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Mission Statement and  
Core Commitments: *A Commentary*



**BARRY**  
UNIVERSITY



# Mission Statement and Core Commitments: *A Commentary*

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## BARRY UNIVERSITY VISION STATEMENT

*Engaging the World through  
Transformative Catholic Higher Education.*



## BARRY UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Barry University is a Catholic institution of higher education founded in 1940 by the Adrian Dominican Sisters. Grounded in the liberal arts tradition, Barry University is a scholarly community committed to the highest academic standards in undergraduate, graduate and professional education.

In the Catholic intellectual tradition, integration of study, reflection and action inform the intellectual life. Faithful to this tradition, a Barry education and university experience foster individual and communal transformation where learning leads to knowledge and truth, reflection leads to informed action, and a commitment to social justice leads to collaborative service.

Barry University provides opportunities for affirming our Catholic identity, Dominican heritage, and collegiate traditions. Catholic beliefs and values are enriched by ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. Through worship and ritual, we celebrate our religious identity while remaining a University community where all are welcome.

### CORE COMMITMENTS

Catholic intellectual and religious traditions guide us in the fulfillment of our mission. The mission and values of the Adrian Dominican Sisters serve as the inspiration for our core commitments.

#### **Knowledge and Truth**

Barry promotes and supports the intellectual life, emphasizing life-long learning, growth and development. The University pursues scholarly and critical analysis of fundamental questions of the human experience. In the pursuit of truth, the University advances development of solutions that promote the common good and a more humane and just society.

#### **Inclusive Community**

Barry is a global, inclusive community characterized by interdependence, dignity and equality, compassion and respect for self and others. Embracing a global world view, the University nurtures and values cultural, social and intellectual diversity, and welcomes faculty, staff, and students of all faith traditions.

#### **Social Justice**

Barry expects all members of our community to accept social responsibility to foster peace and nonviolence, to strive for equality, to recognize the sacredness of Earth, and to engage in meaningful efforts toward social change. The University promotes social justice through teaching, research and service.

#### **Collaborative Service**

Barry is committed to serving local and global communities through collaborative and mutually productive partnerships. The University accepts responsibility to engage with communities to pursue systemic, self-sustaining solutions to human, social, economic and environmental problems.





## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In Barry's "Strategic Agenda" for 2006–2011, we, as a university community, committed ourselves to a review of the University's Mission Statement. I am grateful for the collaborative reflection and spirited dialogue that led to a rearticulated Mission Statement and the definition of four Core Commitments that were approved by the Board of Trustees and the University's religious sponsors, the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan, in 2008.

To support and deepen our personal and collective understanding of the Mission Statement, four members of the University faculty developed this companion document. They based their theological study upon the essential elements that created and continue to enliven and nourish a Barry University education and experience, namely, the University's clear Catholic identity, its strong Dominican heritage, and its proud Adrian Dominican foundation.

Our Barry students, faculty, staff, administration and Board of Trustees are deeply grateful to our scholars – Sara Fairbanks, OP, PhD; Scott T. O'Brien, OP, DMin; Mark E. Wedig, OP, PhD; and Gloria L. Schaab, SSJ, PhD. – for generously sharing their individual and collective theological expertise in the preparation of this *Commentary*.

I am very pleased to present this booklet to you. May our personal and communal study and reflection lead to a deeper understanding of the individual and institutional transformation that can flow from faithfulness to our identity, mission and core commitments.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Linda". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Sister" being a large capital 'S' and the first letter of "Linda" being a large capital 'L'. The signature is written in a personal, elegant style.

Sister Linda Bevilacqua, OP, PhD  
President



## INTRODUCTION

*Gloria L. Schaab, SSJ, PhD*

In the opening paragraphs of our Mission Statement and Core Commitments, the community of Barry University clearly articulates the essential elements which characterize and animate the life and ministry of our University. These elements are its *Catholic identity*, its *Dominican heritage*, and its *Adrian Dominican foundation*. In this commentary, we explore the meaning and spirit of these essential elements to see how they have informed and motivated the guiding principles and responsibilities that Barry University sets forth for our community. We do so to deepen our community's understanding and appreciation of our Mission Statement and Core Commitments that we may more fully embrace and practice them.

This commentary includes five parts. In the first part, "Catholic Imagination, Catholic Identity and the Catholic University," we examine both Catholic identity and what has been termed the *Catholic imagination*. "Within the broad context of what it means to be Christian," this term refers to those "distinctive characteristics that make the specific difference of Catholicism."<sup>1</sup> In the second section, "The Dominican Heritage," we focus on an integral part of the Catholic imagination, the emphasis on the dynamic relationship between faith and reason that has resulted in the *Catholic intellectual tradition*. Throughout history, this tradition has been an integral part of the heritage of the Order of Preachers founded by Saint Dominic in the 13th century. Moreover, the dedication of the Dominicans to *veritas* (truth) and "*contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*" ("to study [contemplate] and to hand on the fruits of study [contemplation]") has decisively shaped this tradition. In the third portion of this commentary, "The Adrian Dominican Foundation," we engage an essential aspect of the dynamism of faith and reason, the "necessary search for meaning in order to guarantee...the authentic good of individuals and of society as a whole."<sup>2</sup> This search "provides an awareness of the Gospel principles which will

<sup>1</sup>Monika K. Hellwig, "What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?" in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Survival and Success in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 14.

<sup>2</sup>John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae (Apostolic Constitution of The Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities)* (henceforth ECE), August 15, 1990; available from [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_constitutions/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apc\\_15081990\\_ex-corde-ecclesiae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae_en.html) (Accessed 10 July 2009), §7.

enrich the meaning of human life and give it new dignity” (*ECE § 13*), an awareness that fully resonates with the Vision of the Adrian Dominican Sisters who, “impelled by the Gospel and outraged by the injustices of our day seek truth; make peace; reverence life.”<sup>3</sup> As an extension of this vision, part four, “Catholic Social Teaching,” points out the consonances between the Mission and Core Commitments and Catholic teaching on social justice. In the concluding part of this commentary, we present “A Spirituality for Living the Mission,” which incorporates questions for reflection and discussion to enable this Mission Statement and Core Commitments to become deeply rooted in our Barry community through prayer and sharing. Through this commentary, we desire to contribute to the quest for “individual and communal transformation where learning leads to knowledge and truth, reflection leads to informed action, and a commitment to social justice leads to collaborative service.” We invite you to join us in this quest.

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<sup>3</sup> Adrian Dominican Sisters, “Vision,” available from <http://www.adriandominicans.org/OurMissionVision/MissionVision.aspx> (Accessed 10 July 2009).

## PART I:

### CATHOLIC IMAGINATION, CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

*Gloria L. Schaab, SSJ, PhD*

In her essay entitled “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?” theologian Monika Hellwig identifies five elements of what she called “A Catholic Way of Being Christian.”<sup>4</sup> As this identification implies, before one considers what it means to be a specifically Catholic university, one must first understand the implications of being Christian. According to Hellwig, to be a Christian venture or community means to affirm our relationship with God as creator and redeemer, to profess faith in and discipleship of Jesus Christ, and to acknowledge the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in human life and initiatives.<sup>5</sup> As an outgrowth of these fundamental affirmations, the Catholic way of being Christian, referred to as both the “Catholic imagination” and as “Catholic identity,” describes what, within the broader purview of Christianity, has been recognized as the particularly Catholic worldview. While it encompasses such things as faith, belief, doctrine, and ritual, it is a broader expression of the ways in which Roman Catholicism envisions itself, approaches human experience, and interprets each.<sup>6</sup> The five elements of the Catholic imagination that Hellwig discusses are (1) an emphasis on the dynamic of faith and reason, (2) a respect for the tradition’s cumulative wisdom, (3) an inclusivity in membership and values, (4) the communal nature of redemption, and (5) an appreciation of the sacramental principle.<sup>7</sup> This section examines each of these elements through a fourfold method: (1) a brief theological or Christological reflection tied to the Christian tradition described by

<sup>4</sup>Hellwig, “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education,” 14.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>6</sup>See James Provost and Knut Walf, eds., *Catholic Identity* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), especially the essays by David Tracy and Norbert Greinacher.

<sup>7</sup>Hellwig, “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education,” 14.

Hellwig, (2) the insights of Monika Hellwig herself, (3) the assertions of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, and (4) the salient portion of the Barry University Mission Statement and Core Commitments that relate to each element.

### *Dynamic of Faith and Reason*

In the 11th century Saint Anselm, Bishop of Canterbury, defined theology in terms of the dynamic of faith and reason; theology for Anselm was “*fides quaerens intellectum*” or “faith seeking understanding.” However, for Anselm, this juxtaposition of faith and reason did not imply that the content or act of faith can be attained by reason alone. More precisely, Anselm considered that “‘faith seeking understanding’ means something like ‘an active love of God seeking a deeper knowledge of God.’”<sup>8</sup> Two centuries later, Dominican Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae* defined theology – which he termed “sacred doctrine” – as “A unified science in which all things are treated under the aspect of God either because they are God himself or because they refer to God.”<sup>9</sup> While Aquinas cannot be presumed to use the word “science” with the precise understanding we have in the 21st century, he did mean to understand theology as a scholarly and intellectual pursuit of knowledge that pertains to God in Godself or to the things associated with God, such as the creation of life, the inevitability of death, and the entities and structures of the cosmos. Nonetheless, God in Godself cannot be studied in the same way in which we might study the things of God in the natural order. Unlike the structures of the cosmos, God is pure Spirit (John 4:24) and as Spirit cannot be seen or touched or heard in the same ways in which the physical elements of the natural world can. Therefore, as our faith seeks understanding, we must observe certain “rules” for our reasoned pursuit. Three such rules have been suggested by 20th century Catholic theologian Elizabeth A. Johnson:

- 1) God is an ineffable, incomprehensible mystery and we can never wrap our minds around the fullness of who God is.
- 2) Therefore, every word we use to speak about God is metaphorical, symbolic or analogical. It always means that and more.
- 3) Therefore, we need many words, many names, many images, [and] many adjectives for God. Each adds to the richness and texture and the greatness of what we mean when we say “God.”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Williams, “Saint Anselm,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; available from <http://www.science.uva.nl/~seop/entries/anselm/#FaiSeeUndChaPurAnsThePro> (Accessed 14 July 2009).

<sup>9</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (ST), trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province; online ed. Kevin Knight; available from [www.newadvent.org/summa/](http://www.newadvent.org/summa/) (Accessed 13 July 2009), I.1.7.

