

Editors' Comments

C*atholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* (hereafter *Journal*) was founded in 1997 through the collaborative efforts of the University of Dayton, Saint Louis University, Fordham University, and the University of San Francisco. Start-up funding for the *Journal's* operational expenses were provided by a grant from the Lilly Foundation. For over a decade, the *Journal* was published quarterly as a subscription-based, mail order, print journal. The founding editors of the *Journal* (1997-1998) were William F. Losito and Joseph F. Rogus. From 1998-2008, