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Editors' Comments

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EDITORS' COMMENTS

Catholic colleges and universities have long been engaged in supporting K-12 Catholic schools and especially in offering professional, academic preparation programs for teachers and principals. There is an intrinsic and familial connection between Catholic higher education and K-12 Catholic schools. First, many undergraduates in Catholic universities come from Catholic schools, explicitly desiring to continue their education in an environment animated by faith. Having experienced the rigorous academic formation and personal faith formation found in the typical Catholic school, young adults of college age feel most at home at a university where prayer and worship are a part of daily life, where theology is studied seriously, and social justice is lived intently. While there are certainly major developmental differences in the curriculum and milieu of Catholic universities and Catholic schools, the transition to Catholic higher education from Catholic high school is remarkably comfortable and seamless for most students. The same is true for the movement from the Catholic elementary school to the Catholic high school. Students find the school culture welcoming and familiar.

Second, and more importantly, both Catholic schools and Catholic universities share in the overall educational mission of the Church and contribute to the synthesis of faith and culture called for by a Catholic educational philosophy. There should be a connection between these different levels of education because they are a part of the same Church and share a similar mission. Although operationalized differently and in ways age-appropriate to their respective students, Catholic schools and Catholic universities aim at similar educational goals and use similar methods to advance those goals.

Two university-inspired efforts provide evidence of this intrinsic connection between Catholic universities and Catholic schools. One is a consortium, the second an association. The University Consortium for Catholic Education (UCCE) is a group of 14 institutions, all offering programs for the professional preparation of teachers for under-resourced Catholic schools. UCCE programs together place over 400 teachers in 32 states, and do so every year (<http://www.ucceconnect.com>). Additionally, this remarkable organization supports undergraduates in discerning a career in Catholic education and has experienced steady growth in participation. UCCE fosters the development of educational professionals who will become lifelong advocates for Catholic schools.

The Association for Catholic Leadership Programs (ACLP) is a group of 30 institutions which offer degree and licensure programs for those prepar-

ing for service as Catholic school principals. ACLP members include Catholic colleges and universities from coast-to-coast, all of whom operate with the conviction that Catholic school leadership is distinct from public school administration, and requires a unique blending of the knowledge base of educational administration with the rich theological traditions of Catholicism. ACLP also offers the services of a speakers' bureau for Catholic educational issues, comprised in large part by the faculty of its member institutions (<http://aclp.ncea.org>).

Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, is one of the institutions whose membership spans both the UCCE and the ACLP. Creighton faculty, under the direction of Timothy Cook, provide the focus section for this issue and with it, a significant contribution to advancing the mission of Catholic education. Three articles engage timely and important issues, all connecting Catholic higher education with Catholic schools. One article offers a study of teacher induction programs in Catholic schools and offers some insight to those administrators trying to reduce teacher attrition. Another article discusses value transmission in education and offers practical advice for implementing core values even in distance education. The lead article of the focus section provides an overview of a new partnership between Creighton University and the Archdiocese of Omaha that has been developed to respond to the need for leadership succession in the principalship of the Catholic schools of the archdiocese. Diocesan central office personnel and university faculty across the country will find helpful ideas here for connecting local Catholic schools and their needs with a Catholic university.

The University of Notre Dame recently convened a task force to study the challenges facing Catholic schools, and the report of this task force is reprinted in this issue with permission. The editors have proffered commentaries on the report, as did James Heft, S.M. The task force report is another example of the common work of Catholic schools and Catholic universities.

Catholic colleges and universities, especially the fine institutions and programs represented in organizations such as the UCCE and the ACLP, continue to serve Catholic schools by responding to manifest needs and by developing programs that help advance the overall educational mission of the Church, as embodied in Catholic schools everywhere. While no one program, university, or response can offer a panacea for all the challenges facing Catholic education, surely our future is in large part dependent on the cooperation, collegiality, and collaboration of all who share this important ministry and mission. The needs are many, and the resources often few. Connecting Catholic higher education and K-12 Catholic schools is one essential strategy that we welcome and encourage. The journal is grateful to be one of those resources that work to make this connection by being a place

where Catholic educators can talk to one another, share important ideas and insights, research common problems, and grow together as we attempt that synthesis of faith and culture that is at the heart of a Catholic education.

Ronald J. Nuzzi, Thomas C. Hunt, Editors