

joys institutional autonomy, which must be respected and promoted by all so that it may effectively carry out its mission of freely searching for all truth." The footnotes to the proposed 1998 norms state that "institutional autonomy means that governance of an academic institution is and remains internal to the institution itself."

However, if that were literally true, then the norms would be unnecessary. Neither the sponsor nor the local bishop would have any role whatsoever in the governance of the university and that would be the end of the matter. But that is obviously not true. Compare, for example, the definition of institutional autonomy with what the norms say should happen when the president of a Catholic university, required to be a "faithful Catholic," takes office: "Upon assuming the office of president for the first time, a Catholic should take the prescribed profession of faith and oath of fidelity." To whom should the president be faithful, the board of trustees or to some authority outside the university? If the institution is truly autonomous, it must be the former but, obviously, it is the latter.

Similarly, if the board wishes to appoint someone who is not a "faithful Catholic," then the university is required by the norms to "consult with the competent ecclesiastical authority about the matter." That would not happen if the university were truly "autonomous." In fact, it is precisely because the Vatican believes that the American Catholic universities have become a bit too "autonomous" that we are engaging in this discussion in the first place.

There should be no mistake about it; neither academic freedom nor institutional autonomy will exist at the margin if the norms are adopted. That is the whole point.

In an attempt to avoid the strictures that the Supreme Court has put in place for institutions receiving federal or state aid, the footnotes to the norms say that the church's expectation of "integrity of doctrine" that is required of all professors "should not be misconstrued to imply that a Catholic university's task is to indoctrinate or proselytize its students." If it were, then federal or state aid would not be permitted. Still, there are enough other parts of the norms—the requirement that the university be "faithful to the teachings of the Catholic church," the requirement that there be a "commitment of witness of the Catholic faith by Roman Catholic teachers," who must make up a majority of the faculty (assuming that the federal civil rights laws would permit this), the role given to the local bishop or competent ecclesiastical authority—that the continuation of state or federal aid for any university that elects to be governed by the norms remains problematic.

Implementation of the proposed norms will, in short, raise a hornet's nest of legal issues that will not be resolved easily or quickly and that may result not only in the loss of federal or state aid, but in liability by the university to those who will be adversely affected by such implementation. The failure of the bishops to address these important issues does a great disservice to those they are asking to bear these serious risks. □

Andrew M. Greeley

A SOCIOLOGIST'S VIEW

What Catholics do well

Catholic colleges and universities (hereinafter to be referred to simply as "colleges") are in serious trouble in great part because neither their administrators nor their faculties seem to have a clear idea of what it means to be Catholic. The Catholicity of a college, I will argue, is not finally affected by requirements for theology and philosophy courses, ownership by "secularized" boards, crucifixes in the classrooms, Catholic proportion of the faculty and student body, mandates for theologians, oaths by presidents, prohibition of gay and lesbian clubs, juridical control by bishops, or any of the other issues so hotly debated today.

The problem rather is the flight from Catholic content and substance which occurred in the wake of the destabilization of structures by Vatican II (and which I discussed in "The Revolutionary Event of Vatican II," *Commonweal*, September 11, 1998). By way of an example, a certain Catholic woman's college in that turbulent era announced that it was no longer Catholic but ecumenical. The school had a wondrous history of educating the first women from ethnic families to attend college. If it were no longer Catholic, why should parents pay the tuition for a Catholic college when an education which was also not Catholic came at a much lower cost at a state school?

The sentiment was part of the era. Pastors announced that their parishes were now ecumenical. The Christian Family Movement informed its members that it was now an ecumenical organization. Priests and nuns showing up on secular campuses wanted to be "like everyone else." Although most of the women college presidents in America were nuns (and in my experience very able administrators), the religious communities seemed to vie with one another in a race to find lay presidents, male presidents, presidents who were not Catholic. Rules, regulations, requirements disappeared from Catholic campuses.

These campus events were part of a larger and a more general flight from Catholicism. Gregorian chant was replaced by guitar music from the Saint Louis Jesuits. The altars, as Eamon Duffy says in the title of his magisterial book about the English Reformation, were stripped—saints, stations of the cross, crucifixes, souls in purgatory, votive candles, and private devotions disappeared. New Catholic churches didn't "look" Catholic; indeed they often looked like Quaker meeting houses. The baby was thrown out with

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the bath water, and the baby's mother too. The baby's mother, you see, was not very ecumenical.

