

Introduction

Catholic colleges and universities embody the best ways to integrate the common characteristics of higher education as well as the unique dimensions of Catholic identity and culture. This issue focuses on topics related to articulating this embodiment.

Two articles focus on the importance of faculty and staff understanding Catholic identity for a vibrant Catholic culture on campus. Maryellen Gilroy describes how the division of student affairs at Siena College developed a framework for communicating its Franciscan and Catholic identity to job candidates and current staff. Joseph Ferrari and Patrick Janulis explore faculty and staff perceptions of institutional mission and community.

As the direct beneficiaries of mission and identity initiatives, students' perceptions are also vital. Vincent Bolduc goes directly to this population with carefully designed surveys of students' religious beliefs and practices so as to assess an institution's Catholicity.

Essential in communicating the identity and culture within and beyond the institution, all Catholic colleges and universities spend considerable time and resources when selecting names, images, and symbols. In this light, Sarah Bonewits Feldner and Scott D'Urso discuss how an institution's faith mission interacts with the secular purposes of the organization.

Both here in the United States and abroad, engagement with diversity on and off campus personifies the Catholic mission. Charles Strain, James Halstead, and Thomas Drexler consider the pluralistic and polycentric society in which Catholic colleges and universities exist, and then propose a model for Catholic identity. Finally, Peter Carpenter and Gabrielle McMullen explain community engagement at Australian Catholic University and demonstrate how such initiatives find their inspiration in the charisms of the institution's founding religious congregations.

May this issue continue to enrich your good work in Catholic higher education.

Michael Galligan-Stierle, Ph.D., Editor

