

## ON THE CATHOLIC AND JESUIT IDENTITY OF JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

**Preamble.** Since the first century the integration of faith and culture has been an essential characteristic of the Christian, and especially the Catholic, understanding of human experience. The first Christians—drawn together by their faith in the significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth—were members of Jewish communities embedded in a Roman political system and in a linguistic and intellectual culture that was largely Greek in origin. As the Christian “way” moved beyond these Jewish communities, attracted Gentile converts, and spread, a Christian intellectual tradition or, better, a constellation of traditions developed in the diverse regions where Christian faith took root. There emerged theologies, philosophies, artistic currents, systems of legal thought and political theory, which were the product of a continuous dialogue between faith and cultures. In the medieval period the integration of faith and culture manifested itself in two abiding aspects of the Christian understanding of human experience: that faith necessarily seeks understanding, and that all intellectual inquiry leads eventually to questions of ultimacy that invite faith response. With the fragmentation of the Christian churches in the sixteenth century, the Catholic intellectual tradition in the West developed its own characteristics while maintaining this union of faith and culture.<sup>i</sup>

1. **The Catholic Character.** The Catholic character of John Carroll University is centered on its relationship to the Word of God. For the Catholic, the term *Word of God* signifies that the self-revelation of God within human life climaxes in Jesus as the Christ. It is Christ who manifests that “God is with us, to liberate us from sin and death and to raise us to eternal life” (Vatican II, *Constitution on Revelation*, #4). Whatever enhances the human ability to recognize in word and deed the dynamics of the reality of mystery as embedded in all human activity is in the widest sense a catholic moment. Therefore, for the believer the Catholic character of John

Carroll University dwells within all human knowledge and wisdom, within all human technology and professional skill, and within all artistic creation and human compassion. But there is a particular care for the treasury of wisdom, meaning, beauty, and ethical commitment that is part of the Catholic intellectual and cultural tradition.<sup>ii</sup>

Those who are participate in this educational community in its search for wisdom, meaning, and beauty but who stand within other religious and ethical traditions share intimately in this enterprise. In this most inclusive sense, then, John Carroll University is a community of faith; that is, it is an educational community that commits itself to an ecumenical and inter-religious right to ask and to pursue questions that are ethical and religious, questions that lead us to appreciate the mystery that also constitutes human life.<sup>iii</sup>

John Carroll is also Catholic in its engagement with the world. Just as Jesus the Christ has no meaning if he is isolated from his human culture so, too, belief has no meaning if it is isolated from human culture. Certainly, the gospel celebrates the grace, forgiveness, and reconciliation with God and one another that characterizes our faith. But the gospel also invites us to be part of the life and development of all human reality, especially in its age-old struggle for truth, justice, and peace. All members of the John Carroll community share in this mission of engaging the world as searchers of truth, teachers of justice, and mentors for peace.<sup>iv</sup>

Finally, John Carroll University is Catholic in its radical commitment to forging a community that is faithful to the asceticism of authentic dialogue with others, faithful in its mutual respect for the inherent dignity of all peoples, and faithful in the practice of a Eucharistic-inspired hospitality that welcomes all God's people.

In short, John Carroll University desires to create an environment where the tradition and culture of Catholicism profoundly and creatively influence its search for wisdom and understanding and its formation for service. However, as a university community, it welcomes

other approaches and expects and honors the right to question as the enduringly best human way to appropriate for oneself both the culture and tradition of Catholicism.

2. **The Jesuit Character.** The Catholic character of John Carroll University is intimately bound to the Ignatian spiritual heritage and the Jesuit tradition of interpreting that heritage.<sup>v</sup> From its inception the Society of Jesus has embraced the ministry of the Word as central to its apostolic identity and pastoral mission. That commitment means that Jesuits see themselves as among those who sustain the command of Christ to “go into the entire world and proclaim the good news to all creation” [Mark 16:15]. The ministry of the Word developed early in the Jesuit culture into a diversity of creative enterprises, chief among these being the schools. For the early Jesuits the schools were not simply places of educational process but communities where all inquiry led to a reverence for the creation of God and a fuller understanding of the God of creation. All knowledge became part of God’s word, an insight into the humanity of Christ, and the foundation for a society of humane learning and professional competence. That dimension of the Jesuit tradition endures today at John Carroll in the rich variety of intellectual disciplines and skills that constitute the environment of the contemporary university.

