


COMMON  
THEMES  
IN THE  
MISSION  
AND  
IDENTITY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF DAYTON





# COMMON THEMES IN THE MISSION AND IDENTITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Winter 2013

Dear University of Dayton community,

Great universities stay true to their mission.

For two years, a campus-wide task force on mission and identity explored a number of important questions that speak to our history and our future. What does it mean to be a Catholic, Marianist university? How can we sustain our mission and strengthen our identity as we adapt for the times?

The task force, chaired by Brother Ray Fitz, S.M., and Dr. Paul Vanderburgh, developed reports and engaged in thoughtful conversations with faculty, staff and students about how we can respond to the challenges of the times while sustaining our distinctive mission. I thank Brother Ray, Paul and the entire task force for their excellent work.

Please read the task force's final report, *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*. These five themes emerged as important ones for staying true to our mission:

- Excelling in integrated learning and scholarship
- Searching for truth grounded in both faith and reason
- Educating for practical wisdom
- Building community across diversity
- Partnering for the common good

These themes express well the hallmarks of the educational philosophy that have animated this university. As a Catholic, Marianist university, we embrace change and transformation; embracing our educational heritage will assist us in staying true to our mission.

Thank you for being part of this important conversation on mission and identity.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Curran, Ph.D.  
President

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**Mission and Identity Task Force Roster**



*The purpose of this document is to help faculty, staff, students, trustees and other University stakeholders appreciate the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University of Dayton.*





# I. INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes more than two years of conversations by faculty, students, staff, administrators and the board of trustees to articulate common themes in the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University of Dayton. These conversations were guided and periodically summarized by the Mission and Identity Task Force.<sup>1</sup> The task force began by reviewing multiple documents on mission and identity produced by the University community over the past 40 years and, through that review, developed a preliminary framework of contemporary issues facing the University and themes of UD's mission and identity. This framework served as a starting point for University-wide conversations during the spring semester of 2012. The task force organized multiple conversations with faculty, staff, students and trustees and systematically gathered affirmations, critiques and revisions of the preliminary framework. This document provides a major revision of the preliminary framework based on the responses of the spring conversations of 2012.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this document is to help faculty, staff, students, trustees and other University stakeholders appreciate the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University of Dayton. The task force endeavored to state the themes of the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University in contemporary language and in a way that would help the University community further clarify and focus its vision of excellence and incorporate these themes into its educational program.

This summary is organized in two parts: 1) a historical reflection on how the University has exercised creative fidelity to its mission in periods of change and adaptation, and 2) a statement of the common themes of the University's mission and identity.

## II. FIDELITY TO MISSION IN THE MIDST OF CHANGE

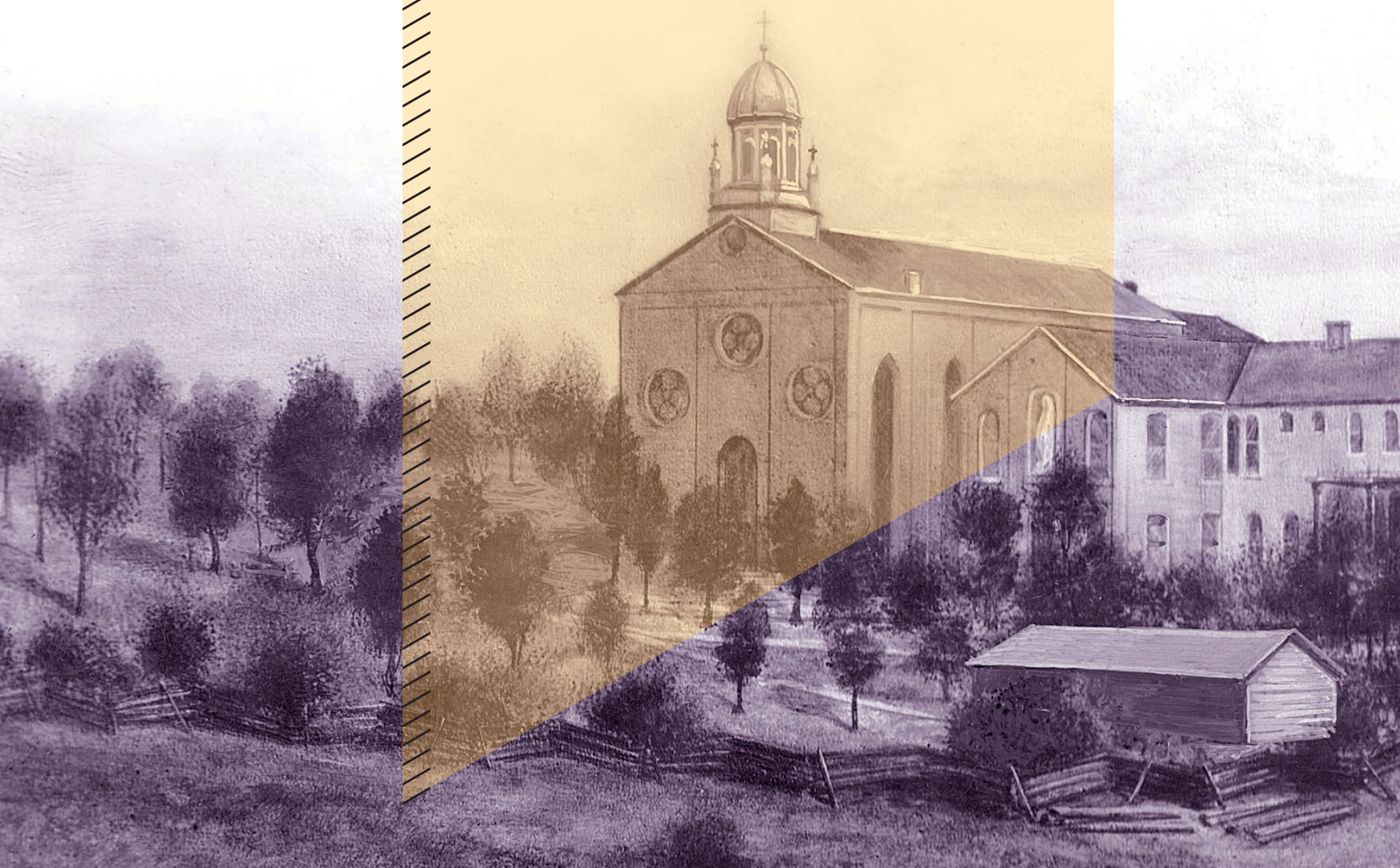
The University has responded to new challenges and opportunities by expanding the scope of its programs and the size of the campus and instituting many other changes. Yet, in the midst of all these changes, the University has sustained a creative fidelity to its founding mission and to enriching the beliefs and convictions that support this mission.

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<sup>1</sup> The membership of the Mission and Identity Task Force is given on the inside back cover.

<sup>2</sup> The issues identified in the original framework are integrated into the section on the common themes.

