipients. However, in May 2015, the Carroll Fund reportedly had assets valued at approximately \$10 million. These funds were reportedly used to provide annual lump sum payments to the ten secondary and pre secondary Jesuit schools in the Maryland Province. See Toole, *Institutional Peculiarity* at pp. 79 81.

The Carroll Fund was liquidated in mid 2016. The Maryland Province decided to divide the Carroll Fund equally among the ten secondary and pre secondary schools it sponsors, sending each institution a check for \$1 million. See Prep News, *Annual Report 2015 2016* at p. 39 (Scranton Preparatory School, Scranton, PA, October 2016). Upon information and belief, the checks were delivered with little or no guidance on the manner in which the funds were to be applied. Also

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upon information and belief, one of the recipients was Georgetown Preparatory School in Washington, DC.

The GU272 Community Rediscovered (2015-16)

In September 2015, the President of Georgetown University assembled a Working Group on Slavery, Memory & Reconciliation (the “GU Working Group”). The GU Working Group’s membership included a total of sixteen members. Three of the members of the GU Working Group were members of the Society of Jesus, but they did not serve as official representatives of the Society. One of these three (Father David Collins, SJ, Associate Professor of History at Georgetown University) served as Chairman of the GU Working Group.

The GU Working Group was not chartered by the Maryland Province, nor did it speak for the Maryland Province. The GU Working Group contained no officially designated representatives of the Maryland Province, nor did it address or consider the responsibilities and obligations of the Maryland Province.

At its inception, the GU Working Group was given three specific charges by the President of Georgetown University:

- Make recommendations on how best to acknowledge and recognize the University’s historical relationship to the institution of slavery.
- Examine and interpret the history of certain sites on the campus.
- Convene events and opportunities for dialogue on these issues.

All three of these charges are Georgetown centric. None relates to the ongoing material and spiritual obligations owed by Georgetown University and the Maryland Province to the GU272 and their offspring. Indeed, the charges do not even acknowledge the potential existence of descendants of the GU272, living or dead.

On November 16, 2015, a senior member of the GU Working Group was asked in writing to comment on the possibility of reparations and other forms of restorative justice for the descendants of the GU272. In response, the official replied (emphasis supplied):

“[T] the problem with making some sort of reparation to the descendants of the slaves sold south is that, as far as we can tell, all of them quickly succumbed to fever in the malodorous swamp world of Louisiana. I had students do a research project a couple of years back to see if we could locate their descendants. The best available evidence suggests that, used to the more temperate climate of Maryland, and the kind ish oversight of the somewhat feckless Jesuits, almost all of them immediately succumbed



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to the hostile climate and the harsh labor conditions into which they were so suddenly and cruelly submitted.”

The Georgetown Memory Project (the “GMP”) was founded on November 21, 2015 by friends, allies and alumni of Georgetown University, aligned with the GU272 and their descendants. The GMP’s purpose is to locate and identify the 272 enslaved individuals sold to Louisiana in 1838, and trace their descendants. The GMP receives no funding or assistance of any kind whatsoever from Georgetown University or the Maryland Province.

On April 17, 2016, *The New York Times* published a front page article entitled: “272 Slaves Were Sold to Save Georgetown. What Does It Owe Their Descendants?” Since the publication of this article, the GMP has located and identified 212 of the 272 individuals sold by the Maryland Jesuits to Louisiana. In addition, it has found 4,202 of their direct descendants (living and deceased).

The Georgetown Memory Project believes that, in time, it will identify and locate virtually all of the 272 enslaved people sold to Louisiana by the Maryland Jesuits in 1838. And it estimates that it will locate 12,000 15,000 of their direct descendants.

At least 1,500 direct descendants of the GU272 are alive today. The great majority of them live in southern Louisiana, in many cases just miles from the sugar plantations to which their ancestors were sold in 1838. A great many GU272 descendants remain devoutly Roman Catholic, and raise their children in the Catholic faith.

In August 2016, the GU272 Descendants Association was formed. This Association is the largest group of individuals directly descended from the GU272, and presently has more than 800 members.

The Association’s mission is to:

- Support the goals, objectives and aspirations of all descendants of the 272 enslaved people;
- Research, identify, locate and re unite descendants of the GU272 whose heritage and roots were disrupted by the sale of their ancestors and the lingering and persistent impact of the institution of slavery in America; and
- Represent the same interests of all other descendants of people enslaved before and after 1838 by the Maryland Province.

The GU272 Descendants Association serves as an instrument and voice for pursuing and addressing the common and shared interests of all descendants. For more information about the GU272 Descendants Association, please visit www.gu272.net.



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