Fidelity to the word of God inspires service to the world that God so loved that he sent his only Son. The contemporary Jesuit commitment to a faith that expresses itself in scholarly research and teaching and in works of justice and solidarity flourishes in a climate of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. In the contemporary university the motivations for this commitment are religiously and philosophically diverse but ought to be no less generous, no less profound, and no less graced than the educational commitment to service of the early Jesuits. Today commitment to the works of truth, justice, and peace binds the faculty, staff, and student body of John Carroll University to an essential characteristic of its Ignatian heritage and Jesuit tradition.

The Jesuit character of John Carroll University dwells in its community, whose members dedicate themselves both to scholarly work and teaching and service: service within the Carroll community, service to the community beyond Carroll, and service to the future generations of our world. Within the Jesuit tradition the phrase *cura personalis* has been used to cover a multitude of relationships between students and the educational and professional personnel within the schools. What the phrase means is the ability to adapt the total educational experience to the talents, needs, and personalities of the students. It is a student-centered commitment. It is a commitment with a tradition that originated in the personal experience of Ignatius Loyola and, more than any other inspiration, linked his personal experience to the founding of the Society of Jesus. Today the vision and value of helping people ought to frame all activity at John Carroll University. This vision and value should manifest itself in a mutual openness among faculty, staff, administrators, and students. To that end, the Ignatian heritage and the Jesuit interpretation of that heritage should create a climate of trust in which every member of the community feels that she or he can pursue her or his dream, ask her or his deepest questions, and fulfill her or his professional and spiritual ambitions. Only in such a climate can service be embraced as both personal fulfillment and a commitment to others.

**Conclusion.** The Catholic and Jesuit character of John Carroll University is a single reality. It represents a commitment to a Church within the world, serving the human search for truth and value and for justice and solidarity. It also represents a reverence for the transcendent vision that Christ preached and lived as the final best expression of human fulfillment. This Catholic and Jesuit character inspires and guides the intellectual, professional, and ethical labors that make John Carroll a university.

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> This introduction draws from the work of a large and representative group of faculty at Boston College faculty who are pursuing the meaning today of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, which they have named the CIT project. The author of the Preamble graciously granted permission to use it here as a kind of frame for the characteristics outlined in this discussion paper. For more information about the BC project, cf. “Pursuing the Catholic Intellectual Traditions at Boston College” in *Connections*, vol. 8, #2, October 2007.

<sup>ii</sup> Without any intellectual strain four recent studies can be cited that exemplify what is meant by “a particular care for the treasury of wisdom, meaning, beauty, and ethical commitment that is part of the Catholic intellectual and cultural tradition”: James Keenan, ed., *Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church* (New York: Continuum, 2007); John W. O’Malley, S.J., *Four Cultures of the West* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2004); Stephen Schloesser, S.J., *Jazz Age Catholicism, Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris, 1919-1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); and Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>iii</sup> David F. Ford, *Christian Wisdom, Desiring God and Learning in Love* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) is a brilliant example of this inter-religious quest, which is an integral part of the learning and teaching community.

<sup>iv</sup> Two recent treatments of this mission come to mind: [1] Melanie M. Morey and John J. Piderit, S.J., “Mission and Culture, An Essential Connection,” in *Catholic Higher Education, a Culture in Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) pp. 21-47 and [2] Thomas L. Schubeck, S.J., *Love That Does Justice* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007). These are a concrete reminder that Catholicism is a big tent.

<sup>v</sup> This is the heart of this statement. There is no Ignatian heritage or Jesuit tradition in or outside higher education without an affiliation to the Church. That is a “non-negotiable” for the university’s authenticity in recruitment, fund raising, and identity. But how one understands that affiliation is crucial. In this regard the addresses of Peter-Hans Kolvenbach to those in higher education are illustrative of what the Jesuit service to the Church means. For example in his May 27, 2001 address, “The Jesuit University in The Light of the Ignatian Charism,” Kolvenbach divides his talk into the points: [1] a learned ministry, [2] university and society, [3] Jesuit-lay partnership, and [4] international cooperation. The greatest service a Jesuit-sponsored ministry gives to the Church is its fidelity to the charism inspired by God.

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# Notes

## Notes on the Catholic and Jesuit Character of John Carroll University.

This statement has been in process for over a year with faculty, staff, student, alumni, and Jesuit community participation. In Appendix I to this statement there is a summary of the initial questions, which engaged fifty plus faculty and staff who volunteered first to discuss them, second, to review the draft of responses, and then to suggest corrections and further additions to this initial report.

Following this faculty/staff participation, the Jesuit community reviewed the results and made a set of suggestion, which are included as Appendix II. Then following these suggestions, there was an email survey of about 200 plus alumni; these results can be found in Appendix III. Finally, with the assistance of both Campus Ministry and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, we also sponsored a set of conversations on these three questions about the Catholic and Jesuit character of John Carroll University.