*The first Marianists arrived in the New World in 1849, a year before Chaminade died. The priest and brothers who established what would eventually become the University of Dayton wanted to continue the mission of educating young men to be grounded in faith, developed as whole persons and well prepared for careers and for leadership in both society and the church.*





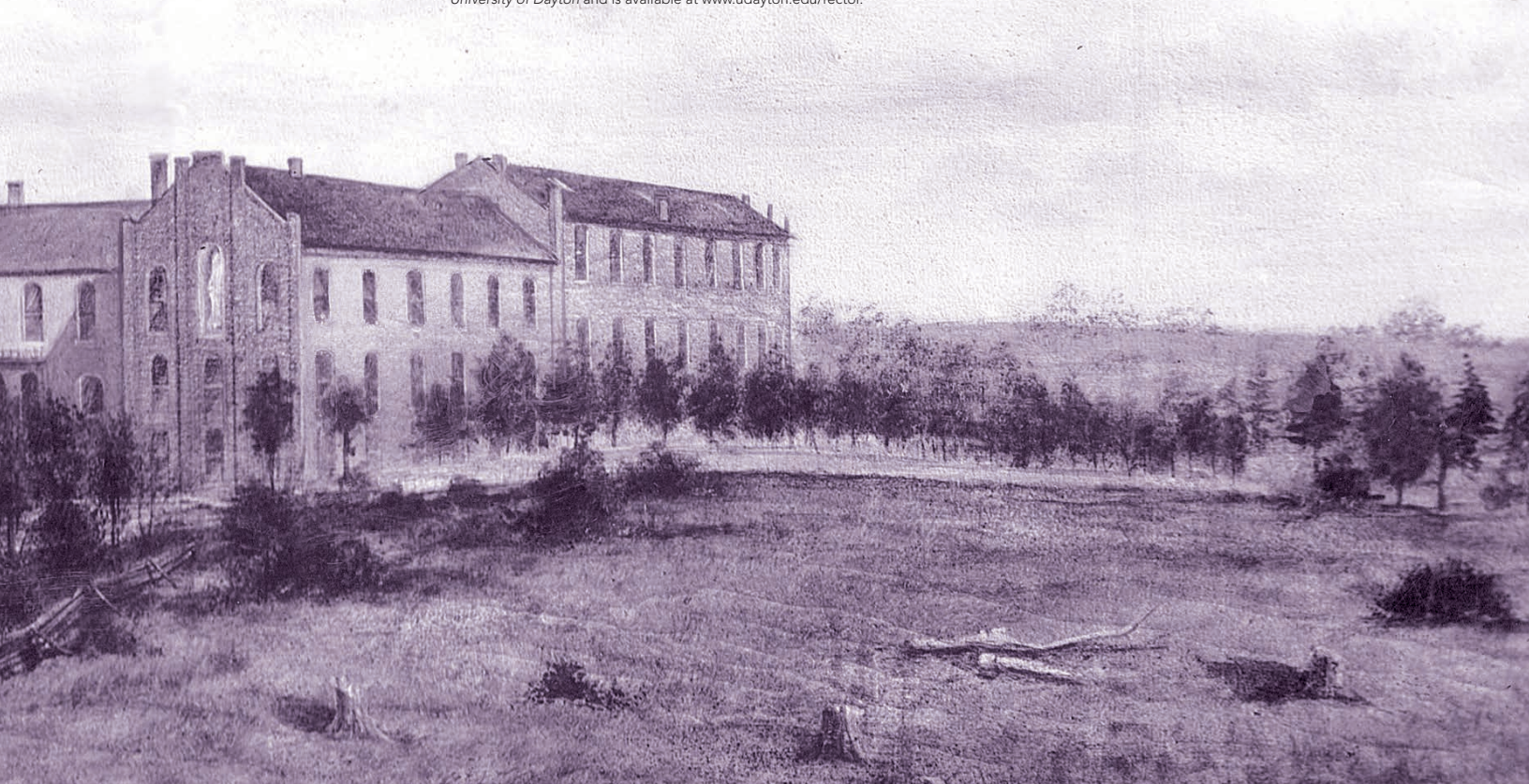
## A brief history of the University<sup>3</sup>

The University of Dayton's educational mission and traditions are rooted in Blessed Father William Joseph Chaminade's response to the chaos of the French Revolution. Chaminade believed that this new situation required new methods of spreading the Gospel. His new method was based on two insights. First, he saw a special role for Mary, the mother of Jesus, in this endeavor. With her "yes" to be the mother of Jesus Christ, son of God, she had a special mission of incarnating Christ and his kingdom into the world. Second, Chaminade believed that Mary's mission, bringing Christ into the world, could be realized by developing lay communities that would support their members in their journey of faith as followers of Jesus Christ. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, in collaboration with Marie Thérèse de Lamourous and Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Chaminade created a network of lay communities aimed at rebuilding Christianity within France in 1800.

Two religious communities emerged from these lay communities: the Daughters of Mary (1816) with Adèle as founder and the Society of Mary (1817) with Chaminade as founder. Guided by Chaminade, the early Society of Mary communities focused on rebuilding the Catholic faith in France through a network of elementary schools and a teacher training center. This network of schools had the mission to educate young people in their faith and to develop the knowledge and skills needed to rebuild French society and the French church. This educational mission was supported by beliefs and convictions about how schools should be organized. Then, as now, the Society of Mary wanted to operate schools that set high standards, educated both the mind and the heart, emphasized relationships of care, integrated both the theoretical and practical approaches to learning, and expressed a special concern for the poor. This educational mission and supporting beliefs and convictions were the beginnings of what today we call the Marianist tradition of education.

The first Marianists arrived in the New World in 1849, a year before Chaminade died. The

<sup>3</sup> A more complete history of the University is found in *Educating Faith-Filled Leaders in the Midst of Adaption and Change: A History of the University of Dayton* and is available at [www.udayton.edu/rector](http://www.udayton.edu/rector).



*Over the next half-century, St. Mary's School for Boys grew from a one-frame building and 14 primary students to a collegiate institution with an ambitious vision of preparing young men to be leaders.*

priest and brothers who established what would eventually become the University of Dayton wanted to continue the mission of educating young men to be grounded in faith, developed as whole persons, and well prepared for careers and for leadership in both society and the church. In contemporary language, their intent was to create a learning community that would educate faith-filled persons prepared and committed to lead and serve both country and the church. They did this in a way that adapted to the situation and needs of the emerging Midwest society and its church.

In their earliest years, the first Marianist missionaries who journeyed to Ohio from the Alsace region in France met the most urgent needs of the Dayton population as they ministered to the sick of Emmanuel Parish during an 1849 cholera epidemic. The leader of this first community, Father Leo Meyer, S.M., met John Stuart, a local farmer whose daughter died of cholera the year before. Stuart wanted to sell his Dayton property and return with his wife to Europe. On March 19, 1850, the feast of St. Joseph, Father Meyer, now joined by Brothers Maximin Zehler, a teacher, Charles Shultz, a cook, and Andrew Edel, a gardener, purchased Dewberry Farm from John Stuart and renamed it Nazareth. Mr. Stuart accepted a medal of St. Joseph and a promise of \$12,000 at 6 percent interest in return for 125 acres, including vineyards, orchards, a mansion and various farm buildings. The Marianists paid off the debt in 12 years.

Over the next half-century, St. Mary's School for Boys grew from a one-frame building and 14 primary students to a collegiate institution with an ambitious vision of preparing young men to be leaders. The historic core of campus buildings reflected and facilitated this ambition: Zehler Hall in 1865, the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in 1869 and St. Mary's Hall, then the tallest building in Dayton, in 1870.

In the ensuing half-century that encompassed two world wars, St. Mary's School became St. Mary's Institute and then, in 1920, the University of Dayton. This shift reflected its close connection with the city of Dayton as well as its desire to claim an American identity for its Catholic students. In the 1930s, women were admitted on an equal basis with men, 40 years before most other Catholic universities allowed. As the Catholic population grew and assimilated, the University expanded its programs in science, engineering and the professions, educating the children and grandchildren of immigrants to participate in the growing affluence that characterized American society.