<sup>10</sup>Elizabeth A. Johnson, “A God Worthy of Belief,” *NCRCAfe* Podcast with Tom Fox; available from <http://nrcrcafe.org/node/1759> (Accessed 1 May 2008).

According to Hellwig, this dynamic of faith and reason is particularly important in the discussion of Catholic higher education. In the university, this dynamic signifies that authentic faith roots itself in the ground of credibility, seeks understanding, constructs a coherent worldview and way of life, and applies itself to interpreting and responding to the challenges of our contemporary world. This view is also consistent with the understanding of Catholic identity articulated in the papal encyclical *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the Apostolic Constitution Catholic Universities. In it, John Paul II wrote:

Every Catholic University, as a university, is an academic community which, in a rigorous and critical fashion, assists in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of a cultural heritage through research, teaching and various services offered to the local, national and international communities...in the light of the Catholic faith...to which it seeks to contribute by its own research. (*ECE*, §12-13)

As an educational institute dedicated to the search for an “integration of knowledge,” the Catholic university has a specific task “to promote dialogue between faith and reason, so that it can be seen more profoundly how faith and reason bear harmonious witness to the unity of all truth” (*ECE*, § 17). Furthermore, as a Catholic university, its research “necessarily includes” both “an ethical concern and a theological perspective” (*ECE*, § 15). As a Catholic institution of higher learning, Barry University is explicit in its expression of this dynamic between faith and reason. In our Mission Statement and Core Commitments, we affirm that

Barry University is a scholarly community committed to the highest academic standards in undergraduate, graduate and professional education. ... Barry promotes and supports the intellectual life, emphasizing life-long learning, growth and development. The University pursues scholarly and critical analysis of fundamental questions of the human experience.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, this intellectual life does not exist for its own sake but in order that “learning leads to knowledge and truth, reflection leads to informed action, and a

<sup>11</sup> Office of Mission Integration of Barry University, “Mission Statement and Core Commitments,” available from <http://www.barry.edu/mission/barryMission/default.htm> (Accessed 12 July 2009).

commitment to social justice leads to collaborative service.” It therefore manifests the ethical concern called for by John Paul II, since “in the pursuit of truth, the University advances development of solutions that promote the common good and a more humane and just society.”<sup>12</sup>

### *Respect for the Cumulative Wisdom of the Catholic Tradition*

In his landmark study, *A Guest in the House of Israel*, Clark Williamson raises the issue of the detrimental effects of the failure of traditional Christology to interpret Jesus of Nazareth within his own historical and religious context of Judaism.<sup>13</sup> Instead, Jesus’ life and ministry have frequently been portrayed as an epic of ongoing conflict with the Jewish people and Judaism itself. Moreover, such portrayals expand the meaning of his resurrection from a victory over death to a vindication over the Jewish rejection of his message and claims, which implies a repudiation of his Jewish heritage. Contemporary Christological constructions, however, have begun reflecting anew on Jesus in relation to his wisdom tradition of Judaism and to demonstrate the deep connection between his teaching and that of the cumulative wisdom of his religious tradition.<sup>14</sup> These reflections attend to Jesus’ own understanding of his mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mt. 15:24), his commitment to radically living and teaching Torah (Mt. 5:17-48), and the Judaic concepts and thought patterns such as Messiah, Son of Man, Suffering Servant, Wisdom, and Son of God that convey the significance of his life and teaching.<sup>15</sup> Standing firmly within the long tradition of prophets, teachers, and preachers, Jesus’ reverence for and grounding in the cumulative wisdom of Judaism nourished his ministry, shaped his self-understanding, and provided impetus for his mission to proclaim the coming of the reign of God in history.

Within the wisdom of those who have come before us in the Catholic tradition, Hellwig includes not only the doctrinal and theological traditions of Catholicism, but also its scriptures, its “role models” of the saints and martyrs, its heritage of spirituality, and its devotional practices and rituals. Through this attentiveness to the traditions, Catholicism seeks “to save and treasure and keep alive for future generations whatever was good and fruitful in the experience, thought, and action of the faithful in the course of the centuries,” ever mindful nonetheless of the historical development of such traditions.<sup>16</sup> In the midst of a culture in search of

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Clark M. Williamson, *A Guest in the House of Israel: Post-Holocaust Church Theology* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 168 – 81.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Braybrooke, “The Future of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” in *The Future of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, ed. Daniel Cohn-Sherbok (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1999): 21-64.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Cohn-Sherbok, “Background to Contemporary Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” in *The Future of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, 1-20.

<sup>16</sup> Hellwig, “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education,” 15.



“instant wisdom,” the Catholic university’s respect for tradition represented through its theological studies and its liberal arts focus poses a countercultural challenge.<sup>17</sup>

In a preeminent way, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* reinforces the significance of this enduring respect as it appeals to the Catholic university to facilitate a dialogue between belief and study “through the encounter which it establishes between the unfathomable richness of the salvific message of the Gospel and the variety and immensity of the fields of knowledge in which that richness is incarnated by it” (*ECE*, § 6). This is especially true for the teaching of theology which should be “taught in a manner faithful to Scripture, Tradition, and the Church’s Magisterium, [so that it] provides an awareness of the Gospel principles which will enrich the meaning of human life and give it a new dignity” (*ECE*, § 20). Furthermore, the Catholic university contributes to this richness, since “By research and teaching, Catholic Universities assist the Church in the manner most appropriate to modern times to find cultural treasures both old and new, ‘nova et vetera’, according to the words of Jesus” (*ECE*, § 10). Because of our presence within a broad variety of cultures and religious traditions, Barry University is in a unique position to mine these cultural treasures both old and new, even as we remain rooted in our Catholic heritage. As the introduction to the Core Commitments attests, “Catholic intellectual and religious traditions guide us in the fulfillment of our mission.” Nonetheless, within the unparalleled cultural milieu of southeastern Florida which necessitates that we be a global community, these “Catholic beliefs and values are enriched by ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. Through worship and ritual, we celebrate our religious identity while remaining a University community where all are welcome.”<sup>18</sup>

### *Inclusivity in Membership and Values*

In his discussion of the Eucharist in *Real Presence: Worship, Sacrament, and Commitment*, theologian Regis Duffy characterized Jesus as someone “on account of others,” one with God and one with the marginalized of his time.<sup>19</sup> In his ministry with the sinner and outcast, Jesus proclaimed the inbreaking of the kingdom of God and embodied its reality in his actions. Particularly through his table-sharing with the marginalized of his time, Jesus transgressed social barriers and extended an offer of intimate participation to those who were ordinarily excluded by social, cultural, or religious convention.<sup>20</sup> By “inviting the outsider and the underdog to the table,”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>18</sup> “Mission Statement and Core Commitments,” <http://www.barry.edu/mission/barryMission/default.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> Regis Duffy, *Real Presence: Worship, Sacrament, and Commitment* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 138.

<sup>20</sup> William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation* (New York: Pueblo, 1989), 252f.

<sup>21</sup> John Howard Yoder, *For the Nations*, in Matthew Whelan, “The Responsible Body: A Eucharistic Community,”

Jesus constituted a new community, “a community of equals within the richness of diversity.”<sup>22</sup> In this community, barriers were abolished, class distinctions were eradicated, and role expectations were reversed. Through the Eucharistic meal, Jesus’ disciples – past, present, and future – are nourished for such subversive living. For this reason, David N. Power asserts, “In times of social and cultural crisis and oppression, the Body of Christ is called to portray the life of an alternative community in which God’s Spirit works, overcoming death-dealing forces abroad in the world.”<sup>23</sup>

For Hellwig as well, the emphasis on inclusivity cuts across economic, social, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and denominational borders and presents specific challenges to the Catholic university in terms of identity and structures. However, by its very nature and foundation, it is incumbent upon the Catholic university “to develop an open-mindedness and discernment that can transcend popular prejudices” and that “such openness be recognized as an obligation of believers before God.”<sup>24</sup> This extends to respect and celebration not only of cultural differences, but also of religious difference, spurred on by the appreciation of the traditions and values of other Christian and non-Christian religions found in such Vatican II documents as *Lumen Gentium* and *Nostra Aetate*.<sup>25</sup> *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* also affirms the element of inclusivity as an essential characteristic of every Catholic university, calling for “an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life” (*ECE*, § 13.4). It recognizes that, through the faithful fulfillment of its mission, a Catholic university “enables the Church to institute an incomparably fertile dialogue with people of every culture” (*ECE*, § 6). Moreover, “they are one among the variety of different types of institution that are necessary for the free expression of cultural diversity, and they are committed to the promotion of solidarity and its meaning in society and in the world” (*ECE*, § 37).

It is most evident that Barry University recognizes our matchless opportunity and responsibility for effecting the inclusivity envisioned by the Catholic imagination and is exemplary in doing so. This realization is emphasized in our Core Commitments.

<sup>22</sup> David N. Power, *The Eucharistic Mystery: Revitalizing the Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 335.

<sup>23</sup> David N. Power, “A Prophetic Eucharist in a Prophetic Church,” pp. 27 – 50, in *Eucharist: Toward the Third Millennium*, ed. Martin F. Connell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 28.

<sup>24</sup> Hellwig, “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education,” 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Lumen Gentium*: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964; available from [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html) (Accessed 13 July 2009) and *Nostra Aetate*: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965; available from [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decl\\_19651028\\_nostra-aetate\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html) (Accessed 13 July 2009).