This statement was put on hold while the wider community at John Carroll had an opportunity to review the Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Initiative Statement, which was recently published in Volume 11, Issue 2 of the *John Carroll University Magazine*. Now we can offer this final draft of the statement. While the entire John Carroll community was generous with its time and talents in preparing this statement, the following were especially helpful: Ryan Daly, Laurie Frantz, Becca Machusick, Dr. Patrick Rombalski, Dr. Nicholas Santilli, John Scarano, Thomas Schubeck, S.J., and W. Jared Wicks, S.J.

## Further Reading.

### A. Essential.

*The Vatican Council II Documents*, edited by Austin Flannery, O.P. Northport, New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1975.

Look especially at the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,” #4.

This is the contemporary starting point for discussion about the word of God. On service and community cf. “The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.”

Alice Gallin, O.S.U, editor, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae, Documents Concerning the Reception and Implementation*. Notre Dame, 2006. This is an indispensable collection of material on the role of the Catholic university today.

John W. O’Malley, S.J. *The First Jesuits*. Cambridge, 1993.

### B. Helpful

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James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford, 1961.

Stephan Bevans, SVD and Roger Schroeder, SVD, editors, *Word Remembered, Word Proclaimed*. Nettetal, 1997.

Michael J. Buckley, S.J. *The Catholic University as Promise and Project; Reflections in A Jesuit Idiom*. Washington, 1998.

Paul G. Crowley, S.J. *In Ten Thousand Places, Dogma in A Pluralistic Church*. New York, 1997.

Avery Dulles, S.J. "Faith and Revelation," in *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I. edited by Francis Schussler Fiorenza and John P. Gavin. Minneapolis, 1991, pp. 91-128.

Philip Endean, S.J. *Karl Rahner, Spiritual Writings*. Maryknoll, 2004.

Howard J. Gray, S.J. "The Experience of Ignatius Loyola: Background to Jesuit Education," in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum, 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Perspectives*, edited by Vincent J. Duminuco, S.J., New York, 2000, pp. 1-21.

Nicholas Lash. *Easter in Ordinary, Reflection on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God*. Notre Dame and London, 1988.

John W. O'Malley, S.J. "How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education," in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum, 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Perspectives*, edited by Vincent J. Duminuco, S.J. New York, 2000. pp. 56-74 and "From the 1599 Ratio Studiorum to the Present: a Humanistic Tradition?" pp. 127-144.

Ladislav Orsy, S.J. *The Church: Learning and Teaching, Magisterium, Assent, Dissent, Academic Freedom*. Wilmington, 1987.

Sandra Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text, Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*. Collegeville, 1999.

David Tracy, "Approaching the Christian Understanding of God," in *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, edited by Fiorenza and Gavin, pp. 131-148.

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# Appendix I

## JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC IDENTITY SURVEY

**Question 1: From your experience at John Carroll what are the expressions of its Catholic identity that you would want to see confirmed and sustained?**

**Environmental:** There was a range of responses that affirmed the affective climate at John Carroll, expressing both a priority for charity, mutual respect, support and dialogue and a priority for inquiry, critical commentary, and the prophetic questioning of civil and ecclesiastical society. Not everyone held both of these attitudes in synthesis; that is, some emphasized the explicitly Catholic virtues of reverence for one another, compassion, care for the buildings and grounds at Carroll, while others emphasized the freedom from ecclesiastical control and the “living at the periphery of the Church” that for them created a climate of investigation and courage to look at both sides of an issue.

- How we deal with one another in daily actions, e.g., death notices and expressions of sympathy at the loss of a family member, the emphasis placed on student development and the rapport between student and faculty/staff
- The priority given to traditions, social justice, the integration of service and academic excellence, the development of conscience
- The courage to allow Vagina Monologues to be shown and to be discussed on campus
- An openness to ideas, critical thought, irritating questions that could trouble authority

**Explicitly Catholic Practices, Services, and Symbols:** While there was strong affirmation for explicitly Catholic expressions of identity, not everyone described his or her priority in the same way. Some would emphasize the presence of Mass on campus, the availability of the sacrament of reconciliation, retreats, prayer sessions, while others would emphasize the social justice initiatives, the immersion trips, and the protest marches at the School of the Americas or at the Right to Life rally in DC.