After the Second World War, the University continued to grow. As the GI Bill and the baby boom increased the numbers of students nationwide, enrollment increased fivefold by 1960. The University adapted to a variety of changes that have clear effects in the present. The establishment of Sinclair Community College and Wright State University decreased local enrollment and moved UD toward becoming a national university. Dramatic changes in the Catholic church, expressed most vividly in the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), led to epic changes in Catholic higher education. Control of the University was entrusted to lay trustees, faculty were hired who were as committed to research as to teaching, and the University began a sustained series of reflections on what it meant to be a Catholic university in this changed world.

Through the presidencies of Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., (1979-2002) and Daniel Curran (2002-present), the University grew in size, reputation and aspiration. Reclassified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education as a research university and committed to the doctoral programs and rigorous faculty research in all areas that classification implies, the University also remains ardently committed to a compelling Marianist vision of undergraduate education. To that end, it engaged in the 1980s and is undertaking





again today a process of curricular revision that seeks to integrate liberal learning with professional education in innovative ways that draw on deep traditions. It also has invested heavily, in both financial and human terms, in a residential education that takes advantage of UD's unique student neighborhoods. The University has renewed and strengthened its commitment to the city whose name it chose for its own, as Dayton struggles to adapt to three devastating decades of deindustrialization. At the same time, the University has extended its reach, enrolling students nationally and internationally and preparing them for life in a global society. It has attained national prominence in discussions of Catholic higher education and Catholic intellectual life while continually seeking to deepen and extend a commitment to diversity in all aspects of the University.

While many of the changes that marked the history of the University of Dayton would be unimaginable to those four founders of St. Mary's School for Boys, hopefully they could recognize the persistent intent to adapt and change as needed to create a learning community that would educate faith-filled persons prepared and committed to lead and serve both country and the church. Even though the University has grown to great complexity, these four founders would recognize a focus on excellence, a concern for the whole person by educating both the mind and the heart, relationships of care exemplified by a family spirit, the integration of theoretical and practical approaches to learning, a focus on and a concern for those at the margins of society as enduring hallmarks of Marianist education.

## **The current conversation on mission and identity**

Just as previous generations addressed new challenges and opportunities and responded in ways that were creatively faithful to the founding mission of the University, our generation must do the same. We must read the signs of the times and respond in a manner that strengthens those elements of University life that truly embody our mission and create those

*The Marianist tradition of education includes the whole person — spirit, mind and body — connecting liberal to professional education through integrating learning and living in community.*

innovations needed to realize our mission more effectively. We are engaged in a series of conversations that began during the 2004-05 academic year with a University-wide reflection on strategic vision. These initial conversations resulted in *The University of Dayton: A Vision of Excellence*, presented by the president and provost to the University community in September 2005. This statement provided a strong affirmation of the University as a Catholic and Marianist university.

### **Vision of Excellence – Statement of Identity**

The University of Dayton — Catholic, Marianist, innovative and transformative — is a leader in higher education and one of the pre-eminent Catholic universities in the nation. As a Catholic university, our commitment to rigorous intellectual inquiry and vigorous dialogue is shaped by the insights of Catholic intellectual traditions that form Catholics and enlighten people of all faiths. These insights ground our convictions that faith and reason illumine one another and that all are created in the image of God. The Marianist tradition of education includes the whole person — spirit, mind and body — connecting liberal to professional education through integrating learning and living in community. These traditions form distinctive graduates who grow in their faith, pursue lifelong learning and achieve professional success. Educated for adaptation and change, our graduates are particularly well prepared for leadership and service in the communities in which they live and work.

As a collaborative endeavor, a University of Dayton education engages and transforms students, faculty and staff. It emphasizes practical reasoning, moral behavior and thoughtful reflection within a diverse and inclusive community committed to the vocation of learning.

Further conversations helped to develop a strategic plan that would allow the University to realize *A Vision of Excellence*. The conclusions of these conversations were incorporated into *Strategic Plan 2006*, which was approved by the board of trustees and presented five goals:

- Educate for transformation and prepare a new generation of servant-leaders;
- Cultivate outstanding scholarship, research and artistic creation;
- Strengthen and promote the University's distinctive Catholic and Marianist identity;
- Advance international and intercultural citizenship and engagement; and
- Practice responsible stewardship.

The *Strategic Plan* was organized around the goal “strengthen and promote the University’s distinctive Catholic and Marianist identity” to demonstrate the importance of the mission and identity as we address the critical issues of the early 21st century.<sup>4</sup>

The strategic planning conversations were held concurrently with University-wide conversations led by the Marianist Educational Working group, which resulted in *Habits of*





*Inquiry and Reflection: A Report on Education in the Catholic and Marianist Traditions at the University of Dayton* in May 2006. The Catholic intellectual tradition and the Marianist charism shaped the report's definition of key learning outcomes for a University of Dayton education, which:

- Seeks knowledge in a sacramental spirit;
- Pursues learning in, through and for community;
- Cultivates practical wisdom;
- Forges critical ability to read the signs of these times; and
- Supports discernment of personal and communal vocation.

These distinctive features of the University's Catholic and Marianist mission and identity shape the learning outcomes of its curriculum.

*Habits of Inquiry* articulated concepts on which *The Common Academic Program (CAP) Proposal* was designed. Approved by the Academic Senate in April 2010, the CAP proposal outlines the structure for redesigning the undergraduate curriculum and intentionally incorporates the "key elements of the Catholic intellectual tradition and its Marianist charism." In the CAP proposal, the First Year Humanities Commons presents an integrated set of religious studies, philosophy, history and English courses that "familiarize students with the central concepts and texts of the Catholic intellectual tradition." A series of upper-level courses, expected to strengthen the student's appreciation of the "Catholic intellectual tradition in significant ways," crosses disciplinary boundaries and includes a faith traditions course, a practical ethical action course, an inquiry course, an integrative course, and a diversity and social justice course.

While the *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* conversations were under way, the divisions of Student Development and Campus Ministry created *Commitment to Community: Catholic and Marianist Learning and Living* (C2C). Founded on the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Marianist tradition of education, C2C outlines principles and personal and social habits that define the norms of learning and living in the University of Dayton community.

In implementing *Strategic Plan 2006*, the University of Dayton has experienced a strong period of growth — enlarging the campus footprint, building new facilities, increasing enrollment, creating new centers of learning and scholarship, and expanding research. The University faculty is now designing courses for the Common Academic Program. In the 2010-11 academic year, the University president and provost formed the Mission and Identity Task Force, which had as one of its mandates to "engage the University community in a series of conversations that would articulate a shared framework of ideas and concepts for understanding, appreciating and developing the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University given the growing complexity of our university." The next section of this document summarizes the shared framework — the set of common themes of our mission and identity — that resulted from these conversations.



# III. COMMON THEMES IN THE MISSION AND IDENTITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In October 2000, the board of trustees approved the University mission statement:

*The University of Dayton is a comprehensive, Catholic university, a diverse community, committed in the Marianist tradition, to educating the whole person and to linking learning and scholarship with leadership and service.*

This mission statement and its shortened form, “Learn, Lead and Serve,” have been the



touchstones of our reflections on mission and identity.