Barry is a global, inclusive community characterized by interdependence, dignity and equality, compassion and respect for self and others. Embracing a global world view, the University nurtures and values cultural, social and intellectual diversity, and welcomes faculty, staff, and students of all faith traditions.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, we recognize the necessity of doing so not only in a theoretical way, but in a practical one. Therefore, “In the pursuit of truth, the University advances development of solutions that promote the common good and a more humane and just society.” In this task, we do not venture alone, but collaboratively and mutually as we “engage with communities to pursue systemic, self-sustaining solutions to human, social, economic and environmental problems.”<sup>27</sup>

### *Communal Nature of Redemption*

In her theological reflections on the mystery of the Incarnation and Resurrection, theologian Sallie McFague asks us to imagine “the Word made flesh’ as not limited to Jesus of Nazareth”<sup>28</sup> solely in his concrete history, but in his enduring presence as “radically and concretely embodied...in the differences, in the concrete embodiments, that constitute the universe.”<sup>29</sup> Because of Jesus’ compassionate identification with and service to the downtrodden and oppressed peoples that he encountered in his earthly ministry, this particular vision of Jesus images him as continually embodied in the poor and oppressed, a vision thoroughly consistent with Jesus’ own claim that “whatever you do for the least of my people, you do to me” (Mt. 25:40). This understanding of Jesus as continually embodied in those suffering today has the capacity to move us “toward inclusive love for all, especially the oppressed, the outcast, the vulnerable”<sup>30</sup> which, in an ecological age, includes the “new poor,” that is, non-human beings and the cosmos itself. Moreover, our Christian faith informs us that Jesus’ Incarnation into a suffering and broken world moved through his own suffering and death to Resurrection and new life. Hence, beyond challenging Christians to embrace Jesus in the suffering and oppressed, this perspective encourages Christians with the promise of hope that, like the love that raised Jesus from the dead, “the liberating, inclusive love of God for all is alive in and through the entire cosmos” in a continuous and unconditional way.<sup>31</sup> McFague’s reflection offers a

<sup>26</sup> “Mission Statement and Core Commitments,” <http://www.barry.edu/mission/barryMission/default.htm>.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 131.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

powerful Christian truth. On the one hand, the mystery of the Incarnation assures us of God's suffering love and presence with the human and non-human victims of exploitation, diminishment, despoliation, and death in the world. On the other, the mystery of the Resurrection assures creation and all its creatures of "the incognito appearance of Christ whenever we see human compassion for the outcast and the vulnerable...when and where the oppressed are liberated, the sick are healed, the outcast are invited in."<sup>32</sup>

In Hellwig, the commitment to inclusivity in membership naturally leads to this emphasis in the Catholic imagination on the communal nature of redemption. As Hellwig explains it, this element of Catholic identity expresses itself in the concept of *cura personalis*, the concern for the whole person of all members of the university community.<sup>33</sup> Such a concern requires the university to assert the unity of the human race, to advance the cause of justice and peace, and to support the equal opportunity of all persons to partake in what the world offers.<sup>34</sup> This perspective is clearly affirmed by *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

A Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ which gives the Institution its distinctive character. As a result of this inspiration, the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals. It assists each of its members to achieve wholeness as human persons; in turn, everyone in the community helps in promoting unity. (*ECE*, § 21)

This dedication, however, reaches beyond the university community itself to encompass the well-being of the human community as well. In his call to the Catholic university for service to the church and society, John Paul II reminds us that

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>33</sup> Hellwig, "What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education," 21.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

A Catholic University, as any University, is immersed in human society; as an extension of its service to the Church...it is called on to become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society. Included among its research activities, therefore, will be a study of serious contemporary problems in areas such as the dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level. University research will seek to discover the roots and causes of the serious problems of our time, paying special attention to their ethical and religious dimensions. (*ECE*, § 32)

In addition to his challenge to universities to research root causes and solutions to social problems, John Paul II also stipulated that “service to others for the promotion of social justice is of particular importance for each Catholic University, to be shared by its teachers and developed in its students” (*ECE*, § 34). As a university rooted in the Catholic and Dominican traditions, Barry University’s emphasis on and commitment to justice and peace is unequivocally stated in our Mission and Core Commitments. Central to our Mission is the understanding that “reflection leads to informed action, and a commitment to social justice leads to collaborative service.” Articulated in a specific Core Commitment and inspired by our Adrian Dominican Sisters,

Barry expects all members of our community to accept social responsibility to foster peace and nonviolence, to strive for equality, to recognize the sacredness of Earth, and to engage in meaningful efforts toward social change. The University promotes social justice through teaching, research and service.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Mission Statement and Core Commitments,” <http://www.barry.edu/mission/barryMission/default.htm>.

## *Appreciation of the Sacramental Principle*

In his writings on the relationship between God and creation, Dominican Thomas Aquinas reflected upon the relationship of cause and effect that exists between a creator and what is created. According to Aquinas, any effect reveals something of its cause; in other words, that which is created communicates something about the one who created it. It has the ability to do this because, in creating, the creator puts something of himself or herself – plans, ideas, emotions, hopes, intentions and the like – into what she or he creates. Therefore, Aquinas writes, “God is in all things... inasmuch as God is present to all as the cause of their being.”<sup>36</sup> What is important about Aquinas’ perspective is that God is not understood as being in opposition to nature, but truly present within it. Christian theology can claim that “Nature itself is symbolic or revelatory of God.”<sup>37</sup> Such a claim is the basis of the entire tradition of the sacramental in Christianity because “The essence of a sacrament is the capacity to reveal...God, by being what it is...[by] being thoroughly itself” and the nature of a sacrament “requires that it be appreciated for what it is and not as a tool to an end.”<sup>38</sup>

In her reflections on the sacramental principle, Hellwig herself lifts up the “exuberant wealth of symbolic expression” contained not only in the Catholic tradition of the seven sacraments, but also in the statues and images, practices and procedures, ceremonies and vestments, incense and candles that proliferate in Catholic religiosity. Such symbolic expression reveals a profound understanding that “As creatures, corporeal beings in space, time, and cultural context, we relate to God through created things – speech, analogies, images, expression in gesture and song, and so forth.”<sup>39</sup> To implement this principle, the Catholic university, Hellwig insists, “ought to be different in a sensible, tangible way that strikes all who step onto campus.”<sup>40</sup> This involves the schedule of events, the location of campus ministry, the centrality of the university chapel, the extent of library holdings in theology and religious studies, the display of religious symbols and motifs in buildings and classrooms, and the engagement with religious themes and topics by the members of the university community. In all these ways, the Catholic university provides witness that counters the cultural tendency to privatize and compartmentalize the spiritual dimension of human life.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> ST, I.8.3, adapted for inclusive language.

<sup>37</sup> John Haught, “Ecology and Eschatology,” in *And God Saw That It Was Good*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer (Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1996): 47–64.

<sup>38</sup> Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes, “The Sacrament of Creation: Toward an Environmental Theology,” *Commonweal* 117 (1990), 42–49 at 45 and 46.

<sup>39</sup> Hellwig, “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education,” 17.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 22–23.

For its part, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* urges Catholic universities as part of their pastoral ministry to

...give a practical demonstration of its faith in its daily activity, with important moments of reflection and of prayer. Catholic members of this community will be offered opportunities to assimilate Catholic teaching and practice into their lives and will be encouraged to participate in the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist as the most perfect act of community worship. (*ECE*, § 39)

Moreover, in the conduct of its research, the Catholic university is called to resist a “rigid compartmentalization” (*ECE*, § 16) of knowledge into individual disciplines and to realize that the sacramental principle implies that “all aspects of truth” have an “essential connection with the supreme Truth, who is God” (*ECE*, § 4). Barry University’s Mission and Core Commitments witness as well to the sacramental principle. Through its affirmation of worship and ritual, ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, social and cultural diversity, global worldview, and sacredness of Earth, the university advances St. Dominic’s vision of a world that celebrates God’s dwelling within us and among us. This vision reminds the members of the Barry University community that God is constantly revealing Godself through the splendid diversity of all that has been created. Everything is full of sacred presence; everything has the capacity to reveal the Living God.

## FROM THE WRITINGS OF BENEDICT XVI

### INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

“A united humanity will be able to confront the many troubling problems of the present time: from the menace of terrorism to the humiliating poverty in which millions of human beings live, from the proliferation of weapons to the pandemics and the environmental destruction which threatens the future of our planet.”

*From the papal Christmas Message, December 25, 2005*

### FAITH AND REASON

“...Theology adds the dimension of reason to the word of God and thus creates a faith that is deeper, more personal, hence also more concrete in the person's life.... It reminds us that a natural friendship exists between faith and reason, founded in the order of Creation itself. In the *incipit* of the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, the Servant of God John Paul II wrote: ‘Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.’”

*From the General Audience in St Peter's Square, October 28, 2009*

### SACRAMENTALITY OF CREATION

“Even before discovering the God who reveals himself in the history of his people, there is a cosmic revelation that everyone can see.... There exists...a divine message secretly inscribed in creation as a sign of the *hesed* (loving faithfulness of God), who gives life, water, food, light and time to his creatures. We need clear vision in order to contemplate this revelation of God, keeping in mind the admonition from the Book of Wisdom that reminds us that ‘from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen’ (Wisdom 13:5; see Romans 1:20).”

*From the General Audience in St Peter's Square, November 9, 2005*

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

“Charity in truth, to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. Love — *caritas* — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace.”

*From Caritas in Veritate, June 29, 2009*



## PART II:

### THE DOMINICAN HERITAGE

*Mark E. Wedig, OP, PhD*

As stated in the introduction to this commentary, one of the essential elements that make up the mission and core commitments of Barry University is its Dominican Heritage. The Dominican Order, more properly called the Order of Preachers (Latin: *Ordo Praedicatorum*)<sup>42</sup> was founded in the early thirteenth century (1216) by Dominic de Guzman (1174-1221). From the beginning of the Order, the Dominicans were not focused so much on Dominic himself, but more on a movement composed of friars, nuns, and laity who set out to reform and renovate the Church through preaching and the accompaniment of people who were hungry for God's Word. In the words of Dominican historian Simon Tugwell "the Order was not simply his [Dominic's] personal brainchild and he was not, and never claimed to be, its sole inspiration or even the primary embodiment of its nature and ideals."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, from the beginning, the Dominicans thought of themselves as a family of men and women committed to preaching the Gospel and feeding others with the harvests of their contemplation. The Dominican *motto contemplari et contemplate aliis tradere* – to contemplate and to hand on the fruits of contemplation – encapsulates the essence of the Dominican mission.

The Dominican movement arose in Europe from contexts where the Church and society were filled with religious intellectual dilemmas. During the late Middle Ages, people within the Church, including some of its leadership, harbored ideas and practices that were contrary to the authentic Christian message. In addition, the Church suffered from an uneducated clergy unable to teach the faithful about the meaning of essential Christian doctrines. Dominic and the early leaders of the Order knew that in order for the Word of God to be authentically and effectively

<sup>42</sup>Therefore the O.P. behind the names of the sisters and friars at Barry University.

<sup>43</sup>Simon Tugwell, *The Way of the Preacher* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1979).

