

Introduction

The John A. Ryan Institute at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, established in 1992, is one of the leading centers in Catholic higher education dedicated to the study of the Catholic Social Tradition and its relationship to business theory and practice. For over two decades, through seminars, conferences, publications, and other projects, the Institute has explored both theoretical and practical aspects of the integration of faith and work. One of the Institute's major activities has been the sponsorship of 16 international conferences around the world in countries as far flung as Belgium, India, Spain, and the Philippines. In 2015, the Institute held the 9th International Symposium on Catholic Social Thought and Management Education under the theme of *Prosperity, Poverty, and the Purpose of Business: Rediscovering Integral Human Development in the Catholic Social Tradition*. Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, and De La Salle–College of Saint Benilde hosted the conference in Manila, Philippines. This issue of the *Journal of Catholic Higher Education* features three articles that are products of this 2015 symposium.

The lead article by Justin Anderson argues that more often than not, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) have been politicized in the academy to such an extent that this has resulted in a number of negative prejudices. The author proposes a “familial hermeneutical” as a remedy to this situation, which renders CST principles more comprehensible and, at the same time, avoids the negative effects of politicization. Acknowledging that others may have strong objections to this approach, the author thoroughly tackles those objections, thus further clarifying his approach. Anderson then discusses the practical implications of this “familial hermeneutical” approach for Catholic higher education, especially in areas of the curriculum that impart business ethics. At the same time, he demonstrates how this approach is readily applicable to other realms of Catholic higher education.

In the second article stemming from the Manila gathering, Michael Naughton and Rachelle de la Cruz maintain that Catholic institutions of higher education ought to be concerned about forming and educating future business leaders who have a disciplined sensitivity to those who suffer from both material and spiritual poverty. Further, the authors claim that success in this endeavour will be achieved only when these

institutions draw upon a mission that has a deeper root system than generic values or instrumental rationality. Naughton and de la Cruz provide a rationale for Catholic universities that connects business and poverty-related issues to their deepest convictions. The authors then offer suggestions for how this multidimensional approach can integrate specific business courses in the fields of marketing, management, organizational behavior, finance, and accounting.

Laetitia Ako Kima and her colleagues suggest that higher education has an important role to play in the alleviation of poverty, but all too often that potential remains unharnessed. This is especially the case at universities in developing countries such as Cameroon, which continue to see high unemployment among university graduates and a certain lack of professionalism among graduates of business schools in these countries. Employing a variety of concepts and approaches from different disciplines, the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources (SANR) at the Catholic University Institute of Buea, Cameroon, developed a model curriculum that responds to the needs of communities in that country. With an emphasis on value chain systems, this innovative program has successfully aided the formation of “agripreneurs,” providing them with a new horizon and framework for engaging effectively in the marketplace. The program also has attracted an increasing number of young people to the agricultural sector of Cameroon. With its three-step approach, the SANR Model is able to harness the creative energies of young people and offers new career and job opportunities in high-poverty areas. The program stresses the importance of university instructors as both agents of change and mentors in student formation, realizing an increased level of professionalism and development among graduates of the program.

The subsequent article by Michael Hahn, OSB, takes a retrospective look at *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, which envisioned Catholic institutions of higher education as both fully Catholic and fully universities. The author argues that *Ex corde* can remain a source of vitality for Catholic universities, but only when the institutions take a new perspective on several factors, such as the document’s reception over time and its implementation in the United States. As well, he suggests that the ecclesiology of communion underlying *Ex corde* offers a positive and productive path for a more fruitful engagement between bishops and theologians. The author maintains that because *Ex corde* did not pursue its own principle of *communio* to its logical conclusion, it limited the relationship between bishops and theologians to a narrow juridical horizon. He ends his piece with a picture of what the relationship between bishops and

theologians might look like if illumined by the ecclesial understanding of *communio*.

Finally, Rik Van Nieuwenhove claims that Catholic higher education primarily should be understood in terms of the contemplative disposition it fosters among its students, rather than in terms of values. To develop his position, the author explores Saint Thomas's understanding of contemplation (knowing and loving God) as well as Simone Weil's notion of "attention." The first part of the article discusses key components of a contemplative disposition and attention to God, particularly with regard to charity as desire for God. In the second part, the author outlines what would characterize Catholic higher education in light of the general vision that he outlines in the first part.

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