As a national Catholic university in the Marianist educational tradition, the University of Dayton provides a wide range of excellent educational and research programs and engages in extensive partnerships and service programs. The University provides a residential undergraduate program with a broad range of curricula in the College of Arts and Sciences and in the professional schools of business administration, education and allied professions, and engineering. The University offers master's and doctoral degrees, a juris doctorate, and programs of continuing education in selected fields where it has competence and can offer an important service. Scholarship and research for faculty and students is a major emphasis. The University of Dayton Research Institute, a unique asset, allows the University to make a major contribution to the greater Dayton region as an advanced technology hub delivering innovative and practical science and engineering solutions. The University's strong regional, national and international partnerships enable it to contribute its knowledge and its practical expertise to the building up of society and the church.

Our mission and identity have their foundation in the beliefs and convictions of three educational traditions: independent higher education in the United States, Catholic higher education and Marianist education. Independent higher education in the United States refers to non-state-supported institutions of higher learning that are authorized by a state charter and governed by a board of trustees. Independent institutions of higher learning are supported mainly by student tuition, private philanthropy, and grants and contracts. Students of independent higher education may receive financial aid and subsidized loans from state and federal sources. Independent higher education's public responsibility to serve society has led this sector to develop many innovative partnerships for learning, social change and economic development.

Catholic universities in the United States are part of the independent sector of higher education. They also share a rich tradition of higher education with Catholic universities around the world. Catholic universities were first created by the church around 1200 in Paris, Oxford and Bologna. Over many centuries, Catholic universities have carried on a dialogue between the Catholic faith and various cultures. The University of Dayton collaborates with other Catholic universities through its membership in the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities.

The Society of Mary founded three educational institutions that eventually became Catholic universities in the United States: University of Dayton (Ohio, 1850), St. Mary's University (Texas, 1852) and Chaminade University (Hawaii, 1883). Through the Association of Marianist Universities, these three universities have collaborated to embody the Marianist educational tradition as independent Catholic universities serving in very different locales and situations.<sup>5</sup>

Although these three educational traditions have different origins and histories, they come together in the mission of the University of Dayton like the different-colored threads in an ornate tapestry. Each tradition complements the others, and at the same time, raises critical questions which, if thoughtfully addressed, enrich the other traditions. Together, these traditions project the spirit and nature of the University of Dayton. The five themes articulated in this section draw from these three traditions and help our University community appreciate our mission and identity as an independent, Catholic university in the

<sup>5</sup> A summary of the Marianist educational tradition is found in *Characteristics of Marianist Universities* at [http://udayton.edu/rector/\\_resources/files/cmu.pdf](http://udayton.edu/rector/_resources/files/cmu.pdf).

*The University of Dayton is committed to excelling in integrated learning and scholarship.*

Marianist educational tradition:

- Excels in integrated learning and scholarship;
- Searches for truth grounded in both faith and reason;
- Educates for practical wisdom;
- Builds community across diversity; and
- Partners for the common good.

Each of these themes is developed more fully in the following sections.

## **Theme 1: Excelling in integrated learning and scholarship**

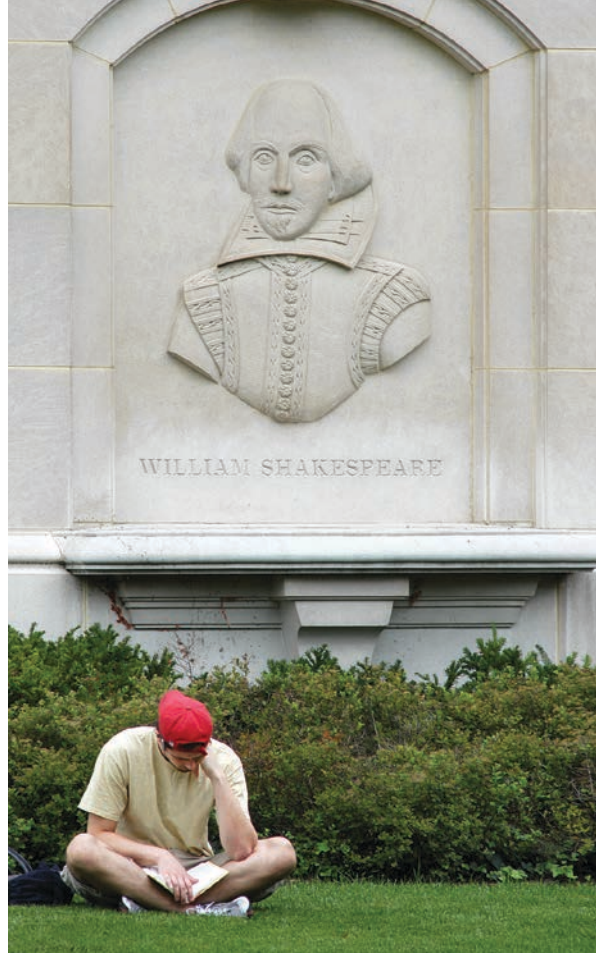
Modern intellectual inquiry has produced a vast explosion of knowledge, facilitated by worldwide sharing of information among scholars and the growth of the Internet. Scholars working in interdisciplinary teams have made major contributions to the growth of knowledge and its applications. Scientific and technological advances and applications of knowledge to the economy and commerce have presented ethical issues we have not previously encountered, including the sustainability of the Earth, the exploration of stem cell research and the use of intellectual property, such as patented pharmaceuticals, to treat the AIDS crisis in Africa. Addressing such issues requires interdisciplinary exploration and interaction among scholars with technical expertise and scholars who bring social, moral and religious perspectives to the conversation.

The University of Dayton is committed to excelling in integrated learning and scholarship. To cope with the explosion of information and knowledge, learning in today's universities involves the ability of faculty and students to discover, integrate, apply and communicate information and knowledge to answer questions or solve problems. Integrated learning involves weaving together information and knowledge from a variety of sources: from texts, conversations, experiences and reflection. The University of Dayton curriculum is designed to enhance integrated learning.

The undergraduate curriculum at the University is designed to enable students in a developmentally appropriate manner to integrate their learning across the boundaries of different disciplines and professional fields, across the boundaries of theory and practice, and across the boundaries of the classroom, the library and residence life. The University is committed to providing an excellent introduction to liberal education as a basis of understanding for integrated knowledge. The University's Common Academic Program strives to integrate learning across the foundations in liberal education and the advanced undergraduate study in the disciplines and professional fields. The undergraduate curriculum should encourage interdisciplinary learning and scholarship, which allows our faculty and students to explore the critical issues shaping our world, such as globalization, climate change and sustainability, the growth of economic inequality and worldwide poverty, and the building of global peace.

The University's graduate programs are designed to allow students to engage in advanced intellectual inquiry as well as to prepare themselves for expanded career opportunities and





leadership and service roles. Graduate programs strive to enhance the skills of integrated learning by preparing students to deeply explore a discipline or a professional field and to connect this learning to other fields of inquiry and practice.

We pursue excellence in integrated learning and scholarship by being a community that expects the very best from ourselves and from one another. At the University of Dayton, excellence means thinking, speaking and writing clearly; acting with wise judgment; investing our work with reason, faith and imagination; and dedicating

ourselves to a lifelong pursuit of learning.<sup>6</sup> Excellence in integrated learning and scholarship also requires faculty who have competence and depth of specialized knowledge in their academic disciplines as well as the ability to enter into intellectual inquiry that crosses disciplinary boundaries.

