

■ Case Studies: Ignatian Leaders in Education

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Ignatian leadership is not a theory — it is lived daily in classrooms, schools, and communities. These case studies highlight how educators inspired by Ignatian spirituality embody discernment, service, and the magis in their leadership.

■ Case Study 1: Leading with Compassion — The Principal as Shepherd

At a Jesuit secondary school in Lusaka, the principal faced a crisis of rising dropout rates due to poverty. Instead of adopting a punitive or purely administrative approach, she initiated home visits to families, mobilised alumni for scholarships, and launched a food support programme at the school.

Her leadership flowed from the Ignatian value of *cura personalis* (care for the whole person). She discerned not just the academic needs but the full dignity of her students. Today, the school is known as much for its academic strength as for its solidarity with the poor.

■ Case Study 2: Discernment in a University — Leading through Conflict

At a Catholic university in Nairobi, faculty tensions grew around curriculum reform. Rather than pushing through decisions by authority, the dean adopted an Ignatian discernment process.

- He invited faculty to a day of reflection before decision-making.
- He used consolation and desolation language to explore not only academic but spiritual movements in the debate.
- In the end, the faculty arrived at a more holistic curriculum — one that balanced academic excellence with formation in values and leadership.

This approach transformed a conflict into a moment of mission renewal.

■ Case Study 3: Magis in Rural Education — Doing More for the Marginalised

In rural Malawi, a headmaster of a Jesuit-run school faced the challenge of overcrowded classrooms. Instead of resigning to limited resources, he formed partnerships with NGOs and local churches, creating a community classroom initiative.

- Volunteers offered space in parish halls.
- Retired teachers mentored younger ones.
- Parents helped with school feeding.

The initiative embodied the Ignatian spirit of the magis — striving for the “greater good” even in scarcity.

■ Lessons for Leaders in Education

- Cura Personalis: Leadership means caring for people's whole reality.
- Discernment: Decisions are not only rational, but spiritual.
- Magis: Always seek the greater good, even with few resources.
- Community: Leadership is shared, never solitary.

■ Closing Thought

Ignatian leadership in education flourishes when it is rooted in discernment, guided by compassion, and oriented toward service. These stories remind us that leadership is not about control or prestige, but about helping others to grow in dignity, faith, and hope.