- University liturgical celebrations: Mass of the Holy Spirit, Christmas Carol Mass, Graduation Mass, full chapel liturgical program daily and on Sunday
- The preaching and music that are part of the liturgical life at JCU are of high quality
- Christian Life Community [CLC] activities
- Retreats ranging from weekends to 8-day silent retreat in January and May
- Revitalized Campus Ministry with good leadership and a talented team in place to oversee much of the practice and outreach of Catholicism, e.g.,

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the RCIA program, the lay leadership in the lectures on Ignatius, Xavier, and Favre

- About Women Group
- Fair Trade Initiative
- Allies

**Intellectual Catholic Tradition:** Again, it is important to note that while this is an area that everyone wanted to sustain, not everyone identified that tradition in the same way or identified what for them were the “non-negotiables” in retaining that tradition. Some located the strength of the intellectual tradition in the liberal arts emphasis of the school, in the Core, in the presence of committed and articulate Catholic faculty and staff, in experiences that confirmed the beauty and contemporary vitality of the Catholic intellectual tradition through specific courses and immersion experiences. Others would emphasize more the “catholicism of spirit” that embraced the world as revelatory of God’s presence and not bound by any one cultural or religious tradition, a kind of ecumenism of intellect, a fearlessness before authority—religious or secular—when that authority presents opinion as dogma or abusive intolerance as moral conviction, e.g., towards gay people.

- “We shout *Jesuit* but whisper *Catholic*” was the way one participant interpreted the overall tone among faculty at JCU
- “The Catholic Studies program is, and ought to be, a center of fostering a sense of Catholic intellectual life. This program is of greatest importance to the university.”
- The opportunity for immersion and study in a dominantly Catholic culture like that of Italy and the synthesis of Catholic wisdom to be found in studying Dante
- Center-piecing the Kolvenbach Santa Clara talk on the role of social justice within the Jesuit university in our teaching so that students appreciate the meaning of service as challenging social structures and ingrained viewpoints at radical odds with the gospel.
- Library collection that has a rich storehouse of theological and philosophical works, reflecting the tradition and its contemporary significance
- The Jesuit tradition of serious commitment to the intellectual life as inquiry and creative critique, a restlessness that is unafraid to question and to admit limits.
- Office of Mission and Identity as an expression of witness, articulation of our values, bridging different approaches towards the mission
- JCU’s involvement with Collegium

**Programs:** There was recognition that John Carroll offers a variety of programs for students, faculty and staff and the wider Cleveland-area audience, which reflects its character as a Catholic institution. Some of these programs were intramural by their very nature, e.g., “Bagging Ignatius,” Ignatian Day; others were offered for a wider audience, e.g., the lectures associated with Catholic Studies, the Bishop Pilla Program in Italian-American Studies, Program in Applied Ethics, the Cardinal Suenens Center, and the Tuohy Chair; others look towards enrichment of the Jesuit-

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Catholic character of the institution, e.g., the tri-annual Heartland/Delta Assemblies and the annual Conversations.

Some programs are explicitly religious in character, e.g., the 8-day silent retreat and the 19<sup>th</sup> annotation retreat programs; others are a combination of spiritual and professional, e.g., the Ignatian Faculty Forum.

**Question 2: From your experience at John Carroll what are the expressions of its Catholic identity that you think need to be strengthened, improved, or better articulated and implemented?**

**Environmental:** There was some feeling that the Catholic character of John Carroll was often marginalized, underplayed, and apologetically represented. The conviction of many in the focus groups is caught by this written contribution: “Developing a sense of pride in the Catholic identity of the university. Frequently, I sense in myself and in others a tone of defensiveness, perhaps not unjustified given the perils and misbehaviors of today’s Church, but through the development of our Catholic tradition we ought to produce a sense of proper pride in the tradition and, in turn, stimulate further development of that portion of the university’s character.” A little different emphasis is represented by the criticism that too often there is a dissonance between university rhetoric and university reality, e.g., [a] low staff salary vs. Catholic social justice emphasis; [b] tenure and promotion decisions are made with scant or no reference to the mission and identity performance of a faculty person; [c] dysfunctional faculty governmental structures have created a fragile loyalty towards the university and, therefore, a need to rethink and reform the Faculty Forum, making it a voice for the university mission and its implementation; [d] teaching really does not play a role in reward system at JCU, although we claim it is important; [e] serious disconnect between the Human Resources Office way of proceeding and the value of that care for the person we propose as a Jesuit ideal.