Excellent Catholic universities integrate learning and scholarship in search of wisdom. The goal of theoretical wisdom is to discern the truth, i.e., the order of the world by distinguishing first principles of that order and the logical consequences that can be drawn from these principles. The goal of practical wisdom is the exercise of human reason to determine how to act well, i.e., how to order society toward the good. Wisdom also comes from artistic creations that manifest beauty and expand our horizons of human meaning.

The Catholic tradition of learning seeks to educate the whole person. In addition to educating for acquisition of knowledge and skills, the University of Dayton emphasizes the formation of character and the growth of faith. Striving to integrate intellectual, spiritual, religious, moral, emotional, social and physical capacities in the life of the student, the University endeavors to weave all the experiences of campus life into a unified learning environment. We seek to integrate classroom learning with experiences of civic engagement and to use residential community life as an integral part of the unified learning environment.

As part of its Marianist tradition, integrated learning and scholarship at the University must strive to be transformative in two important ways. First, teaching and learning are for the sake of education, for the ongoing development into a more fully human person. While much of higher education and all Catholic higher education strive to develop the fully human person, the Marianist tradition of education emphasizes the integration of head, heart and hands. Education must provide ways to promote connections across and integrity among our ways of thinking — knowing and believing, our ways of feeling — our desires, emotions and passions, and our ways of relating with God and others. Education, in the Marianist tradition, stresses that becoming more fully human requires balance in one's life

<sup>6</sup> c.f. Vision of Excellence 2005 [http://www.udayton.edu/provost/\\_resources/docs/2005\\_Sep\\_VisionExcellence.pdf](http://www.udayton.edu/provost/_resources/docs/2005_Sep_VisionExcellence.pdf)



that can come only by the blending of contemplation and action and the blending of leisure and work.

Second, in the Marianist tradition, integrated learning and scholarship must be connected to leadership and service. It must equip our learners and scholars not only with the skills to analyze and appreciate the critical issues of our society, but also with the skills to imagine futures that will respond to these issues and the skills to organize people and groups that can realize these futures. In the Marianist tradition of education, all those with the privilege of a University education, no matter what their discipline or field, have a responsibility to use their learning for not only their personal good, personal success and the well-being of their family, but also for the well-being of the human family.

## **Theme 2: Searching for truth grounded in both faith and reason**

With the growth of knowledge comes a multiplicity of perspectives on how to interpret human interactions, the meaning of our economic and political systems and the very meaning of life. We are increasingly aware of the multitude of religious traditions and cultural perspectives that influence our global interactions. In our contemporary world we find an enormous growth of ideas but little agreement about a widely shared basis for inquiry into truth and whether there are important ideas that all students should learn.

At the University of Dayton, the search for truth is based on the belief that truth is ultimately one and can be more fully known through both faith and reason. If what is held through faith or what is held through reason appears to be in conflict, then something must give way to reconsideration: one of the things held, or both, or perhaps the larger framework within which the apparent contradiction arose. Inquiry then must be carried out both with academic freedom and with openness to the transcendent dimension of life. We highly value the free and responsible intellectual inquiry into and the sharing of truth. Out of our Catholic intellectual tradition, we are convinced that human questioning that humbly seeks the truth leads ultimately to the exploration of the transcendent and that openness to the transcendent enriches rational inquiry. Intellectual inquiry must



*As in all outstanding Catholic universities, the Catholic intellectual tradition is a dynamic presence shaping the intellectual inquiry of the University of Dayton faculty, staff and students.*

be based on sound methods that examine critically the coherence of and the warrants for reasoned arguments, but even the best of arguments cannot capture all that can and ought to be part of our search for truth. “Horizons are opened, relationships made possible and understandings are embraced when individuals and communities pursue inquiry with both faith and reason.”<sup>7</sup>

The dialogue of faith and reason can be mutually enriching and purifying. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, “Reason always stands in need of being purified by faith. ... For its part, religion always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face. Any breach in this dialogue comes only at an enormous price to human development.”<sup>8</sup>

As in all outstanding Catholic universities, the Catholic intellectual tradition<sup>9</sup> is a dynamic presence shaping the intellectual inquiry of the University of Dayton faculty, staff and students. The University of Dayton endeavors to provide multiple forums, where through free inquiry and open conversation the various elements of the Catholic intellectual tradition can connect to all forms of human knowledge in the arts and sciences, the professions and in the experiences students and faculty have in applying knowledge to the critical problems of the human community.

The Catholic intellectual tradition engages the resources of the Catholic faith with the great human questions and situations as they unfold across centuries and civilizations. This tradition of rational inquiry was initiated as the early Christians began to reflect upon and engage the Gospels, their experience of Jesus, in a number of new situations. Throughout their history, Christians have wrestled with and drawn upon the best of human knowledge to defend, explain, understand and better learn to practice their faith.

This tradition has evolved and developed through conversations with the world of ideas and philosophies, the example of the saints and the contribution of great artists. The tradition also has developed as persons explored its meaning for their personal lives and as the Catholic community, in dialogue with others, explored its insights to address social questions such as the status of the worker in modern capitalism, the global economy, war and peace, etc. In short, the Catholic intellectual tradition is a 20-centuries-old conversation between the church and the world, a dialogue between the Christian community of believers and the cultures in which it finds itself.

The Catholic intellectual tradition can continue to provide conceptual resources for greater integration of learning and scholarship in our undergraduate programs, our graduate programs and our programs of scholarship and research. Most contemporary universities mobilize interdisciplinary scholarship to address the critical issues confronting our world, such as globalization, sustainability, economic inequality, poverty, etc. In addition, as a Catholic university, our campus community can also bring the religious and moral resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition to the exploration of critical issues.<sup>10</sup>

An important task for the University is the critical and reciprocal dialogue between faith and cultures: a dialogue in which faith can both learn from and critique cultures, and cultures can learn from and critique faith. A people’s culture is embodied in its beliefs, values and practices. Expressions of culture include not only art, literature, philosophy, politics,

<sup>7</sup> Characteristics of Marianist Education, 24

<sup>8</sup> Caritas in Veritate, 57

<sup>9</sup> A working summary of campus conversations on the Catholic intellectual tradition can be found in the document *The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Mission of the University: A Continuing Conversation*. This document is on the web at [www.udayton.edu/rector](http://www.udayton.edu/rector).

<sup>10</sup> An excellent example of this type of scholarship on our campus is contained in *Engineering Education and Practice: Embracing a Catholic Vision*, editors Kevin Hallinan and James Heft (University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

*A Catholic university should also be a place of dialogue where Catholic believers from different parts of the world come together to explore how faith has grown in different cultural contexts.*

social norms and technology, but also past and present events and experiences that can be studied with the methods of history and the human sciences. Historically and globally, the overwhelming majority of human cultures have displayed awareness of and even fascination with the transcendent. The Catholic intellectual tradition strives to be open to truth, wherever it may be found. Interest in, knowledge of and engagement with the cultural expressions of a variety of peoples is integral to the search for truth. The contemporary world faces few challenges whose solution would not require a deep understanding of their cultural dimensions.

The dialogues of faith and cultures are present in many settings with different agendas. In interreligious dialogues, world religions enter into conversation to find ways they can act together to promote concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Ecumenical dialogues bring members of Christian churches together to search for common ground in beliefs and action. A Catholic university should also be a place of dialogue where Catholic believers from different parts of the world come together to explore how faith has grown in different cultural contexts. All of these dialogues, marked by respect and trust, allow persons and communities of different faith traditions to understand other religious perspectives, deepen their appreciation of their own faith tradition, and search together with others for common human values. We hold people of other religious traditions in high esteem, especially those we work with and, as a community, we can be models for the larger society. This approach to conversation across differences moves beyond mere tolerance to genuine dialogue and consensus-building.