The genius of Catholicism is that it can say "both...and"—both faith and reason, both marriage and celibacy, both neighborhood and foreign mission. However, that genius was not operative in the decades immediately after the council. Few could say both preconiliar and postconciliar, both May crownings and liturgy, both continuity and change.

Many members of religious communities, especially the younger ones, argued for the abandonment of their old missions and the discovery of new ones. The Religious of the Sacred Heart, for example, were the best in the world at the education of middle-class young women. They retreated from that mission to serve the "poor"—whatever that meant. Although the Jesuits ran excellent high schools, many of their members argued that they did not want to teach adolescents and "discerned" other vocations, some deciding in unconscious irony that they were called to be clowns or talent

As long as the student body is heavily Catholic and much of the faculty is Catholic and a religious order is somehow involved, and the buildings are the same and a tradition (like a chapel) lurks in the corridors, a school will continue to be Catholic, perhaps in spite of itself. Mandates from a bishop can't improve that or even affect it.

agents. The spirituality traditions of the religious orders were swept away with a wave of the hand. What did Madeleine Sophie Barat or Ignatius of Loyola or Vincent de Paul know about political relevance or social concern? Prophets, true and false, rose up to pronounce new party lines. Theologians (Küng, Rahner) became folk heroes to be misunderstood, misquoted, and quoted out of context. Self-admitted atheists and agnostics taught freshman theology. A master's degree in counseling and guidance became a license to practice therapy, a summer workshop on the Scripture made one an expert about the

subject, a couple of courses at the Notre Dame liturgy program qualified one as an accomplished liturgist.

It was a silly season, a time of shallow, angry, ideological romanticism. Under such circumstances there was a rush in the Catholic colleges to become "like everyone else." Many of them did not go so far as to proclaim that they were no longer Catholic, but the vestiges of Catholicism began to disappear from course offerings and student life (no more

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bed checks, no more searches for contraband beer). The situation was complicated by the attempt, begun before Vatican II, to move the Catholic colleges into the mainstream of American higher education. How did we enter the mainstream? By hiring faculty who were not Catholic, by eliminating Catholic course requirements, by ending obligations to participate in Catholic services such as retreats, by clergy dressing in sweat suits and nuns in Bermuda shorts.

Many of the changes were surely both desirable and long overdue. Catholic colleges should not have been minor-league novitiates for young lay men and lay women. However, in all the enthusiasm over change, there was little effort to try to understand what "Catholic" really meant. The council as a revolutionary event had destabilized the structures of certainty that had shaped the lives of American Catholics and their culture. Once it was said that the church could change, that it didn't have the answers to every question, and that other churches and denominations had a validity of their own, then little was left. Catholicism suddenly seemed empty of content. If you had to find new certainties—and both individuals and institutions in that era needed new certainties immediately—then where else would one look besides to ecumenism and being "just like everyone else"?

The difficulty was—though few seemed to understand—that if you (or your institution) are Catholic, you cannot, no matter how hard you try, become just like everyone else. Catholicism is different (as David Tracy would later teach us in explaining the analogical imagination). There was no time in those harried, hectic, exhausting days to consider that possibility, much less to explore it. Patently there was nothing in the decrees or the theology of the council that supported the stripping of the altars, the banning of the baby's mother, the dismissal of Gregorian chant, or the effort to be

like everyone else. It ought to have been evident from the document on ecumenism that ecumenicity involves a long and difficult effort and cannot be achieved overnight by administrative fiat.

Yet no one was to blame for the romantic enthusiasms of the era. The American church was caught by surprise. Destabilization swept it like the aftermath of a hurricane the forecasters had missed. The church in this country (and maybe everywhere) did not have the maturity, the scholarship, the depth, the poise, and the taste to cope with destabilization. So everyone ran wild. You cannot open wide the windows as Pope John did without kicking up some dirt.