- Eliminating the Office of Mission and Identity is seen as a retreat from the personal, available, informed, and versatile to the anonymous committee which is hard to contact and hard to utilize in the same way.
- Student Tour Guides need to be carefully trained in the mission and identity of John Carroll so that visitors do not hear this reported presentation: “Don’t worry about theology; you can get by with as little as you want.”
- Strengthen our presence with and in the local Church as the premier Catholic university in northeastern Ohio
- Reflect and move on our relationship with Gesu Church and parish as these move into new diocesan parish relationship with St. Dominic
- Space for religious/spiritual reflection beside the chapel to accommodate students from other religious traditions
- Utilize the pastor-in-residence more effectively

**Explicitly Catholic Practices, Services, and Symbols:** Again, there are different emphases on how the members of the focus groups identify “Catholic,” with one set clearly stressing the external signs of the tradition in the way the campus looks, while the other set would stress more how the community acts. These are not at odds but they represent two different approaches. This observation from a faculty member catches the emphases of the first set: “Unabashed public display of Catholic images throughout the university; statues, icons, crucifixes,

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and the like. We should not be afraid to manifest who we are. Catholic tradition is not an emphasis on justification by works alone but is a way of life leading to and living in the divine. We cannot be satisfied with producing good boys and girls.” Other participants felt that we do not have a really clear, focused set of priorities that state and implement our Catholic and Jesuit identity so that communal actions result or, at least, give better direction to how departments should make decisions. There is studied disconnect between the academic and the service and faith life within the university.

- Why is there a need for Campus Ministry at JCU? The answer is not only to care for and support but to challenge, disrupt, disturb with the priorities of the gospel through promoting and discussing things like Fair Trade, immersion experiences, sexual assault, the homeless and the poor.
- Campus Ministry needs to be highlighted. It is one of the strengths of this university and its mission is integral to its Catholic identity.
- Need to find ways to integrate Campus Ministry into the academic life at JCU
- Need to integrate the work and insights of the Center for Community Service and the academic program at JCU.
- Jesuit and Roman Catholic are too often separated in the minds of the faculty and staff; they need to be seen as unified and one.
- The president of JCU is a spiritual [not necessarily a religious] leader as well as an academic leader. In addition to presiding at university liturgies, how does the president exercise his spiritual leadership? How can his role as spiritual leader be enhanced?
- As the future of John Carroll includes, most probably, a lay president, we need to think now how the president embodies the integral [academic, spiritual, and social] mission and identity of the university as Catholic and Jesuit [or Ignatian].

**Intellectual Catholic Tradition:** While these two following positions are not at odds, they represent, again, different emphases. One of these focuses on the Catholic intellectual tradition itself: “John Carroll must consistently re-assert its essential and irrevocable identity as a truly Catholic university—in its advertising and other sorts of propaganda—again in opposition to the egregious and arrogant claims of some universities to be the sole Catholic voices in university work because they attempt to present a feeble image of an academic mid-twentieth century Catholicism as the only expression of Catholic tradition. We should be more aggressive in asserting this absolute element in our identity.” The other emphasis centered on academic freedom as something John Carroll should articulate, practice, and take risks in asserting as an integral part of genuine Catholic intellectual life. It was represented that the JCU administration protects the freedom of the individual professor within the classroom to investigate, to raise questions, and to challenge but shows itself hesitant, careful, and timid about public utterances that could cause friction between the school and Church authorities. We need to discuss communal academic freedom and public expressions that challenge what some claim to be traditional Catholic teaching.

- Religious Studies was a prominent subject in most of the groups. It was criticized as unfocused in its Catholic character, lacking any strong

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introductory course in specifically Catholic doctrine, spirituality, or practice, and in need of more effective cooperation with Catholic Studies. [In fairness it was also represented that Religious Studies sees its mission in ecumenical terms, had initiated and supported the program in Catholic Studies, supported the Institute of Ignatian Spirituality, and offered courses in Ignatian spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises].