<sup>44</sup>William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order: Origins and Growth to 1500* (New York: Alba House, 1965).

preached there needed to be an educated preacher, knowledgeable of the Christian theological tradition, as well as able to fathom the intellectual and social challenges of the day. Therefore, from the outset, Dominicans turned to the emerging universities of Europe to seek out education for their preachers. Without an education that would inform the preacher of the challenges of the day, the Dominican would be unable to truly relate the Christian message to contemporary social, intellectual, and moral quandaries.<sup>44</sup>

The Dominicans contributed greatly to the Catholic intellectual tradition as the Order flourished at the end of the Middle Ages and throughout the Renaissance and early Modern periods. The Order of Preachers gave a unique focus to the Church's intellectual tradition through its strong belief that faith and reason always demanded correlation. In other words, the Dominicans believed that God's revelation had to be continually reconciled with the human gift of reasoned analysis. Both were God's unique gifts. Great Dominican preachers, who were also great teachers – some eventually becoming Doctors of the Church – emerged on the landscape of the Church and championed questions raised by science, philosophy, theology and spirituality.<sup>45</sup> Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena, and Meister Eckhart are examples of intellectual leaders from the early centuries of the Order.

This great Dominican intellectual heritage has continued to transform the Church and society in the modern and contemporary periods. Much of 19th and 20th century Dominican scholarly and intellectual endeavor focused on historical and biblical studies, ecclesiology, Christology, and social ethics. In sum, these Dominican contributions have been about transforming the Church for the modern world. For instance, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the establishment of biblical historical-critical method by the Dominicans at the École Biblique in Jerusalem at the end of the 19th century transformed contemporary biblical scholarship and engaged Catholics with the Scriptures in a new way.<sup>46</sup> The ecumenical and ecclesiological work of Yves Congar during that latter half of the 20th century challenged the Church to re-think its strictly hierarchical and institutional self-understanding. Congar also advocated that the Church enter into a much greater engagement with the modern world and authored much of Vatican II's Constitution on the *Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)*.<sup>47</sup> Another contemporary example is the unique work of the Dutch Dominican Edward Schillebeeckx, who breaks open new Christological meanings presenting Jesus as the parable of God and

<sup>44</sup> William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order: Origins and Growth to 1500* (New York: Alba House, 1965).

<sup>45</sup> M.-H. Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, transl. by Kathleen Pond, (Green Bay, Wisconsin, Alt Publishing, 1964).

<sup>46</sup> Bernard Montagnes, *Marie-Joseph Lagrange. Une biographie critique* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2004).

<sup>47</sup> Mark E. Wedig, "The Fraternal Context of Congar's Achievement: the Platform for a Renewed Catholicism at Les Éditions du Cerf," *US Catholic Historian* 17:2 (Spring 1999) 106-115.

a socio-political gadfly of his day, revealing God's grace in contrast experiences.<sup>48</sup> Extending these insights is the Peruvian Dominican Gustavo Gutierrez, whose liberation theology presents a ground-breaking analysis of Jesus as the one who radically identifies with the poor and accompanies the marginalized in their realization of God's Kingdom.<sup>49</sup> More recently the emerging scholarship of Dominican women theologians, such as Mary Catherine Hilkert and Suzanne Noffke, retrieve the voices of Dominican women from the Christian tradition and provide new constructs of the human person in light of the Gospel and Christian tradition.<sup>50</sup>

Consequently the core commitment of Barry University to *knowledge and truth* resonates authentically with the Dominican intellectual heritage. In fact the Dominican motto is *Veritas* – truth. That which holds all things together is truth; how we appropriate what is right, beautiful, and intelligible. What is true enables us to make sense and meaning out of our lives and ultimately for what we are willing to lay down our lives. The Dominican understanding of truth is deeply Incarnational, which means that what is true is always embedded in the cultural and social fabric of the day. Truth always arises from contemplating the dilemmas of the contemporary world. Therefore it is not something that is removed or abstracted from human living, but is deeply discovered in the midst of a fully lived human existence. For that reason the pursuit of truth necessitates comprehensive steadfast commitment to serve a particular society and culture and that the search for truth cannot afford to retreat from that context. To the degree that the university engages the world around it in its search for truth, it is Dominican.

Truth is inseparable from its quest which is knowledge. The process of gaining knowledge is a life-long endeavor; hence the university is one of the best places in society that can set the stage for that process. It is why Dominicans have always been linked to university life. Knowledge is power which can be used for good or bad. Consequently when knowledge is linked to contemplation we realize that we do not know things for the sake of knowing them in themselves, but knowledge is a way of situating us in the world so that we can serve the world for its greater good. Knowledge that is contemplative and for others leads to virtue, whereas knowledge that is organized for itself leads to ideology and often despair. Barry University is a place where we endeavor to teach the contemplative virtues of knowing, hoping that our students will be able to see from our teaching the true value for what knowledge is meant: serving our brothers and sisters in need.

<sup>48</sup> Mary Catherine Hilkert and Robert Schreiter, *The Praxis of the Reign of God* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002).

<sup>49</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* (New York: Orbis, 1973)

<sup>50</sup> Mary Catherine Hilkert *Speaking with Authority: Catherine of Siena and Voices of Women Today* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001); Suzanne Noffke, *Catherine of Siena: Vision Through a Distant Eye* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996)

The Dominican heritage by its nature has been wide-ranging and can be paralleled to Barry University's core commitment of *Inclusive Community*. From the early establishment of the Order of Preachers, the Dominican family was not about one group but an extended association of women and men. By its conception it involved differences and brought together unlike associates. The early inclusive community of Dominican life was an aggregate of friars, nuns and laity. Moreover that diversity extended to the farthest reaches of the known world at the time. In order to preach and to evangelize, Dominicans set out to discover and accompany peoples in places like Dubronik and Krakow. In the early 16th century the Dominicans were on the voyages of Columbus to the new world and were some of the first missionaries to Asia. In the 19th century Dominican women left the cloister of their monasteries to accompany immigrant Catholics in the Americas. To encounter and celebrate difference is an instinctive part of the Dominican evangelical spirit.

Yet Dominican faithfulness to inclusivity in the modern and contemporary worlds has taken on a distinctive global ecclesial flavor and been about reconciliation between peoples estranged and separated by modernity itself.<sup>51</sup> First of all, to be a Dominican is precisely not to be solely from a nation-state or a country, but to be a member of a world-wide Order. This perspective obstructs the ways we have been conditioned to view and classify ourselves as merely nationals and culturally specific people. Secondly our community life is based on offering hospitality to strangers. Our houses model inclusivity by the way they welcome brother and sister from across the world and invite dialogue and conversation centered on those welcomed.

Some examples of modern and contemporary Dominican concern for inclusivity are participation in the ecumenical dialogues by members of the Order with various forms of Protestantism, with Judaism and Islam and other world religions. The Order's leadership in these dialogues is extensive.<sup>52</sup> A unique way inclusivity is being modeled is through the Dominican Non-Government Organization's representation (NGO's) at the United Nations which has played a distinctive role in advocating on behalf of brothers and sisters in South Africa, Iraq, Pakistan, Egypt, India, Vietnam and many other parts of the world.<sup>53</sup> Moreover in the contemporary period Dominican sisters have been a uniquely prophetic voice for the Church in the global world. Their advocacy work for many of the most estranged in our world, whether they be immigrants, the poor of our cities, the imprisoned, or those ostracized by racial, ethnic, and gender-based discrimination, has characterized much of their ecclesial contributions.

<sup>51</sup> Timothy Radcliffe, *Sing A New Song: The Christian Vocation* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1999) 233-300.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas E. Fritgerald, *The Ecumenical Movement* (London: Praeger Publishing, 2002).

<sup>53</sup> A simple internet search of "Dominicans NGO United Nations" will bring up a voluminous array of references to Dominican activity at the UN.

The term social justice refers to a modern concept that envisions a world which offers individuals and groups fair treatment and an impartial share of the benefits of society.<sup>54</sup> However, one can really trace the origins of the idea of social justice to the teachings of the Dominican Thomas Aquinas,<sup>55</sup> who delineates concepts of commutative and distributive justice.<sup>56</sup> In the generic sense, social justice can be understood as the greater Dominican concern for the truth which naturally demands the welfare of the entire human community. In fact within the pre-modern Dominican tradition there is a long-standing legacy for what can be understood to be social justice. For instance, the preaching of the Dominican Antonio de Montesinos of Hispaniola moved Bartolomé de las Casas to become a Dominican and then to write on behalf of and publically defend the human rights of the indigenous peoples of the new world. Las Casas envisioned a utopian society where natives could peacefully co-exist with Spanish colonists. He proposed reforms such as the natives would be paid fair wages, Indian pueblos would have hospitals and churches, and he would recruit Spanish farmers to teach them agricultural techniques.<sup>57</sup>

Barry University's core commitment of Social Justice can be aligned with the Dominican heritage of reflecting and acting on behalf of justice. For Barry expects every member of the institution to accept social responsibility as an integral part of the mission of each university division whether it be athletics, residential life, student accounts, admissions, or all academic units. It is not a matter of extracurricular activity or ornamentation to a Barry education. Neither should it be the concern of a select group within the university. Like the Dominican heritage, advocacy for justice is essential and fundamental to every aspect of learning and growing as a human being and not something peripheral to one's transformation. It is why one finds service-learning in sociology and theology core curriculum classes at Barry University.<sup>58</sup> It is why a Center for Community Initiatives and the De Porres Center for Community Service exist at the center of academic and student life. Social justice must be the fulcrum of a Dominican university.

A commitment to social justice intrinsically entails a commitment to service. Without serving the local and global needs of one's world, commitment to social justice is simply making a lot of noise about nothing. The outcome of learning

<sup>54</sup>The term "social justice" was coined by the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in the 1840s, based on the teachings of Thomas Aquinas. Pope Leo XIII, who studied under Taparelli, published in 1891 what is considered the beginning of Catholic social teaching in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

<sup>55</sup>*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2004), translated by the USCCB.

<sup>56</sup>*Summa Theologica - Secundae Pars*, Questions 57-62.

<sup>57</sup>*Bartolome de Las Casas: Indian Freedom, the Cause of Bartolome de las Casas*. Trans and ed. by Francis Patrick Sullivan (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1995).