To promote the intellectual exchange proper to a Catholic university requires a diversity of scholarly voices, including Catholic scholars, scholars from other religious traditions, and scholars with no religious tradition. The University relies on the presence and work of people from other religious traditions — indeed, all people of good will — committed to the mission of the University, in discovering what is true, cherishing what is good and appreciating what is beautiful. The Catholic mission and identity of the University depends upon, and is nurtured by, the continuing presence of an influential number of Catholic intellectuals, i.e., scholars and teachers of the highest quality who practice the Catholic faith. What the University asks of all its scholars and students, however, is not a particular religious commitment but respect for its Catholic and Marianist mission and identity and a willingness to enter into conversation that contributes to the realization of that mission and identity in its curriculum and in the culture of the campus community.

The University carries out its mission in communion with the church, the believing community in and through which Christian revelation is received, lived and handed on. Mutual trust and close and consistent communication mark the relations between the University and the church. Our University is a forum where scholars and members of the church community can come together to explore and reflect mutually upon the challenges that the church must address in its evangelizing mission. While the University has no direct dependence on church governance or church support, the University freely chooses to constitute itself as a Catholic university and is committed to working within the Catholic tradition. The University recognizes the rights of the Church's Magisterium to question, criticize and judge the integrity of the implementation of this commitment. Whenever such issues arise, they are addressed in a spirit of dialogue and mutual trust between the University and the church hierarchy.

Formation in faith is a central element in the Marianist tradition of education. The Marianist tradition emphasizes not only the important intellectual dimensions of faith — “faith seeking understanding” — but faith as a disposition of the heart, an openness to the





transcendent and the ability to experience faith as both a gift from God and as a relationship with God. Faith grows not only through rigorous exploration and reflection but also in the religious practices of the faith community — in both common worship and in the solitude of prayer and reflection.

Building on his experience in the time of the French Revolution and radical social change, Chaminade saw that formation in faith has both a personal dimension (a personal relationship with God) and a public dimension (a call to bring God's reign of justice, peace and reconciliation into society). Formation in faith provides conceptual and moral resources and a deep motivation to link learning and scholarship to leadership and service.

## Theme 3: Educating for practical wisdom

Our University community strives for excellence in integrated learning and scholarship in search of truth and wisdom. In our Catholic and Marianist traditions of learning, we seek to render truth and wisdom practical and to transform the world into a place of greater realization of the truly human good. At the University of Dayton, we strive to develop a community of learners and scholars who, individually and collectively, think both critically and imaginatively, judge from sound moral principles and practical knowledge, and work collaboratively for the common good.

Practical wisdom, in the classical and Catholic tradition, is excellence in practical reasoning. Practical reasoning represents the capacity to draw on knowledge and intellectual skills to engage concretely in the world. Practical reasoning allows the individual to go beyond reflection to deliberate and decide upon the best course of action within a particular situation.<sup>11</sup> Engaged citizens and leaders of all sectors of society rely on this capacity for practical reasoning to construct the good in all facets of life. Practical reasoning allows one to *see* — to frame a problem or issue so that one understands causes; to

<sup>11</sup> The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has been promoting practical reasoning as an important way of integrating liberal education and professional education. See specifically William Sullivan and Matthew Rosin, *A New Agenda for Higher Education: Shaping a Life of the Mind for Practice* (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2008) and Anne Colby, et. al., *Rethinking Undergraduate Business Education: Liberal Learning for the Profession* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011).





*judge* — imagining the good to be realized and designing the appropriate response to realize the good; and to *act* — implementing that response. Practical reasoning also allows one to *reflect* — to untangle the complex web of experience and to draw practical knowledge from this experience.

Practical wisdom is a virtue or habit that combines skill in practical reasoning, a commitment to a moral tradition and practical knowledge. A commitment to a moral tradition involves 1) knowledge, i.e., principles and beliefs about the goods of human life and how to realize these goods, and 2) a set of habits or virtues that support the realization of the goods of human life. Learning a moral tradition enriches the practical imagination, which proposes what we can make of our lives and the futures that we can hope for, both individually and collectively. Practical knowledge is obtained through reflection on past actions and is usually tacit knowledge about how one rightly connects a particular situation with the goods one would like to realize. Engaging in the journey toward practical wisdom is an important way to realize excellence in integrated learning.



intellectual tradition can provide conceptual and moral resources to recognize critical issues in particular situations, to imagine how the good can be realized in these situations and practical guidelines to mobilize people to realize the good. In the Catholic intellectual tradition, practical reasoning can be enriched by virtues like justice, fortitude and temperance and by openness to the grace of God.

Learning practical wisdom is a developmental journey; the interdependency of practical reasoning, a commitment to a moral tradition and practical knowledge require a continual learning. People learn practical wisdom by exercising practical reasoning within a community of practice. Practical wisdom develops through conversations of inquiry, action and reflection that are well-facilitated and well-mentored. In a Catholic university, these conversations should involve many mentors who can demonstrate how the conceptual and moral resources of the Catholic intellectual and social traditions and the best of contemporary knowledge can be integrated in addressing issues of personal integrity and social responsibility.

In our globalized world, we can encounter many injustices, for example, the suffering and misery caused by unjust economic structures, the lack of opportunity caused by local and global poverty, and the discrimination suffered by minorities and women. In the Catholic moral tradition, the virtue of compassion is an important complement to practical wisdom. Compassion allows us to enter into the suffering of others in a way that we can perceive the affliction of the other and our role in causing that affliction, with a willingness to interpret the context of injustice from the perspective of those who suffer, and with a commitment to create new relationships that can transform ourselves, our neighbor and the institutional structures of society.<sup>12</sup> Local and overseas immersions are important in learning practical wisdom; they allow our students and faculty to enter into the plight of peoples and communities that suffer injustice.

Practical wisdom allows one to read the signs of the times and to be skillful in adaptation and change. Reading the signs of the times requires a deep knowledge of the trends within one's world combined with knowledge of an intellectual and moral tradition that allows one to evaluate these trends. At the University of Dayton, we draw on profound and longstanding intellectual traditions, especially the Catholic intellectual tradition, to evaluate the trends of our society. We make these evaluations in an open and critical dialogue with others and with a hopeful spirit that seeks justice, peace, reconciliation and the common good.

Cultivating practical wisdom enables students to develop a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives and to continually refine that purpose into a deeper sense of vocation. Learning in the Catholic and Marianist traditions strives to support students, inside and outside the classroom, to find and explore the deep purposes that lend meaning, wonder and fulfillment to their lives. "These purposes consist not merely in what students may find themselves especially fit for pursuing but in what each student is especially called to do. The University's commitment to support students' discernment of their vocations in academically appropriate ways follows from the fundamental objective to educate whole persons, in mind, spirit and body, for whole lives."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> On the connection of compassion to practical reasoning, see Maureen H. O'Connell, *Compassion: Loving our Neighbor in an Age of Globalization* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> "Habits of Inquiry and Reflection," [http://www.udayton.edu/artssciences/about/images/Habits\\_of\\_Inquiry.pdf](http://www.udayton.edu/artssciences/about/images/Habits_of_Inquiry.pdf), 6.