- One faculty member compared the theological requirements at Xavier and Dayton with those in the JCU Core, voicing concern that [a] the Religious Studies department ignores the c 75% of first year students who are Catholic and expect some deepening of their faith tradition, [b] that this dimming of Catholic emphasis might be one factor in our lessening enrollment, and [c] is at variance with the Undergraduate Bulletin claim, “As a Jesuit and Catholic university, John Carroll also provides the opportunity for its students to choose elective courses designed to give them an understanding of their faith commensurate with their other learning” [p.295] because, in fact, students can elect to take no course that is explicitly Catholic in its orientation. The latter is borne out by the fact that only two courses (6 credits) in Religious Studies (RL) are required in Division V (Philosophy and Religious Studies – page 59 - 2005-2007 *Undergraduate Bulletin*) of the University Core. One of these courses must be RL 101 (Introduction to Religious Studies) since it “is a prerequisite for all other courses offered in the department” (page 296 – 2005-2007 *Undergraduate Bulletin*). The second course in Religious Studies (RL) can be chosen by the student from all of the other courses offered by the department. From the Spring Semester of 2004 to the Fall Semester of 2006, two sections of “Islam” (RL 355) were/will be offered by the Religious Studies department. In addition, in the Fall Semester of 2004, two sections of “Introduction to Asian Religions” (RL 252) and one section of “Buddhism” (RL 351) were offered ; in the Spring Semester of 2005, two sections of “Buddhism” (RL 351) were offered ; in the Fall Semester of 2005, two sections of “Introduction to Asian Religions” (RL 252) and one section of “Buddhism” (RL 351) were offered; in the Spring Semester of 2006, two sections of “Buddhism” (RL 256) were offered; in the Fall Semester of 2006, two sections of “Buddhism” (RL 256) will be offered. “Buddhism”, “Islam”, and “Introduction to Asian Religions” are not only given the designation of Division V, but are given an “R” designation as well. The “R” course (international course which must study one or more societies of Asian, Africa, or Latin America) is an additional “letter” requirement of the University Core. All of these RL courses listed above have a capacity of 25 students and, in some cases, the count has reached 30. In order to fulfill the core requirements (6 credits – two courses) for Religious Studies in Division V, all students select RL 101 and many students choose one of the above-mentioned “R” courses (Islam, Buddhism, or Introduction to Asian Religions), thus “killing two birds with one stone”. As a result, over 200 students each year fulfill the core requirements in Religious Studies without taking one course dealing with Roman Catholic identity and tradition or “designed to give them an understanding of their faith commensurate with their other learning”. Furthermore, on page 63 of the 2005-2007 *Undergraduate Bulletin*, describing core requirements in Religious Studies, it is

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stated: “In keeping with the university’s Jesuit heritage, special emphasis is given to the Roman Catholic tradition”. It is obvious that, with such large numbers of students taking the above-mentioned “R” courses as a second course in Religious Studies, the *Undergraduate Bulletin* statement on page 63 concerning Religious Studies is FALSE and MISLEADING.

- Another faculty person said that he had attended the First Year Seminar faculty sessions in which there was no reference to, much less discussion of, John Carroll’s mission, its Catholic character, or its Jesuit tradition.
- Frequently there was dissatisfaction with only two required courses in Religious Studies.
- Some alarm about the lessening of Jesuit presence in the Religious Studies department.
- The Core has no Catholic or Jesuit emphasis
- While the basis for social action in a Catholic university is faith, some concern that this is frequently muted or ignored in some immersion experiences.
- JCU’s participation in Collegium needs more emphasis and dissemination

**Programs:** The comments here centered on three areas: [a] the immersion experiences, [b] faculty and staff hiring, orientations, and promotions, and [c] the proliferation of centers, program, and institutes, designed to promote one or other feature of the Catholic and Jesuit character of John Carroll.

- **Immersion experiences.** The question was raised about the depth and comprehension of the reflection that is part of these experiences. Is there too much time and energy spent on self-realization and self-fulfillment and not enough on the history, the politics, the culture, and people of the regions that the students are visiting and serving? It is a question of how transforming an experience these are or can become.
- **Faculty/Staff/Administration hiring, orientation, and promotion.** “When hiring faculty, staff, and administrators, the new employees should be asked if they understand the Catholic identity of the university and if they, in fidelity to their own integrity and conscience, can appropriately support the mission of John Carroll University.” Another participant phrased it this way: “Could you respect colleagues who espouse a transcendent set of values? Do you reverence the religious traditions others have and practice?” There is a need to re-examine the way we help new employees know and support the mission and identity of the university.
- **Proliferation of centers, programs, and institutes.** There are two questions here: [a] Do we have unnecessary duplications with too much dissipated impact? And [b] Are these institutional ways we can claim a lively Catholic intellectual culture without really addressing the question of undergraduate Core vis-à-vis the Catholic intellectual tradition? If you lay out the array of Catholic initiatives [e.g., Catholic Studies, ISI, Bishop Pilla, Center for Community Service, the Cardinal Suenens Center, and Campus

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Ministry] we have to address overlap, saturation of lectures about, more or less, the same areas of interest or concern, and drain on our benefactors. Could we coordinate these initiatives better in order to strengthen their impact, e.g. a common speakers' series?