<sup>58</sup>Service Learning is a process whereby students learn and develop through active participation in organized service experiences that actually meet community needs. Service learning provides students opportunities to use their acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations in their communities; this enhances teaching by extending student learning into the community and helps foster a sense of caring for others.

about social justice is a deep, comprehensive, and life-long involvement with service-based institutions that critique social structures and help change society for the good. When universities do not engage the social concerns and injustices that often surround their campuses and punctuate their worlds, they suffer from one of the worst educational failures that the modern university can possess, that of being an institution oriented only for its self-serving purposes. Yet a university dedicated to social justice must commit itself to wide-ranging and far-reaching efforts that involve its student, faculty and staff community in service. This is a fundamental orientation of Barry University and its commitment to social change which imbues its mission through the particular involvement of its entire university community to service.

For the Dominicans, service is the natural outgrowth of preaching. One does not preach to hear one proclaim, but one preaches in order to draw the preacher himself or herself and the hearers of the Word into action and particularly into actions that mirror the Kingdom of God. The preacher preaches the Good News of the Kingdom which word-smiths visions and images of a world that reflects things the way God sees them. Such visions and images move communities to act in ways that transform people and institutions in order to benefit and advocate for the poor, the marginal, and the outcast. Preaching that does not lead to social transformation fails to follow the mission of the Gospel itself. Dominican women and men have realized this integral understanding of their preaching for generations.

As Dominicans, we recognize that the work of the preacher is not a solitary endeavor. Preaching and the actions that follow upon it arise out of communities where an extensive collaboration has occurred for the sake of the Gospel. Dominicans refer to their convents and houses as “The Holy Preaching,” meaning that the corporate work of those sisters and friars *is the Good News*. Accordingly, preaching a Just Word for God’s Kingdom must be a collaborative project. The Gospel is a comprehensively shared undertaking that transforms the praxes of communities. Therefore, bringing people together for the greater good of the Gospel and discovering new ways to work for the Kingdom of God is at the heart of Dominican mission.

Barry University follows the lead of its Dominican heritage and sees Collaborative Service as a hallmark of its mission. As a Dominican institution, “Barry is committed to serving local and global communities through collaborative and mutually productive partnerships. The University accepts responsibility to engage with communities to pursue systemic, self-sustaining solutions to human, social, economic and environmental problems.”<sup>59</sup> To put that explanation of the mission concisely, such solutions cannot be achieved without extensive collaboration, the hard

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<sup>59</sup>The description of Barry University’s fourth core commitment: Collaborative Service. See Mission Statement at [www.barry.edu](http://www.barry.edu).

but absolutely necessary task of working together for the greater good of others. Such collaboration begins with the alliance of the structures and divisions of the university itself and is modeled by the various constituencies of the university working together on projects that the communities value as essential for social change. However, that collaboration must quickly move beyond the confines of the university proper, so as to engage the various individuals and agencies that will join in with the university to transform society and world. The university therefore becomes a fulcrum or a centrifuge of *collaborative service*, modeling for others what the world could be if people collaborate instead of compete with or subvert the efforts of others.

In this part of the commentary on the Mission and Core Commitments of Barry University, we have stressed the underlying consonance of that mission with the Dominican heritage. As we have shown, Barry's striving to affect *knowledge and truth, inclusive community, social justice, and collaborative service* in the lives of its students, faculty, staff and administration can be derived from and connected to the long-standing tradition of the Order of Preachers. That 800-year-old heritage holds a central place in the history of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Dominicans played a foremost role in shaping the original universities of Europe, Latin America, and Asia and continue to give a unique perspective to contemporary university life. Moreover what we have demonstrated is that Barry's Mission and Core Commitments represent a distinctive perspective on what the modern Dominican and Catholic university is meant to be.

## PART III:

### ADRIAN DOMINICAN FOUNDATION

*Sara A. Fairbanks, OP, PhD*

Barry University was founded in 1940 by the Adrian Dominican Sisters, whose roots go back to St. Dominic in the 13th century. St. Dominic actually established St. Mary's Convent for women in Prouille, France, in 1206, ten years before he received final approval for the men's Order of Friars Preachers. These women participated in the preaching mission of St. Dominic through contemplative prayer, counseling, teaching other women, and offering hospitality.

While the Dominican intellectual and religious heritage is rich, Catherine Benincasa of 14th century Siena, Italy, is an outstanding role-model who embodies the values of the Adrian Dominican Sisters and Barry University. With no wish to be a cloistered nun, Catherine joined a community of vowed lay Dominicans and actively proclaimed God's truth and love in all the diverse ways open to her. As an active contemplative, she cared for the poorest and most vulnerable in her society as she ministered to prisoners and victims of the Black Plague. She worked tirelessly as an advocate for social justice and was frequently called upon to serve as an ambassador of peace between feuding families and warring states. Her love for the Church compelled her to work for its reform. She even met with Pope Gregory XI, chastising him for removing the papacy to Avignon and convincing him to return to Rome. Her quest for truth and knowledge about God and humanity is elucidated in over four hundred letters and her spiritual classic, the *Dialogue*.

Unlike Catherine's life as a lay Dominican, most Dominican congregations for women were cloistered. The Adrian Dominican Sisters have their origins in one of the earliest cloisters, Holy Cross Convent in Regensburg (Ratisbon), Germany, founded in 1233, just twelve years after Dominic's death. By the mid-19th century, a sea of immigrants from Europe flooded the shores of the United States, seeking their



livelihood in America. They faced grave hardships in their new homeland, including anti-Catholicism, nativism, and a fierce anti-immigration movement. To counter these hardships, the Bishops of the United States called upon European congregations of cloistered nuns to develop ministries in health care, social work, and education in the New World. With Dominic's characteristic adaptability and readiness to risk, four women from Regensburg braved the voyage and arrived in New York City in 1853. There they established the Convent of the Most Holy Rosary and became the foundation of 11 Dominican congregations in the United States, including Adrian. In response to the ever-growing needs of immigrant populations, the congregation in New York sent eight sisters to open two parish schools, St. Mary and St. Joseph in Adrian, Michigan, in 1879-80. In 1884 six more sisters joined them with the mission to open St. Joseph Hospital and Home for the Aged. By 1923, the congregation in Adrian became canonically independent from the New York Motherhouse and became the Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary, with Mother Camilla Madden as the first Prioress General.

The third Prioress General was Mother Gerald Barry, who served in that role for twenty-eight years, from 1933 through 1961. Born in Inagh, Ireland, March 11, 1881, Catherine Barry was one of eighteen children of Catherine Dixon and Michael Barry. Having grown up in a happy and respected family, she came to the United States at the age of fifteen and lived with family in Chicago. She received her education in literature, business and law. She worked for a number of years as a teacher and then as a legal aide for her brother Frank, who practiced law in Nogales, Arizona. On February 2, 1912, she entered the Adrian Dominicans at the age of thirty-one.

In the ten years before Mother Gerald took office, the Adrian Dominicans were already opening schools in different parts of Florida, including West Palm Beach, Fort Pierce, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami Beach. Mother Gerald's two priest brothers had been recruited to serve in Florida, which was considered missionary territory at that time. Her brother Patrick was consecrated Bishop of St. Augustine in 1922, and her brother William was pastor of St. Patrick Church in Miami Beach. When Mother Gerald was elected Prioress General in 1933, the congregation numbered 965 sisters who staffed sixty-five schools, including St. Joseph College (now Siena Heights University), founded in 1919. Upholding an Adrian Dominican tradition, Mother Gerald vigorously promoted the education, growth, and development of the sisters, assuring that they were fully qualified and credentialed to teach at every level of education. She encouraged the sisters to make education a life-long pursuit because, in her words, "God's work should be done more than well."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Mother Gerald Barry, from her letter of November 26, 1951, quoted in *Mother Mary Gerald Barry, OP: Ecclesial Woman of Vision and Daring, 1881-1961*, ed. Nadine Foley, 20.

In 1937, in close collaboration with her two brothers, Mother Gerald initiated the idea of a Catholic college for women in Florida, since, at the time, no such institution existed in the southeastern states. With the assistance of their friend John Graves Thompson, a partner in the law firm of Thompson and Thompson, the work of finding an appropriate location, obtaining the property, and beginning construction was soon underway. The college was named Barry College in honor of Bishop Patrick Barry, who as fate would have it, died suddenly of a heart attack just one month before the college opened that fall in 1940.

The Adrian Dominican vision of what Barry College would be is echoed in our current Barry University Mission Statement: “It was to be a distinctive Catholic college for women with objectives which were deeply rooted in the...legacies of the Dominican Order...and the Catholic educational system in the United States.”<sup>61</sup> Even with the radically different historical and cultural context, many of the goals of Barry College reflect several of the Core Commitments of Barry University today. In the first college catalogue, the Adrian Dominicans stated the broad aims of the College:

1. To develop to the fullest the intellectual powers of the young women.
2. To so permeate this intellectual training with Catholic principles that the products...may be a regenerating force in the society.
3. To so develop the social nature of the students that they may live happily, graciously and unselfishly.
4. To develop in the...student a realization of her dignity as a woman.<sup>62</sup>

Today the Adrian Dominican Sisters continue to be engaged in a sponsorship relationship with Barry University. The Sisters define sponsorship as “an ongoing relationship whereby the Adrian Dominican Sisters influence an institution in a way that furthers the mission of both institution and the Congregation” (General Chapter, 1982). The Sisters believe that Barry University and their other sponsored institutions “are places where we can share faith and life, create justice and peace, and influence society positively and actively” (General Chapter, 1986).

As members of the Order of Preachers, the Adrian Dominicans claim preaching the Word of God their distinctive charism and mission. Through a diversity of ministries developed from the traditional ministries of education, health care, and social services, the Sisters proclaim God’s Word of love, justice, and peace to our suffering earth community. Among these ministries are special education, religious and theological education, youth and adult education, literacy centers,

<sup>61</sup> Sister Eileen, F. Rice, O.P. “Barry University: Its Beginnings” from *Tequesta: The Journal of Historical Association of Southern Florida* XLIX (1989), 9.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

campus ministry, ministries in the arts, diverse forms of pastoral ministry, pastoral care of sick and elderly persons and of those with physical and mental disabilities, parish ministries in liturgy, preaching, counseling and spiritual formation, prison ministry and legal services, community organization, and various forms of peace, justice and environmental advocacy.

