

## Editors' Comments

This issue features three research articles, including a study that explores Catholic school students' ecclesial agency and the dilemma schools face when teaching about controversial intra-Church topics. McDonough argues that greater clarity is needed from the Church on the aims of Catholic education to help guide Catholic schools in developing students as persons both in society and in the Church in light of students' ecclesial agency. Scott and Santos de Barona examine student self-concept among Catholic elementary school students as they transition to junior high school to determine whether and to what degree students' self-concept fluctuates during this time of transition, when self-concept typically decreases. Many Catholic schools follow a K-8 model, where there is a lack of physical transition between elementary and junior high school in contrast to the physical transition that is common in many public school settings. Researchers found that Catholic school students reported higher self-concept compared to their peers who changed schools. Cook and Simonds present a framework, based on ecclesial documents, scholarship, and current educational practice, to help Catholic schools closely examine mission and identity to develop a distinct charism of building relationships. This charism of relationships will serve students in developing critical skills for evaluating culture and building relationships in a context where individuals are increasingly becoming driven apart.

The focus section includes two documents prepared for a meeting of representatives from 200 Jesuit higher education institutions worldwide last April in Mexico City. The theme of the meeting was "Networking Jesuit Higher Education: Shaping the Future for a Humane, Just, Sustainable Globe." Rev. Joseph M. O'Keefe, S.J. provides an introduction to the focus section, including an overview of the meeting and Superior General Adolfo Nicolás, S.J.'s talk "Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today." Rev. David Hollenbach, S.J.'s paper discusses the history of the development of human rights, the Church's response and advocacy of human rights, and the call for Jesuit colleges and universities to advance this cause in our increasingly globalized society. Rev. Charles Currie, S.J. writes about the history of Catholic identity among Catholic institutions of higher education, and more specifically the development of Jesuit, Catholic identity within Jesuit colleges and universities. He presents recommendations for what Jesuit institutions can do as they face the decreasing presence of Jesuits on campus.

This issue concludes with three book reviews. Convey reviews a recent release edited by Thomas C. Hunt and Timothy Walch, *Urban Catholic Education: Tales of Twelve American Cities*. Feltwell reviews Joseph Stoutzenberger's *The Human Quest for God: An Overview of World Religions*, a textbook that can be used in high school and entry level college courses. Finally, Houtekier presents a review of *Watching My Friend Die: The Honest Death of Bob Schwartz*.

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