**Question 3: From your experience at John Carroll what are the expressions of its Catholic identity that you would like to see introduced?**

**Environmental.** Here the discussion ranged around three areas of concern: [a] Are we losing our feeder schools because some perceive John Carroll as no longer Catholic? [b] The culture at John Carroll is at least twofold [students and adult support through faculty, staff, and administration] and we have to find ways to have these two cultures interface, and [c] The emergence of interest in and then a promotion of a culture of dialogue and mentoring.

- **There was some concern expressed that the trends in enrollment seem to indicate we are losing our traditional feeder schools.** For example, this year 12 Ignatius students are coming to JCU but 19 are going to Xavier and 13 to Dayton. One participant reported that an Ignatius counselor told students that JCU was no longer really Catholic. This triggered a variety of reflections in at least two groups. One faculty person recounted that as a JCU undergraduate she had two Religious Studies courses only one of which was Roman Catholic in its orientation. She had only two Jesuits throughout her undergraduate work. Nonetheless she felt that hers was a profoundly Roman Catholic education because of the co-curriculars. This kind of reflection moved the groups to look at the culture at JCU.
- **There are at least two cultures at JCU:** student and adult support groups. Students are much influenced by their parents who are well-educated, have time for them, and have invested a lot of money in their college education. That parent-student conversation forms many of the students' opinions and expectations. Is there at JCU a concomitant conversation? In the older days where there were Jesuits in the residence halls, much of this kind of conversation took place late at night, ranging over a variety of topics but bound by trust and informality. This kind of discussion led to a proposal that had three parts to it, culture, dialogue, and mentoring.
- **Promotion of a culture of dialogue and mentoring at JCU.** How can we create a culture where we talk about those questions that surround Catholicism but we duck, e.g., Why aren't there women priests? Why were the Jesuits suppressed? Can you be gay and a good Catholic? What is it to be a progressive educated Catholic today? "I do not want to teach at Ave Maria, Steubenville, or even Duquesne. I want to teach here where we ask questions, and I would like to help students engage those questions; and in that process embrace something about the mission that involves risk and uneasiness and pushing buttons—precisely because that is what a progressive Catholic should do." There was a feeling that if faculty and administrators would talk together, then they could learn how to mentor the students to help create this culture of dialogue. It was also felt that dialogue about faith is hard, especially for faculty and especially to one another. "On 9/11 there was no statement from the JCU administration and few professors interrupted

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their classes to unpack how students felt about this catastrophe and what it might mean for their lives. We should never let such omissions happen again.”

**Explicitly Catholic Practices, Services, and Symbols.** The kind of question that seemed to float within all the groups was this one: What do we want the student at graduation to have experienced at John Carroll? There was a concomitant view that the present mission statement does not really say what these discussions about Catholic identity have been articulating. How do we distinguish between what we permit and what we promote? Maybe the symbol is the kind of questions that we wish to pursue because we are a Catholic university within a Jesuit tradition that lives at the margins of the Church. Some explicit suggestions about practices, services, and symbols are printed below.

- Lenten activities through the university that are academic in tone and in content.
- “I’d like to see more younger Jesuits on campus by revitalizing the Jesuit Scholars Program.”
- One faculty person reported a student who expressed satisfaction with the courses and teachers but found nothing on weekends—no life at all. In the group someone responded by saying that in the Satisfaction Survey the vast majority of JCU students are happy to be here. Nonetheless, the weekend question endures as one we have to address.

**Intellectual Catholic Tradition.** There was strong support for some explicitly Catholic course that would deal with Catholic identity, tradition, and challenges. However, there was no agreement on whether this course should be obligatory for all, optional for those students from other religious traditions, or part of the Core but not obligatory. There was also some suggestion that there be some course on Jesuits, especially as these were fewer and fewer on campus. There was also the suggestion that there be a dimension of the Catholic tradition in every course taught at Carroll.

- There are only rare departmental discussions about the mission and how that could be incorporated into the courses offered by the department.
- We have to understand that some faculty resent the explicit introduction of Catholicism into academic life or the public arena.
- We need to discuss the value of team teaching in bringing aspects of the mission into the classroom, e.g., business and ethics.
- There was again strong urging to revisit the mission statement and revise it, incorporating a progressive sense of Catholicism that was social, prophetic, inquiring, and restless.

**Programs.** Tying into the idea of a culture of dialogue which would allow open discussion and exchange between faculty, staff, and student there were the following suggestions:

- **Set of Contested Questions Forum** which would encourage debate and discussion, witnessing to a searching as well as an assertive Catholicism. This could be run throughout the year, one per month.