In promoting their mission and vision, the Adrian Dominican Sisters established a Portfolio Advisory Board in 1975 to oversee their corporate investments and by a variety of corporate responsibility activities collaborate with others to make corporations accountable for their impact on people, communities and the environment. The board also administers the Community Investment Fund, providing investments and loans to community-based organizations that show a commitment to social justice through alternative economic enterprises. Since 1978, the Sisters report to “have made over 344 loans to worker-owned cooperatives, credit unions, banks, housing projects, loan funds and community organizations. Although the investments may provide a smaller financial return than conventional investments, they offer a greater social return.”<sup>63</sup> The Sisters also operate an Office of Global Mission Justice and Peace to work for the poor and marginalized in our society through peacemaking education, and action through legislative lobbying, community organizing, and coalition building with other organizations of justice and peace. The Dominican Family even has permanent Non-Government Organization (NGO) status at the United Nations to advocate for different issues of justice and peace. The Adrian Dominican commitment to live in right relationship with Earth and to inspire others to do so came to unique fruition in the establishment of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence as a joint venture of the Law Schools of Barry University and St. Thomas University, Miami, FL. The spirit animating these ministries is reflected in the Adrian Dominican Sisters’ Mission Statement and 2004 Vision Statement. The Sisters’ mission and vision is clearly reflected in the Barry Mission and Core Commitments and has received their full approval.

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<sup>63</sup> Adrian Dominican Sisters, “Socially Responsible Investing: Portfolio Advisory Board,” available from <http://www.adriandominicans.org/OurMissionVision/PortfolioAdvisoryBoard/AboutthePAB.aspx> (Accessed 24 September 2009).

*Adrian Dominican Sisters' Mission Statement*

In the mission of Jesus  
We Adrian Dominican Sisters  
discover and identify ourselves  
as women called together  
to share faith and life with one another  
and sent into our world to be with others  
bearers and recipients of his love  
co-creators of his justice and peace.  
(Constitution, 1.6)

*Adrian Dominican Sisters' Vision Statement*

We Dominican Preachers of Adrian  
impelled by the Gospel and outraged by the injustices of our day  
seek truth;  
make peace;  
reverence life.

Stirred by the Wisdom of God and rooted in our contemplative prayer, communal study and life in community, we challenge heresies of local and global domination, exploitation, and greed that privilege some, dehumanize others, and ravage Earth.

We confront our racist attitudes and root out  
racist practices in our lives and systems.

We confront systems where women are denied  
freedom, equality, and full personhood.

We walk in solidarity with people who are poor  
and challenge structures that impoverish them.

We practice non-violent peacemaking.

We promote lay leadership and shared  
decision-making for a renewed Church.

We live right relationships with Earth community.

We claim the communal authority and responsibility of our Dominican heritage.

We commit ourselves to live this vision.

(General Chapter 2004)

Through the ongoing sponsorship of Barry University, the Adrian Dominican Sisters invite the university community – students, faculty, staff, administration, and community partners – to commit themselves to live this vision as well.

## PART IV:

### CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS: A RESOURCE

*Compiled by Gloria L. Schaab, SSJ, PhD*

Throughout the first three sections of this commentary, there have been countless references in Catholic identity, Dominican heritage, and Adrian Dominican foundation of Barry University to what has been termed Catholic Social Teachings. Articulated through papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents, “The Church’s social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society.”<sup>64</sup> Expressing its own commitment to global, inclusive community; to interdependence, dignity and equality; to compassion and respect for self and others; to meaningful efforts toward peace and non-violence; and to systemic solutions to human, social, economic, and environmental problems, Barry University’s Mission and Core Commitments resonate clearly with countless of these documents on social justice for all persons and for Earth. Therefore, we craft this fourth section of the commentary as a resource for members of the University community to enable us to connect the Mission and Core Commitments more explicitly with themes and quotes from Catholic Social Teaching. A more expanded version of this and other material concerning justice teachings, activities, and organizations is available from the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) at [www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/socialteaching/excerpt.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/socialteaching/excerpt.shtml).

### THEMES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops delineates seven major themes that characterize Catholic Social Teaching. These themes are listed below with a brief explanation of each.

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<sup>64</sup>United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Themes of Catholic Social Teaching,” available from <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/socialteaching/excerpt.shtml> (Accessed 22 July 2009).

- *Life and Dignity of the Human Person*: Proclaiming the sacredness of human life from conception through natural death, Catholic Social Teaching declares that the dignity of the human person is the cornerstone of societal morality. Created in the image and likeness of God, “every person is precious.” Moreover, “the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.”<sup>65</sup>
- *Call to Family, Community, and Participation*: Because the God in whose image each person is created is a relational, Trinitarian God, “the person is not only sacred but also social.” Laws, policies, and practices in a society, therefore, either foster or impede the ability of humans to grow and participate in community. According to the USCCB, “We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.”<sup>66</sup>
- *Rights and Responsibilities*: As both sacred and relational, human persons have both inherent rights and communal responsibilities. These rights include those things required for life and decency; their responsibilities include their duties toward other individuals, toward the family, toward society as a whole, and toward the global community.
- *Option for the Poor and Vulnerable*: Grounded in the historical and prophetic traditions of the Jewish Scriptures (Deut. 16.11-12, Ex. 22.21-27, Isa. 1.16-17), incarnated in the mission and ministry of Jesus himself (Lk. 4.1-22 and Mt. 25.31-46), and echoed throughout countless writings in the Catholic tradition, the preferential option for the poor is a cornerstone of Catholic Social Teaching. Pope John Paul II stated, the preference for the poor “is an option, a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning our ownership and the use of goods.”<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the United States Bishops point out, “A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On Social Concern), December 30, 1987; available from [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_30121987\\_sollicitudo-rei-socialis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html) (Accessed 23 July 2009), §42.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

- *The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers*: Envisioned within the context of co-creation with God, human work is a source of dignity and participation in society and its economy. As the Bishops make clear, “The economy must serve people, not the other way around.” Hence, all human persons have “the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.”<sup>69</sup>
- *Solidarity*: Regardless of the personal, societal, sexual, ethnic, racial, economic, ideological, and religious differences that exist among human beings, all humans are members of one human family, brothers and sisters to each and all. In a shrinking world, this fundamental relationship has global dimensions and demands that we commit ourselves to peace and liberation in the face of violence and oppression.
- *Care for God’s Creation*: Our call and challenge to be co-creators with God extends beyond the right to meaningful work and participation in society. It also demands care for Earth as “a requirement of our faith.” By exercising stewardship of God’s beloved creation, we fulfill the ethical and moral responsibility to protect and promote the full flourishing of the cosmos and its inhabitants both now and for future generations.

## SELECTIONS FROM CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS

### *On Human Dignity*

“The struggle against destitution, though urgent and necessary, is not enough. It is a question, rather, of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man.” *On the Development of Peoples*, §47

“Whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.



profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do no more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury.” *The Church and the Modern World*, §27

“The basis for all that the Church believes about the moral dimensions of economic life is its vision of the transcendent worth – the sacredness – of human beings. The dignity of the human person, realized in community with others, is the criterion against which all aspects of economic life must be measured. All human beings, therefore, are ends to be served by the institutions that make up the economy, not means to be exploited for more narrowly defined goals. Human personhood must be respected with a reverence that is religious. When we deal with each other, we should do so with the sense of awe that arises in the presence of something holy and sacred. For that is what human beings are: we are created in the image of God (Gn 1:27).” *Economic Justice for All*, §28

### *Option for the Poor*

“Never has the human race enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic power, and yet a huge proportion of the world’s citizens are still tormented by hunger and poverty, while countless numbers suffer from total illiteracy.” *The Church in the Modern World*, §4

“In teaching us charity, the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due to the poor and the special situation they have in society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others.” *A Call to Action*, §23

“The needs of the poor take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximization of profits; the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion; the production to meet social needs over production for military purposes.” *Economic Justice for All*, §94

“This is the culture which is hoped for, one which fosters trust in the human potential of the poor, and consequently in their ability to improve their condition through work or to make a positive contribution to economic prosperity. But to accomplish this, the poor – be they individuals or nations — need to be provided with realistic opportunities. Creating such conditions calls for a *concerted worldwide*

*effort to promote development*, an effort which also involves sacrificing positions of income and of power enjoyed by the more developed economies. This may mean making important changes in established life-styles, in order to limit the waste of environmental and human resources, thus enabling every individual and all the peoples of the earth to have a sufficient share of those resources. In addition, the new material and spiritual resources must be utilized which are the result of the work and culture of peoples who today are on the margins of the international community, so as to obtain an overall human enrichment of the family of nations.” *The Hundredth Year*, §52

“As followers of Christ, we are challenged to make a fundamental “option for the poor” – to speak for the voiceless, to defend the defenseless, to assess life styles, policies, and social institutions in terms of their impact on the poor. This ‘option for the poor’ does not mean pitting one group against another, but rather, strengthening the whole community by assisting those who are the most vulnerable. As Christians, we are called to respond to the needs of all our brothers and sisters, but those with the greatest needs require the greatest response. *Economic Justice for All* (Pastoral Message) §16

### *Dignity of Work*

“As the Church solemnly reaffirmed in the recent Council, ‘the beginning, the subject and the goal of all social institutions is and must be the human person’ (Gaudium et Spes, 25). All people have the right to work, to a chance to develop their qualities and their personalities in the exercise of their professions, to equitable remuneration which will enable them and their families ‘to lead a worthy life on the material, social, cultural and spiritual level’ (Gaudium et Spes, 67) and to assistance in case of need arising from sickness or age.” *A Call to Action*, §14

“We must consequently continue to study the situation of the worker. There is a need for solidarity movements among and with the workers. The church is firmly committed to this cause, in fidelity to Christ, and to be truly the ‘church of the poor.’” *On Human Work*, §8

“It is in their daily work...that persons become the subjects and creators of the economic life of the nation. Thus, it is primarily through their daily labor that people make their most important contributions to economic justice.” *Economic Justice for All*, §96

## *Solidarity*<sup>70</sup>

“Solidarity...is not a feeling of vague 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 each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.” *On Social Concern*, §38

“Another root of this contradiction between affirmation and practice lies in a notion of freedom that exalts the individual in an absolute way giving no place to solidarity, openness to others, or service of them, asking like Cain: ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ (Gn 4:9). Yes, human beings are their brother’s and sister’s keepers, God entrusts us to one another. Our freedom has a relational dimension; we find our fulfillment through the gift of self to others.” *The Gospel of Life*, §19

“Solidarity helps us to see the ‘other’ – whether a person, people or nation – not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our ‘neighbor,’ a ‘helper’ (cf. Gn 2:18-20), to be made a sharer on a par with ourselves in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God.” *On Social Concern*, §39

“The solidarity which binds all...together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.” *Mother and Teacher*, §157

“Solidarity is action on behalf of the one human family, calling us to help overcome the divisions in our world. Solidarity binds the rich to the poor. It makes the free zealous for the cause of the oppressed. It drives the comfortable and secure to take risks for the victims of tyranny and war. It calls those who are strong to care for those who are weak and vulnerable across the spectrum of human life. It opens homes and hearts to those in flight from terror and to migrants whose daily toil supports affluent lifestyles. Peacemaking, as Pope John Paul II has told us, is the work of solidarity.” *Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*

<sup>70</sup> See also the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website on Global Solidarity, available from <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/globalsolidarity.shtml>.