*Our Catholic educational tradition, which values the dignity of the human person and our innate social nature, emphasizes community as an important part of the educational experience.*

## **Theme 4: Building community across diversity**

The University of Dayton has always had a reputation for a strong sense of community that is immediately evident in the hospitality extended to campus visitors, in the good relationships that exist between students, faculty and staff, and in a shared sense of a common purpose. Yet, at this period of our history, we are challenged by the growth of diversity. Diverse cultures and different ethnic experiences shape our interactions in society, locally and globally. The United States is becoming more diverse with growing African-American, Hispanic and Asian populations, and with newer immigrant populations. We also are increasingly aware of gender issues and differences and of the barriers to women's ability to obtain economic and social equality with men in our society and throughout the world. We are called to deepen and expand our heritage of a strong campus community by building community across diversity. Our Catholic and Marianist traditions of education provide insights that allow us to respond to this call.

Excellence in learning, especially integrated learning, requires a community where students, faculty and staff can pose important and meaningful questions, explore a diversity of ways these questions have been answered in the past, and collaborate across different perspectives to develop insights and arguments that can address these questions today. To extend this learning community beyond a single course to the whole campus requires skills of collaboration and constructive conversation.

Our Catholic educational tradition, which values the dignity of the human person and our innate social nature, emphasizes community as an important part of the educational experience. Our diverse gifts of culture and experiences play important roles in creating community learning and building community across this diversity. These insights into community should not only shape the classroom experience but also permeate the whole campus culture, in all facets of residence life and service-learning. In the Catholic tradition of higher education, university life must provide opportunities and space for personal and shared reflections on faith for all students. For the Catholic intellectual tradition to shape our campus, we must have opportunities not only for rigorous and scholarly exploration of that tradition, but also for engagement in the practices of pondering and sharing faith and common worship.

Our campus community respects and appreciates difference. Over the past 20 years, the University community has developed a number of statements on how we respect differences and how "discrimination, harassment or any other conduct that diminishes the worth of a person are incompatible with our fundamental commitment as a Catholic university conducted in the Marianist tradition. Every person, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability shall be treated with respect and dignity. No person shall be subject to any sexual, racial, psychological, physical, verbal or other similar harassment or abuse or be denied equitable consideration for access to employment and the programs, services and activities of the University."<sup>14</sup>

The Marianist tradition of education emphasizes community by educating for family spirit. The description "the University of Dayton is like a family" illustrates that our obligation and commitment to one another are like a family's. Our University community must be a place where we treat all with respect, care for one another, and speak with authenticity and candor.

<sup>14</sup> This quote is taken from the *University of Dayton Statement on Dignity*.





Family spirit encourages us to build relationships that challenge and support one another to grow in excellence in learning and scholarship and in the professionalism of our service. It also encourages us to grow in our journey to full human development.

Our sense of hospitality and welcome must be inclusive. We must welcome all members of the University to the “family table” and develop a campus culture that recognizes and welcomes the gifts and experiences of our diverse members and that creatively weaves these gifts into rich contributions to our common mission. We must continually develop our skills of “staying at the table” when conflicts and tensions arise. To build a community that is like a family, given that the University is a large, complex organization, we must constantly expand our ability to listen to and appreciate others who are different, to share our beliefs and convictions in a way that touches the experience of others, and to creatively merge and

*The University of Dayton sees itself as a partnership university in that it educates for civic engagement and uses its learning and scholarship to be a critic of society and to offer public service.*

expand our ideas into solutions that work for the good of the whole University community.

A challenging issue for our inquiry and reflection is the respective roles of women and men in our society, in our church and in our campus community. It is important that we challenge the gender stereotypes of popular media and collegiate life. To be creatively faithful to our Catholic and Marianist traditions, as a community we must explore new, more just and loving ways for women and men to live and work together as free and responsible persons. This exploration would not only bring greater goodness and justice to our own campus but also provide a model for change within society and the church.

The Marianist educational tradition has long been characterized by a shared responsibility for decision making at all appropriate levels. For an American university, that tradition meshes well with the tradition of faculty governance in American higher education. Effective collaboration requires good communication, clear mandates, just policies and respect for the principle of subsidiarity. "All these forms of collaboration require, above all, lay faculty and administrators educated in and committed to the Catholic and Marianist traditions of education."<sup>15</sup>

## Theme 5: Partnering for the common good

In the midst of multiple problems facing our nation and the world, universities, both public and private, must help find solutions. Colleges and universities are called not only to educate the next generation of citizens and leaders but also to be partners with other institutions in addressing critical social issues. The University of Dayton sees itself as a partnership university in that it educates for civic engagement and uses its learning and scholarship to be a critic of society and to offer public service.<sup>16</sup> Educating for civic engagement requires learning environments that engage faculty and students in public issues and help them integrate the data, information and knowledge they need to shape the quality of public life. Being a critic and public servant require that the University work with other institutions through constructive conversations to identify critical social issues, to imagine more hopeful and just futures, and to mobilize resources and groups to realize these futures.

As a Catholic university, we must join other colleges and universities to bring the best of contemporary knowledge to solve these critical social issues. In addition, our faculty and students should endeavor to bring the conceptual and moral resources of the Catholic social tradition into public conversations. Given the pluralism of our society, this must be done in a way that respects and appreciates other moral and religious traditions, articulates the perspectives of the Catholic tradition in ways that others can appreciate, and works together to develop public consensus that will advance justice in our neighborhoods, our communities and our world.

Our Catholic social tradition adds an important element to our vision of partnership: We partner for the common good. Social structures shape the realizations of personal goods

<sup>15</sup> *Characteristics of Marianist Education*, 39

<sup>16</sup> *Statement of Purposes of the University of Dayton* (1969) states, "Operating in a pluralistic environment, it (the University) deliberately chooses the Christian world-view as its distinctive orientation in carrying out what it regards as four essential tasks: teaching, research, serving as a critic of society and rendering public service." The critic of society task includes identifying assets and gifts as well as deficits and needs of society.





and the common good. Building on the dignity of the individual and the social nature of the human person, Catholic social tradition has consistently argued that social structures must be organized to realize the common good: the “sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment.”<sup>17</sup> The University collaborates with others to advance social justice by educating people in sound moral principles and transforming the structures of society so that there is a greater realization of the common good.

Two principles of the Catholic social tradition — solidarity and subsidiarity — guide our partnering for the common good. Solidarity is both a principle for organizing social entities and a moral virtue that recognizes the interdependence of all peoples and groups within our local, national and international social networks. Solidarity “is not a feeling of vague

<sup>17</sup> *Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, Second Vatican Council, 1965, 26





compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”<sup>18</sup>

Solidarity demands a commitment to go beyond self-interest and to love one’s neighbor within the social networks in which one participates (local, national and international) with the readiness, in the Gospel sense, to lose oneself for the sake of the other. Solidarity calls the Christian to have a preferential option for the poor that has one judge how the organization of society affects those who are most vulnerable and to partner with them to bring about positive social change.

We must provide our students with the opportunity to develop the virtue of solidarity. Educating for solidarity requires an experience of being with the poor — a relationship

<sup>18</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* contains a fuller description of John Paul’s concept of solidarity, especially 38 and 39.

and friendship that provides insight to their suffering and misery as well as their joys and hopes. This experience allows our learning community to reflect on the personal and social conditions that shape the lives of the poor and to collaborate with those that advance justice. To develop the virtue of solidarity, faculty and students must challenge one another as they reflect and collaborate to integrate the best of contemporary knowledge with the principles and convictions of the Catholic social tradition.