The college I mentioned that became "ecumenical" by executive fiat? It no longer exists. However, it was *Catholic* to the end. It hired a few Protestant theologians, but it was still Catholic. It couldn't help itself, for "once Catholic, always Catholic" applies to institutions as well as to persons. Ethos, atmosphere, tradition, and custom are sticky qualities. "Secularization" is an inadequate "detergent" to cleanse away all traces of sacramentality and community because the analogical imagination tends to arrange physical space to display its metaphors. Catholicism has a remarkable ability to create, usually quite unselfconsciously, a cultural context in its buildings and its atmosphere. For example, ownership by a "secular" board does not put Notre Dame on the road to becoming as "Catholic" as Northwestern is today Methodist or the University of Chicago is Northern Baptist. To suggest that it does ignores both the richness of Catholicism and the profound Catholicity of Notre Dame, a veritable "Catholic theme park," as a faculty member has called it. To really become secular, Notre Dame will have to tear down the Golden Dome, the Touchdown Jesus, and the Grotto and change its name. Forget about it! Symbols, metaphors, stories, memories are much more important religiously than boards of trustees or episcopal mandates. Physically, the Catholic colleges are still Catholic. The stories and the metaphors are inherent in the structure of many of their buildings and in their names—though it escapes me why perfectly good and deeply symbolic names like Saint Procopius must be replaced by Benedictine and Rosary by Dominican.

Thus the first part of my argument: Catholic colleges have, by and large, remained Catholic despite frequent attempts to make them less Catholic. The young people who attend them still report the Catholic atmosphere: They still like the liturgy, they are still more likely to do volunteer service than students at other colleges, and they still want their children to go to the college they attend. Catholic parents and Catholic students still find something Catholic in the schools or they would not pay for them. Indeed those faculty types who want to eliminate Catholicity from the schools completely (and fight attempts to restore it) fail to realize that if they were successful, they would be out of their jobs.

As long as the student body is heavily Catholic and much of the faculty is Catholic and a religious order is somehow involved, and the buildings are the same and a tradition (like a chapel) lurks in the corridors, a school will continue to be

Catholic, perhaps in spite of itself. Mandates from a bishop can't improve that or even affect it. Indeed a mandate from a bishop and a dollar-and-a-half in Chicago will get you a ride on Rich Daley's subway.

The second part of my argument is that the opportunity which was lost twenty-five to thirty years ago can still be seized. I suggested then (in my reports for Clark Kerr's Carnegie Commission on Higher Education) that Catholic colleges should strive to do what they are either uniquely or best qualified to do—explore the Catholic tradition. In that era when everyone was running (often in anger) from anything explicitly Catholic, my suggestion could not be heard. Even today it may be too soon for it to be heard.

At the research level, there should be (not exclusive) emphasis on Catholic topics—for example, Catholic social theory, the effects of Catholic education, American Catholic history, Catholic literature, Catholic spirituality, the history of Catholic art and worship, twentieth-century Catholic thought, Vatican II, Catholic ethnic groups, the spirit of Irish (name the ethnic group of your choice) Catholicism. Why

My premise...is that, while there is much to be ashamed of in Catholic history (as in the history of all human institutions), there is also much in the tradition that is fascinating, important, special, and even glorious....

was Tom Cahill's wonderful book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, necessary? Perhaps because no one (or practically no one) was doing research on early medieval Ireland at Catholic universities. My contention is not that this is the only kind of research that should be done at Catholic universities, only that Catholic research should be a rich opportunity that the universities would want to pursue. That opportunity will be perceived only when it is also perceived that the treasures of the Catholic heritage are worth exploring, something that I am not persuaded is even now widely enough appreciated

in this country.

At the level of undergraduate instruction, courses should be available on similar subjects. Several years ago I collected a dozen or so catalogues from Catholic colleges and searched for the kinds of courses which might provide the nucleus for programs in Catholic studies. Women's studies, African-American studies, Native-American studies...why not Catholic studies?

Courses in Catholic poetry, fiction, literature, art, music, social theory, history? The history of the papacy? (Would that ever offend conservative Catholic parents! I mean would

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you want your children to know who Marozia Theophylact was!) Catholic novels of initiation? Catholic perspectives on fantasy and on science fiction and film? God in the movies? The nude in Catholic art? Varieties of Catholic spirituality? Crucial Catholic thinkers? Mary in the Catholic heritage? Major traditions in Catholic mysticism? Contemporary Catholic theologians? Images of Jesus in art and literature?