### *On Political Responsibility*<sup>71</sup>

“In times of war, of global insecurity and economic uncertainty, of disrespect for human life and human dignity, we need to return to basic moral principles. Politics... should be about fundamental moral choices. How do we protect human life and dignity? How do we fairly share the blessings and burdens of the challenges we face? What kind of nation do we want to be? What kind of world do we want to shape?” *Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility*, pp. 1-2.

“Politics...should be about an old idea with new power – the common good. The central question should not be, “Are you better off than you were four years ago?” It should be, “How can ‘we’ – all of us, especially the weak and vulnerable – be better off in the years ahead? How can we protect and promote human life and dignity? How can we pursue greater justice and peace?” *Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility*, p. 2.

### *On Social Justice*

“In the face of *fundamental and inalienable ethical demands*, Christians must recognize that what is at stake is the essence of the moral law, which concerns the integral good of the human person... In addition, there is the right to *religious freedom* and the development of an *economy* that is at the service of the human person and of the common good, with respect for social justice, the principles of human solidarity and subsidiarity, according to which ‘the rights of all individuals, families, and organizations and their practical implementation must be acknowledged.’ (Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 75). *The Participation of Catholics in Political Life*, §4

“The way society responds to the needs of the poor through its public policies is the litmus test of its justice or injustice.” *Economic Justice for All*, §123

“One of the greatest injustices in the contemporary world consists precisely in this: that the ones who possess much are relatively few and those who possess almost nothing are many. It is the injustice of the poor distribution of the goods and services originally intended for all.” *On Social Concern*, §28

<sup>71</sup> See also the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website on Faithful Citizenship; available from <http://www.gbdioc.org/pdf/stewardship2004ServiceCitizenship.pdf>.

“Justice also has implications for the way the larger social, economic, and political institutions of society are organized. Social justice implies that persons have an obligation to be active and productive participants in the life of society and that society has a duty to enable them to participate in this way.” *Economic Justice for All*, §71

“Social justice and the common good are built up or torn down day by day in the countless decisions and choices we make. This vocation to pursue justice is not simply an individual task; it is a call to work with others to humanize and shape the institutions that touch so many people. The lay vocation for justice in the world cannot be carried forward alone but only as members of a community called to be the “leaven” of the Gospel.” *Everyday Christianity*, §4

### *On the Environment*

“The whole human race suffers as a result of environmental blight, and generations yet unborn will bear the cost of our failure to act today. But in most countries today, including our own, it is the poor and the powerless who most directly bear the burden of current environmental carelessness. Their lands and neighborhoods are more likely to be polluted, to host toxic waste dumps, their water to be undrinkable, their children to be harmed... Caught in a spiral of poverty and environmental degradation, poor people suffer acutely from the loss of soil fertility, pollution of rivers and urban streets, and the destruction of forest resources.” *Renewing the Earth*, §2

“Christian love draws us to serve the weak and vulnerable among us. We are called to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to shelter the homeless. We are also summoned to restore the land; to provide clean, safe water to drink and unpolluted air to breathe; to preserve endangered species; to protect wild places; and to help the poor help themselves.” *Renewing the Earth*, §11

## ECCLESIAL DOCUMENTS ON CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

This resource concludes with the following list of many major documents from popes, councils, and bishops on many of the themes presented in this section. All are available online by following the links provided.

*Vatican Documents on Catholic Social Teaching*  
([www.usccb.org/sdwp/vaticanencyclicals.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/vaticanencyclicals.shtml))

- Mater et Magistra (Christianity and Social Progress) – Pope John XXIII, 1961
- Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth) – Pope John XXIII, 1963
- Gaudium et Spes (Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) Vatican II, 1965
- Populorum Progressio (On the Development of Peoples) – Pope Paul VI, 1967
- Octogesima Adveniens (A Call to Action) – Pope Paul VI, 1971
- Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern) – Pope John Paul II, 1987
- Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life) – Pope John Paul II, 1995
- Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love) – Pope Benedict XVI, 2005
- Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth) – Pope Benedict XVI, 2009
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church Council for Justice and Peace, 2004

*USCCB Statements on Catholic Social Teachings*  
([www.usccb.org/sdwp/majorstatements.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/majorstatements.shtml))

- Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility, *November 2003*
- A Place at the Table: A Catholic Recommitment to Overcome Poverty and to Respect the Dignity of All God's Children, *December 2002*
- A Call to Solidarity with Africa, *November 2001*
- Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good, *June 2001*
- Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice, *November 1999*
- In All Things Charity: A Pastoral Challenge for the New Millennium, *November 1999*
- A Fair and Just Workplace: Principles and Practices, *October 1999*
- Faithful Citizenship: Political Responsibility for a New Millennium, *September 1999*
- Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions, *June 1999*
- A Good Friday Appeal to End the Death Penalty, *April 1999*
- Living the Gospel of Life, *November 1998*
- The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, *November 1993*
- When I Call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women, *September 1992*

## PART V: A SPIRITUALITY FOR LIVING THE MISSION

*Scott T. O'Brien, OP, DMin*

We began this commentary on our university's mission and core commitments with a definition of the Catholic religious imagination. We noted how the integration of faith and reason forms the very foundation of how that imagination gives rise to an intellectual tradition. We recognized the unique contribution of the Dominican Order in shaping and celebrating that tradition, particularly in the mission of the Adrian Dominican Sisters, who have educated and formed thousands of students here at Barry over the past seventy years. These led to a resource section of the commentary that reviewed the social teaching of the Church providing practical application to the Gospel imperative to love one's neighbor as oneself. In this final section, we offer a reflection on how "a Barry education and university experience foster individual and communal transformation" by presenting what we may call a "spirituality of mission."

In popular culture, spirituality is often considered to be a fundamentally solitary search for one's "deepest" and "truest" self or for "enlightenment" and "inner peace" in the face of the frenetic pace of our modern world. While the goal of this contemporary interpretation of the spiritual life is laudable in some respects, the journey of faith is not fundamentally something one "does" in order to obtain some "thing." If one understands spirituality simply as a utilitarian endeavor whereby life can be better managed or enhanced for the self, one may unknowingly cultivate a vulnerability to the loneliness and even despair which plagues so many in contemporary society. Without maintaining the creative balance between care for oneself and responsibility for others, such spirituality can quickly become yet another means by which we justify the excessive individualism and material consumption which seems rampant in American society at large.

Therefore, we have to soberly assess how some cultural interpretations of spirituality as the celebration of self in isolation have given rise to our own

experiences of alienation or hopelessness on campus. While characteristics such as gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, class, intellectual and physical ability number among the things that make us unique as persons, they too can serve to justify choices that isolate us from those we consider “other” because they appear so different from ourselves. Moreover, this isolation is often compounded by the psychological barriers which we often build to protect ourselves from the freneticism and chaos of contemporary life and which become a façade behind which our fear, anxiety, hatred and suspicion of the other is given flawed validation. Any “spiritual path” or religious devotion which legitimizes the enhancement of oneself while diminishing the dignity of our neighbor or the integrity of creation leads ultimately to death and not to the fullness of life.

In the Christian tradition, the spiritual life is primarily that of personal growth or transformation in relationship with God, our neighbor and the created world. In contrast to some popular currents in contemporary culture, the Christian tradition teaches that our search for self comes in the embrace of one another as gift in the context of community. It claims that true and lasting personal peace is the fruit of the daily choice to lay down our lives for the sake of the other, to “turn from a self-centered, self-affirming preoccupation to an openness of being for others and for God.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, authentic Christian spirituality is that process by which we live out the great Gospel paradox that to “find oneself” is to “lose oneself” in free and loving choices we make to take responsibility for our neighbor and for earth in imitation of Christ. Thus, theologian Monika Hellwig, former president of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, named the following as the hallmarks of such a transformed life modeled on the life, death and resurrection of Christ:

...a radical sharing of material resources (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37); a style of leadership characterized by service rather than domination (John 13:6-17); trust in divine providence (Matt 6:25-34); forgiveness and nonviolence (Rom 12:1-21); simplicity, total truthfulness, and a deep level of fellowship (1 Cor 12:4-31); and a style of life permeated by prayer. This reordering of relationships characterizes the commitment to a baptismal life and represents the advent of the reign of God.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Susan Wood. *One Baptism: Ecumenical Dimensions of the Doctrine of Baptism* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 2.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.



In authentic spirituality, therefore, false or destructive psychic façades become increasingly dismantled so that the boundary between ourselves and God, neighbor, and world become truly permeable and as such become life giving for all. Such growth or transformation in the Spirit allows us to become ever more hospitable towards the “Other” as free and loving persons in communion. Such a process of maturation as a self in relationship can however be a painful one. In religious language, it is often referred to as a “conversion” or a real death to self that, nonetheless, leads to new life patterned after Christ’s own. The new life that is experienced in this process of transformation is characterized by a greater freedom from the insatiable desire for personal esteem, control, and security that can often come at the expense of others. As a result of this transformation, we come to recognize that our circle of responsibility must necessarily become wider and more inclusive. A Christian spirituality of mission, then, is not an escape or denial of our dignity or giftedness or that of our neighbor. Rather, it is an embrace and mutual exchange of gifts which is measured by how inclusive we are of the least and most vulnerable among us as it is directed toward the good of all.

When authentic, the Christian spirituality of mission practiced within one’s individual life will reflect the spirituality of mission practiced within the larger Church as the community of faith founded on Jesus Christ, whose life proclaimed God’s irrevocable generosity to all. Moreover, it is grounded in the Christian understanding of the Triune God who creates, sustains and fulfills the cosmos itself. As a communion of free and loving Persons, therefore, the life of the Triune God is characterized by both inclusivity of Persons and mutual engagement in collaborative service for our world. Furthermore, Christian theology often speaks of the unique “missions” of the Persons of the Trinity whose Self-gift to our world is received as life in abundance, as freedom from sin and injustice and as transformation in holiness.