A second principle of the Catholic social tradition that should guide our work of partnership is subsidiarity. Subsidiarity states a twofold obligation in the design of institutions: 1) an institution at a higher level should not withdraw from an institution at a lower level the responsibilities that it can accomplish on its own, and 2) high-level institutions should render assistance to lower-level institutions when the problems are too large to be handled by the lower-level institution. For example, communities should not withdraw the responsibility of parents to raise and educate their children, but they should provide opportunities that assist parents in carrying out these responsibilities. Subsidiarity envisions a strong and limited government that encourages persons, families, associations of civil society and corporations to exercise their responsibility for making their appropriate contribution to the common good.

Shaped by the experience of the French Revolution and inspired by the witness of the early Christian communities, the Marianist approach to social change focuses on building groups and communities that intend to shape the larger social reality so that there are greater opportunities for all people to realize their human capabilities. As a Marianist university, we stress the education of community builders. Community builders have the capacity to create with others a desired community future based on a widely shared vision that is characterized by respect for persons, the common good and a preferential option for the poor. As a Marianist university, we realize it is important for us to develop the skills of students, faculty and staff to build community in every dimension of their lives and to organize collaboration to advance justice.

To realize its partnership for the common good, the University must build and support connections that allow faculty, staff and students to engage in addressing critical issues of our society. Connections, especially partnerships, must be made with a wide variety of groups and individuals that are working to realize the common good, e.g., urban neighborhoods, regional efforts to revitalize economies, and international immersion in the work of development and education.

The University of Dayton's partnership with the Catholic church is critical to our mission. Two dimensions of this partnership have been mentioned: 1) preparing a generation of Catholics ready for leadership and service in their family lives, their professional lives, their civic communities and their church communities, and 2) developing forums where scholars and members of the church community can come together mutually to explore and reflect upon the challenges the church must address in its evangelizing mission. In addition, the University partners with the church to educate lay people and clergy who provide leadership for the ministries of the church, especially through its pastoral ministry and Catholic education programs. The University supports centers of research and education that provide important resources for the church's ministry, such as the Marian Library, the International Marian Research Institute, Institute for Pastoral Initiatives and the Center for Catholic Education. Through these partnerships, the church enriches the University and the University enriches the church.



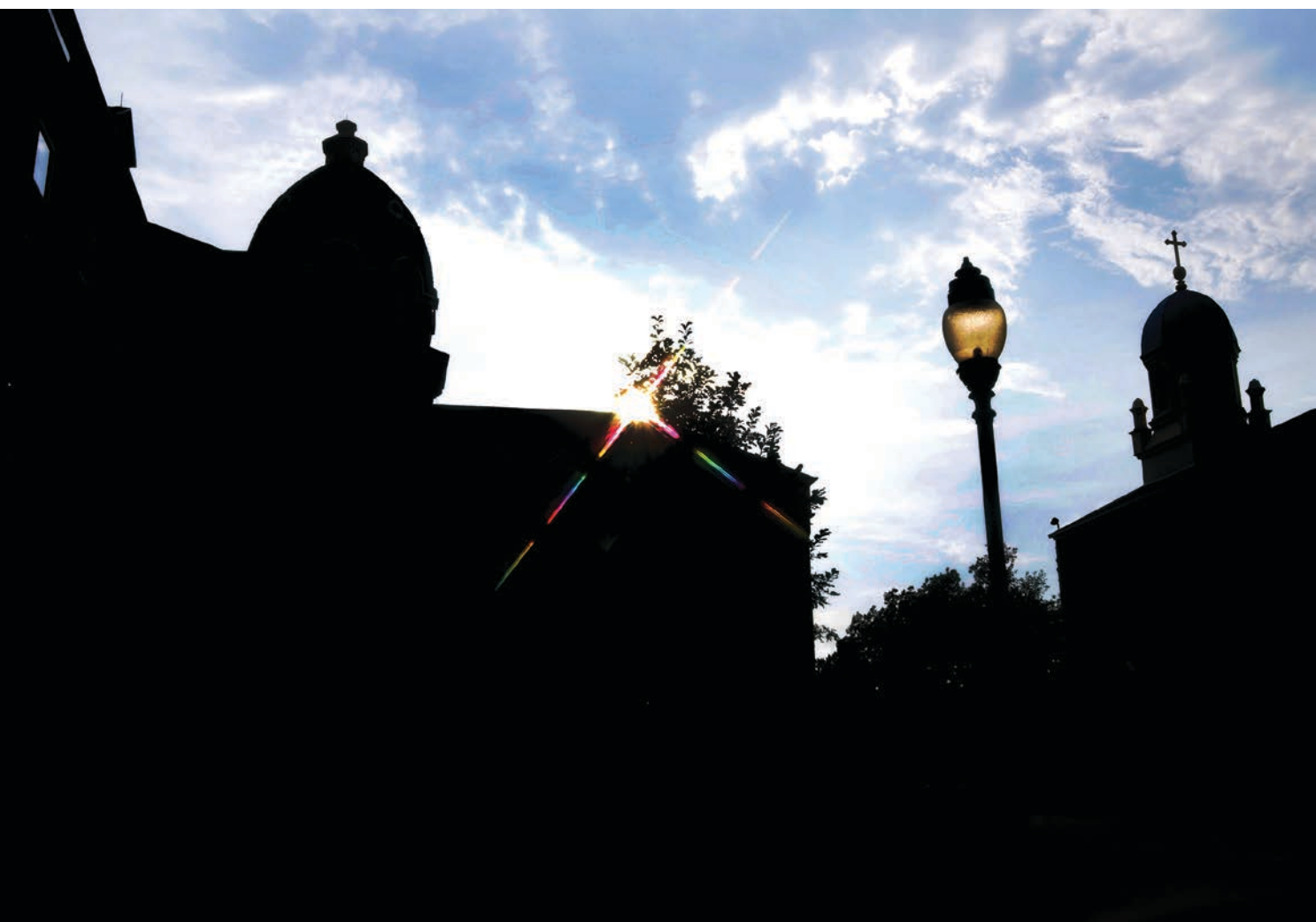
# IV. CONCLUSION

Over the past two years, the University community has engaged in multiple conversations on mission and identity. These conversations began with the Mission and Identity Task Force summarizing the important ideas, concepts and insights of the past 40 years of conversations on mission and identity and presenting a framework for a University-wide spring conversation in 2012. The spring conversations provided an opportunity to deepen our appreciation of the University's mission and identity and think about it in ways that both reground it in a rich history of the University and give it a more contemporary articulation. The Mission and Identity Task Force summarized the conclusions of these conversations in this document.

This document is intended to help faculty, staff, students, trustees and other stakeholders of the University appreciate the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University of Dayton. The common themes of the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the University are stated in contemporary language and intended to help the University community further clarify and focus its vision of excellence and incorporate these themes into its educational and research programs. This document can serve as an important resource as we develop the Common Academic Program for undergraduates that begins in fall 2013, and it can be used to give the University's graduate programs and research programs a distinctive character and orientation. In addition, this document will be used to develop education and communication pieces for student, faculty, staff and trustee recruitment and orientation. Most of all, it should provide the ideas and concepts we will need to continue to grow and develop in response to the new challenges and opportunities of the early 21st century and, at the same time, remain creatively faithful to our founding mission of creating a learning community to educate faith-filled persons prepared and committed to lead and serve society and the church.

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