

# Introduction

Part of that which makes Catholic colleges and universities diverse can be traced to their varied founding traditions and histories. Approximately 195 of our institutions were founded by sponsoring religious congregations, representing more than thirty unique charisms and traditions. Others were founded by lay people, by bishops, or by dioceses. This issue is dedicated to celebrating the richness of these diverse traditions.

The issue begins with an article by Sr. Susan Sanders, R.S.M., which explores how the Church and religious congregations understand charisms and in particular, the role that charisms play in Catholic higher education at large. It concludes with an exploration of some of the challenges that all religious congregations face in trying to preserve and transmit their charisms within the ministry of higher education.

Next, Joseph Kelley shows how the Augustinian tradition provides intellectual and spiritual resources to fulfill a college's educational responsibility to prepare students for virtuous citizenship in a religiously and culturally pluralistic society.

The Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities explores the ten hallmarks of Benedictine education grounded in the Benedictine tradition. The article also provides three case studies from among the Association's fourteen member colleges and their sponsoring monasteries, which illustrate how these hallmarks are implemented.

Sr. Mary Evelyn Govert, O.S.F., takes us on a journey exploring how the Franciscan charism was given to St. Francis and the ways this gift is related to higher education in this particular tradition. The article is offered as a model to help colleagues at other Franciscan institutions as they strive to encapsulate the charism.

Providing a first-person account, Sr. Aurelie Hagstrom, S.T.D., shares her experiences of a nation-wide consortium entitled the *Dominican Colleges Colloquium*. She describes ways that these gatherings have helped in enhancing mission, supporting curriculum ideas, strengthening student life activities, and providing resources for celebrations of the founding Dominican communities and saints.

Michael Galligan-Stierle and Rev. Msgr. Franklyn Casale present ways in which diocesan colleges and universities offer a unique,

community-focused mission. The authors advance the idea that, while all Catholic colleges and universities can be transformational, diocesan institutions exist with an explicit purpose to provide a special relationship with their local church and community.

Sr. Sheila Carney, R.S.M., offers an in-depth look at how the Sisters of Mercy have restructured their congregation in the United States. This paper provides a history, timeline, and contextual description of how the congregation chose to reimagine the manner in which it relates to the sixteen Mercy colleges and universities so that its charism might be preserved and strengthened within its ministry of higher education.

To close the issue, Rev. Charles Currie, S.J., describes the Jesuit tradition of Catholic higher education. He discusses the Jesuit tradition's origins, rooted in Ignatian spirituality, and explains how the charism is reflected in the reality and practice of Jesuit higher education today.

I hope these rich examples provide you with an even greater admiration for the diverse charisms and traditions present in Catholic higher education.

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