The 2nd Letter of Peter tells us that personal or communal transformation or conversion in holiness rests on our fundamental identity as “partakers of the divine nature” (1:4). In our participation in the divine nature of the Trinity, we become collaborative partners with God and with one another and become gift-givers in the ongoing transformation of our world toward the universal reign of God. It is this mission of the Trinity in which the mission of Barry University participates. Like the missions of the Trinity, the mission of Barry University as a Catholic institution of higher learning can be understood as free and loving gift which has preceded us, which cannot be earned or merited, but can only be received with humility and lived out with and for others in gratitude. Moreover, like other Catholic colleges and universities, Barry University:

...has to decide what type of Catholic one wishes to produce so that she or he will have a beneficial impact on the Catholic Church and society at large and also achieve personal goals. Part of the Christian calling is to become a “saint of God.” A Catholic institution should have processes that encourage the student to develop as a holy person who is grateful for legacies and insights from the past and can articulate important spiritual movements in his or her person.<sup>74</sup>

For this reason, the education and formation that is offered to a Barry student can never be reduced to a utilitarian endeavor or a commodity that culminates in a diploma which in turn secures a profession. It is rather a transformative process by which each of us chooses to enter into an exchange of gifts. The life which each person has been freely given is returned to God as self-gift through service of neighbor with all the education and experience one has gained in the process.

Nevertheless, a spirituality of mission at Barry rests not only on the gifts of education, but also on a campus experience of a hospitable environment of personal and communal transformation. As a mission-driven institute of higher education in the Catholic tradition, Barry University facilitates this transformation by offering a hospitable environment for development of a mature self characterized by personal integrity, character, virtue, and service with and for others. When authentically lived out by all members of the university and instilled in all curricula, programming, and activities, Barry’s Mission and Core Commitments give birth to an intellectual, moral, social and religious vision of human development and social progress. In living this vision, each person’s dignity is acknowledged and enhanced, diversity is celebrated, unique gifts are freely offered and gratefully received, and the transformation of life in freedom and love is advanced through collaborative service. Moreover, such openness to intellectual and personal growth, supported by a vibrant and engaging campus life and experience, can be the very vehicle by which other transformations that are emotional, social, moral and religious in nature can also take place. When one enters fully into this process of conversion of the entire person, what is gained is immeasurable. One truly becomes what each is created to be: fully alive as sister and brother to one another and friend of God.

This vision of the person fully alive in God as a member of a servant community was the vision embraced by our Dominican forbears. As we read in Part II of this commentary, the early Dominicans desired to live what they named as

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<sup>74</sup>Melanie Morey and John Piderit, *Catholic Higher Education: A Culture in Crisis* (New York, NY: Oxford Uni. Press, 2006), 53.

*Veritas* or Truth, and in doing so they actively pursued knowledge of the scriptures, the theological tradition of the Church, the arts, and the natural sciences. However, more than the acquisition of “truths” about the Christian faith expressed in the Church’s doctrines and creeds, the first Dominicans availed themselves of being “grasped by” and “embraced into” Truth itself, which they too named as the Triune God. Truth in this theological sense is the living and dynamic gift of relationship with God, self, neighbor, and creation which invites a personal response in both love and freedom. The *Veritas* which Dominicans experienced in their common life was contextualized by an inclusivity of dialogue partners and a commitment to collaborative service through which the fruit of their learning and reflection was shared in preaching and teaching. This dialogue as sisters and brothers, called *disputatio* in the Dominican tradition, was characterized by a mutual and respectful exchange of ideas about the Holy. As such, it was grounded in the conviction that all participants in the dialogue enjoyed the gift of inherent dignity as created in the image and likeness of God and were a “Word of Truth” for and with one another.

In the Dominican tradition, *Veritas* or Truth was therefore defined first and foremost as relationship characterized by love and freedom in the context of a common life built on respect for the dignity of one another and in shared service to the world. It follows, therefore, that living the Barry Mission and Core Commitments like our Dominican forebears should be likewise characterized by love and exemplified by freedom from manipulation and domination as we live out the truth of our own relationships here on campus. The process of education as the ongoing transformation or conversion of intellect, affect, and action will bear most fruit when we choose to become more inclusive in our choice of dialogue partners, each with his or her unique gifts, talents, and perspectives. Such inclusive community enhances the quality of our collaborative service, as each of us provides opportunities for others to freely share their own giftedness in love. Clearly, in this process of transformation, the lofty imperative of Gospel living for Christians comes face to face with often difficult issues in sharing life on campus and calls for practical means by which we may live community. Nevertheless, authentic spirituality based on the Mission and Core Commitments of the University challenges us to see how diversity on campus, including religious diversity, can be a source of strength rather than a cause of divisiveness.

This is particularly the case when ecumenical and interfaith dialogue is enhanced and deepened through campus events and programming and is supported by active participation among all members of the Barry community. When religious faith is shared and celebrated as love of God, self, and neighbor, it becomes the very wellspring of our life together as sister and brother. When religious faith impels us to make practical choices which contribute to a more just society, beginning here on

campus, it heals divisions rather than escalates hostility and violence. When religious faith provides the very foundation of a transformative education, it leads students, faculty, staff, and administration to make daily choices to lay down their lives for the sake of one another. Such transformation becomes apparent when their lives become increasingly more open, hospitable and permeable towards the “other” in their commitment to secure the dignity of their neighbor, to participate in inclusive community, to embrace both their own rights and their responsibilities toward others, to enter the lives of the poor and vulnerable both locally and globally, and to understand themselves as stewards of creation. In so doing, we come to recognize the face of God in the other, whether the other is encountered as our professor, as one who shares a room or a suite in our residence hall, as a member of a course study group, or as someone met on campus, at a party, a club, or at the movies off campus.

This humble and grateful manner of living our lives in freedom and love is forged and refined as we grow in our ability to receive one another as both child of God and sister and brother. In doing so, we keep the memory of St. Dominic, our Dominican forebears, and the countless Dominican Sisters of Adrian who founded our university seventy years ago. To live out a spirituality of mission in the pursuit of *Veritas* on campus is to be impelled to embrace and extend the gift of the mission toward our world beginning here and now on campus. In this way we will live out the Dominican motto of “*contemplata aliis tradere*,” to hand on freely what has been freely given to us as gift. To assist in this free exchange of gifts as dialogue partners, we offer the following questions for reflection and discussion based on each of the first four sections of the *Commentary*.

## FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

### PART I: CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND IMAGINATION

Which of the five characteristics of Catholic identity and imagination resonates most with your experience of the Roman Catholic tradition? Is there another characteristic you would add? How does this other characteristic manifest itself in Catholic practice and belief?

Which of the characteristics described by Hellwig and *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* most obviously manifest themselves in the life and activities of Barry University? How do you see them manifested? How might we as a community strengthen these characteristics at Barry and in our own lives and work?

Did any of the theological reflections on the characteristics of Catholic identity open new understandings for you? If so, which one fostered new insights and understandings? Share an example that comes to mind.

### PART II: THE DOMINICAN HERITAGE

The Dominican understanding of Truth is uniquely Incarnational. What are some of the ways in which this Incarnational understanding of Truth is expressed in the cultural and social fabric of Barry University?

From the early establishment of the Order of Preachers, the Dominican family was not about one group but an extended association of women and men. By its conception it involved differences and brought together unlike associates. In what specific ways could this conception of inclusive character assist Barry University in its mission today?

Barry University expects every member of the institution to accept social responsibility as an integral part of the mission of each university division whether in athletics, residential life, student accounts, admissions, or all academic units. How could the mission of social responsibility be lived out in your division or department?

As a Dominican institution “Barry is committed to serving local and global communities through collaborative and mutually productive partnerships. The University accepts responsibility to engage with communities to pursue systemic, self-sustaining solutions to human, social, economic and environmental problems.” In what ways could this core commitment embody the Dominican understanding of preaching?

### PART III: THE ADRIAN DOMINICAN FOUNDATION

In vigorously promoting the education of the Adrian Dominican Sisters, Mother Gerald Barry was guided by the vision that “God’s work should be done more than well.” How might this vision encourage members of the Barry University community in our striving to live the Mission and Core Commitments of the university? In your experience, what areas of our university life and community are being “done more than well”? What areas of our university life and community need enhancement in order that they too may be “done more than well”?

Which elements of the Mission and Core Commitments clearly reflect the influence and sponsorship, Mission, and Vision of the Adrian Dominican Sisters? How are these elements lived out in practical ways through our embodying the Mission and Core Commitments of Barry University?

Which Adrian Dominican Sisters have you known or encountered within the Barry University community? How have they inspired your commitment to the Mission and Core Commitments of the university in their living of the Mission and Vision of the Dominican Sisters of Adrian?

### PART IV: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING – A RESOURCE

Which of the themes from Catholic Social Teaching resonates most deeply with you? How has this theme manifested itself in the life and activities at Barry University? How has Barry University strengthened your resolve or fostered your ability to live out this theme in your own life or in your course of study?

Choose one of the quotes from Catholic Social Teaching listed in this section. How does it fit with Barry University's Mission and Core Commitments? In what practical ways has Barry implemented the teachings advocated in this quote? How might Barry University strengthen its practical implementation through campus community and events?

What element(s) of Catholic Social Teaching need(s) further development at Barry University? What practical ways can you suggest to foster this development?

## PART V: A SPIRITUALITY FOR LIVING THE MISSION

A spirituality of mission at Barry University rests not only on the gifts of education, but also on a campus experience of a hospitable environment of personal and communal transformation. What specific experiences of hospitality have you experienced within the Barry community? How have you been hospitable toward others in the Barry community? What difference has this hospitality made in your life or that of another?

A Christian spirituality of mission encourages a mutual sharing of gifts and talents directed toward the good of all. What gifts and talents do you bring for the good of the members of the Barry University community? How might your gifts and talents make a difference in this campus community? What gifts and talents do you need to receive from others?

Authentic spirituality based on the Mission and Core Commitments of the University challenges us to see how diversity on campus can be a source of strength rather than a cause of divisiveness. What experiences of personal, religious, social, cultural, racial, or ethnic diversity have you encountered in the Barry University community? What has your response been to such experiences – welcome or rebuff, acceptance or rejection, attraction or avoidance, comfort or anxiety, well-being or fear? Has diversity served to divide you from others or to strengthen your bond with others?