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- **Senior Capstone Course** that would integrate the courses students had taken around the mission and identity of JCU.
  - **Institutional leadership at JCU that would reach out to the Cleveland diocesan educational system from K through 12** to form a network of experience and planning. This would be especially important as we move more and more into a lay led Church.
  - **Mission Committee Initiative**, replacing the Office of Mission and Identity offers an opportunity for a communal sharing of the responsibility for the university mission: its articulation and reformation, its dissemination, and its incorporation into all facets of the university life.

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# Appendix II

## Jesuit Community Responses Catholic Identity Survey

1. **Surveys** of incoming students, seniors, parents, alumni/ae who have been out for four or five years [not the old timers but more recent graduates] in which you also use questions to ascertain what ecclesiology people are coming from. It was also suggested that we might question the faculty of our major feeder high schools for their “read” on JCU as a specifically Catholic institution.
2. **Widen the expectation to shared Christian values**, e.g., do our graduates have an appropriation of the gospel as central to their lives and as a vehicle for inter-faith dialogue? At Vatican II the Church could be said to have become more Christian and less “ghettoized.” We need to expose our students to ideas that we do not agree with because that is what a university does; however, they need also to know the authentic Catholic approach to ultimate questions.
3. **Sensitivity to the explicitly curricular dimension** of the Catholic character of the school: viewing the curriculum as formational, especially the dogmatic “spine” of the faith. It was suggested that Religious Studies does well in social ethics, spirituality, even scripture but less well in a cohesive and challenging presentation of Catholic belief and ethos. **We could be clearer about our confessional stands** so that there are opportunities for students to learn about the tradition, the culture, and their heritage as Catholics.
4. **Alert to numbers:** need for a critical mass of explicitly Roman Catholic faculty and staff because frequently the non-RC’s in departments are simply indifferent about religion or even dismissive about religion and religious questions. Without people who are Catholic, it is hard to claim Catholic presence.
5. **Personal discussion about faith and belief.** While JCU is supposed to be a place of dialogue, de facto, we are embarrassed to talk with our colleagues about areas of personal faith or the devotional dimensions of our lives. Can we construct appropriate forums in which we pursue dialogically the deeper ramifications of current issues where the difference of belief does in fact inform how we think and implement our deepest values?

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# Appendix III

Email Summary: Current as of 12/4/2006 11:04:13 AM

Name: Catholic Identity Survey  
Subject: JCU Alumni Response Requested for Catholic Identity Survey  
Date Sent: 11/15/2006 3:50:00 PM  
List(s): Catholic Identity List- Grads '02-'06

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## Survey Details

Question/Answer	#	%
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### From your experience at John Carroll, do you feel that its Catholic identity is expressed?

Strongly agree	<a href="#">37</a>	21.0%
Agree	<a href="#">86</a>	48.9%
Neutral	<a href="#">30</a>	17.0%
Disagree	<a href="#">13</a>	7.4%
Strongly disagree	<a href="#">4</a>	2.3%

### From your experience at John Carroll, do you feel that it does a good job of confirming and sustaining its Catholic identity?

Strongly agree	<a href="#">38</a>	21.6%
Agree	<a href="#">90</a>	51.1%
Neutral	<a href="#">24</a>	13.6%
Disagree	<a href="#">14</a>	8.0%
Strongly disagree	<a href="#">4</a>	2.3%

### From your experience at John Carroll, do you feel its expressions of Catholic identity need to be strengthened, improved or better articulated and implemented?

Strongly agree	<a href="#">26</a>	14.8%
Agree	<a href="#">38</a>	21.6%
Neutral	<a href="#">52</a>	29.5%
Disagree	<a href="#">48</a>	27.3%
Strongly disagree	<a href="#">6</a>	3.4%

### Do you feel John Carroll's expressions of its Catholic identity are well rounded and comprehensive?

Strongly agree	<a href="#">34</a>	19.3%
Agree	<a href="#">74</a>	42.0%
Neutral	<a href="#">43</a>	24.4%
Disagree	<a href="#">12</a>	6.8%
Strongly disagree	<a href="#">7</a>	4.0%

### Do you feel that John Carroll is open to introducing new expressions of Catholic identity?

Strongly agree	<a href="#">28</a>	15.9%
Agree	<a href="#">66</a>	37.5%
Neutral	<a href="#">53</a>	30.1%
Disagree	<a href="#">20</a>	11.4%
Strongly disagree	<a href="#">3</a>	1.7%

### Additional Comments

<i>Text response. To view all responses, click <a href="#">here</a>.</i>	<a href="#">176</a>	100.0%
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