I found hardly anything. As a nun complained to me when I presented these findings, how can we teach a course on Catholic fiction without having to drop our course on black fiction? How indeed!

These are "ghetto subjects," I am told. Or are they heritage subjects? Can you really learn from other traditions unless you know your own and unless you think you have something valuable to offer the other traditions? I am not suggesting (heaven save us!) that these courses should be requirements, though a school might require a student not majoring in Catholic studies to choose a couple of courses from that area. The fundamental question is whether there is anything in the Catholic tradition worth studying. Twenty-five years ago it seemed that there wasn't, that the whole tradition had been repealed. This is no longer the case.

The University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, has a well-developed Catholic studies department, and Loyola of Chicago has established a graduate program in Catholic studies. But not enough Catholic colleges seem to appreciate the inheritance that is theirs. Had they promoted such Catholic courses all along, Rome's worries might have been calmed (though probably not). In any event, where else will there be courses in Catholic studies if not at Catholic schools? The only reason for not offering them is a lack of faith that there is anything Catholic worth studying.

The students won't take these courses, it will be argued. Yet at the very secular University of Arizona, Robert Burns's course in twentieth-century Catholic thought draws a hundred students each year (not all of them Catholic, by any means), as does his course on Vatican II.

While the colleges are at it, they might also renew, refurbish, rehabilitate the works of the analogical imagination on their campuses. Can a Catholic college, I wonder, have too many statues and pictures? Won't they offend those who are not Catholic in the campus community? They don't have to look at the images if they don't like them. The colleges are, after all, Catholic, what do they expect? Finally, we can explain to them that for us statues of the saints are stories of God's love as revealed in the lives of saints, stories of a God who, in the words of Saint Thérèse (of the Infant Jesus and the Holy Face!) is nothing but mercy and love.

My premise in this discussion is that, while there is much to be ashamed of in Catholic history (as in the history of all human institutions), there is also much in the tradition that is fascinating, important, special, and even glorious and much that has shaped who and what we Catholics are today. The tradition ought not to be considered so much an obligation for Catholic colleges as an opportunity.

Build the program and they will come. □

Francis W. Nichols

A PROFESSOR'S VIEW

Catholic studies are here to stay

I graduated from a small Catholic college in 1952. As with practically all my classmates, I had attended Catholic grade and high schools, and nearly all my teachers had been members of religious orders. Our college had midnight lights out, mandatory chapel, and an annual retreat. No one ever wondered about Catholic identity. Catholic authors—a very typical English class—summed up the spirit of the times. The big red course anthology included readings from Newman, Chesterton, Mauriac, Maritain, Brownson, and Merton. It even included luminaries of the liturgical renewal: Adam, Guardini, and Michel.

How different things are today. A doctoral graduate who teaches at a small Catholic college recently told me there are three Catholics on her entire faculty, and that the college had just reinstated a theology requirement. Clearly, Catholic colleges have left the old Catholic ghetto, but the move came with a price. Some closed, others were secularized, and many joined forces with other Catholic institutions to survive. Of those that remain, many are now looking for ways to reaffirm their Catholic identity.

Traditionally, one means of maintaining Catholic identity was through courses offered in philosophy and theology. At one time, philosophers in Catholic schools were generally Thomists. Today, they come in all flavors. Philosophy departments can no longer be expected to be the primary bearers of Catholic identity. Religion/theology/religious studies departments at Catholic colleges have analogous problems. Once theology departments were concerned with imparting advanced catechetics. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, they "ecumenized," sometimes becoming religious studies departments, sometimes becoming indistinguishable from a subset of anthropology. Partly in response, administrators created campus ministry programs to maintain the Catholic character of the institution. Not all the departments secularized, and the campus ministry programs were generally successful. But many observers feel the Catholic identity of these Catholic colleges and universities was betrayed. Into the breach comes the latest morph on Catholic campuses: Catholic studies.

Thomas Landy, a founder of Collegium, an institute on Catholic intellectual life, has described the emergence of these new programs (see, *America*, January 3, 1998). Most of the programs originated in the manner of the Catholic studies program at Saint Louis University, where I teach. The

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