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BOOK REVIEW

## *Come To Believe,* by Stephen N. Katsouros, S.J.

ORBIS PRESS, 2017 181 PAGES

Reviewed by Edward W. Schmidt, S.J.

**Arrupe College** of Loyola University Chicago opened its doors for classes on August 17, 2015. Its initial student body of 159 young people had already completed a three-week Summer Enrichment Program to help get them ready for college work. The students were of various ethnic backgrounds, but common to all of them was that they would probably not qualify for and certainly could not afford a traditional Jesuit liberal arts education.

*Come to Believe* is the story of how Arrupe College came into being and its first year, told by its founding dean Fr. Stephen N. Katsouros, S.J. But it is far more than a simple account of dates and structures. It is a story of mission, a story of devotion, a story of faith.

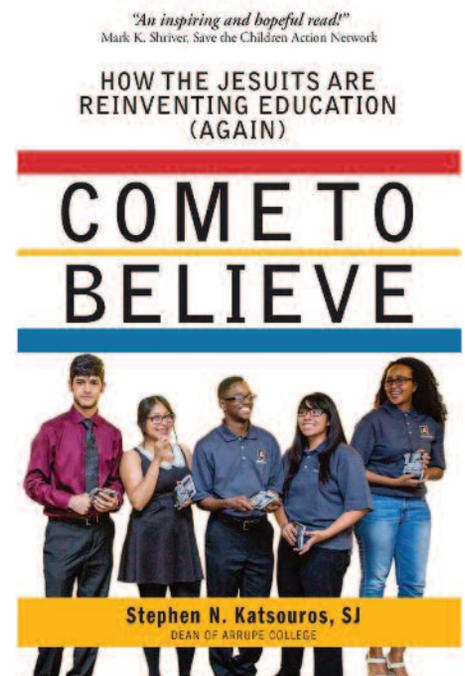
The college was designed as a two-year college leading to an associate's degree. So far, that describes a standard community college. But the mission of Arrupe College goes far beyond that basic description. The students come from tough areas of Chicago and from often challenging backgrounds. They arrive with great energy and good will but without a family history of much education, let alone higher education.

These are students who could hardly have imagined going to college, and suddenly the opportunity is theirs.

Father Katsouros sees Arrupe College as a new step in a development in Jesuit education that began in 1970 with the Nativity Mission and Center in Manhattan; this began providing elementary education to at-risk young people. Then in 1996 came the first Cristo Rey school in Chicago for secondary education. Arrupe College now opens up opportunities in higher education.

The spark that started the school was an address by Jesuit Superior General Adolfo Nicolás in Chicago in 2013 that challenged the U.S. Jesuit higher education leaders. He praised and endorsed the work in higher education in general but was concerned about how to include those students who could not afford Jesuit higher education. This started Loyola Chicago's president, Fr. Michael Garanzini, S.J., thinking. He brought Father Katsouros on board in 2014, and Arrupe opened its doors in 2015.

That may sound straightforward, but there were many meetings, tough decisions, persuasions



– just plain hard work – along the way. Father Katsouros built up an impressive staff and an impressive board. It worked.

*Come to Believe* is, as stated above, a story of mission. Schools generally have a sense of mission, of course, but here that mission is very public, very explicit. It wants to make radical changes in the direction of young lives. It works hard to get its graduates into four-year colleges or into the job market. Its work does not end after two years.

The place of faith, of prayer, of the spiritual abounds in the book. The odds that the students face in daily life and the obstacles that the faculty and staff face in helping the students confront those odds are immense. They include gangs and shootings in the neighborhoods, loss of Illinois State grants, students being thrown out of their homes. Many

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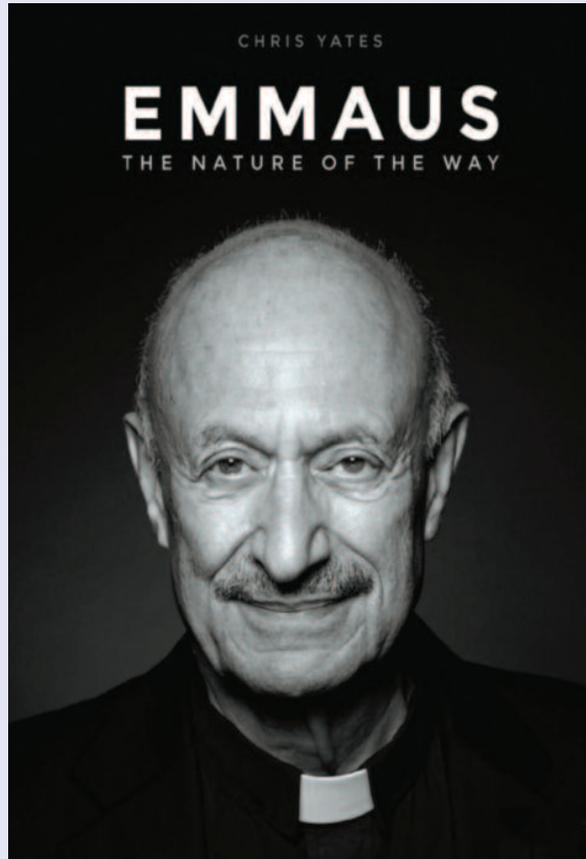
Book Notice

Emmaus: The Nature of the Way is a portrait of faith. It represents the dream, the talent, and the hard work of its creator, Chris Yates, a 2016 graduate of Loyola Marymount University. It portrays 22 Jesuits who are part of that university.

During his college years Chris had a lot of contact with Jesuits there, but he knew that many of his fellow students did not. So he wanted to make the Jesuits better known.

With the support of the Jesuit community rector, Fr. Alan F. Deck, S.J., Chris sent surveys to the Jesuits and began to take formal and informal portraits of them. He put together a team that saw this vast project through to a stunning product that was published last May. Chris, meanwhile, after graduating from LMU, worked for a year as a volunteer for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Chris structured his portraits around the gospel story of Jesus meeting two disciples late on Easter afternoon as they made their way from



Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus.

After a title line reflecting the gospel account (for example "The Road" or "Was It Not Necessary That the Messiah Must Suffer?"), he gives a couple of autobiographical sketches taken from the surveys the Jesuits

submitted and then presents a formal portrait of those who provided these sketches. After this a series of less formal portraits of these men appears, showing them gardening, cooking, playing drums, working on a computer, just relaxing.

The photography is stunning, and the whole book is a work of art. It is also clearly a labor of love.

Chris graduated from LMU with a major in screenwriting and a minor in archaeology. During his time in college, "he understood for the first time that his passion for his faith and his creativity could go hand in hand," as he explains towards the end of the book. After his volunteer year in Chicago, he returns to Los Angeles to work as "a professional photographer and creator to represent those who are on the margins."

(Conversations is planning to have a fuller article by Chris in a future issue. Check the book out at: www.natureoftheway.org )

are undocumented. How do faculty support students who begin to fail? Everyone at Arrupe College has to believe in the students, in the staff, in the future, in the mission. The students too teach the teachers a lot about life in the struggles they face.

All of Jesuit higher education

is filled with people who believe, who work hard, who achieve the mission. This is in no way unique to Arrupe College. All the schools built on founders' hopes and dreams. But at Arrupe the stakes are high and alternatives few for these very fortunate students. Arrupe College has already made a

difference and is a worthy addition to higher education in the Jesuit tradition. Father Katsouros and his collaborators in mission have made a magnificent start. Come to Believe is a powerful testimony to what Jesuit education can achieve.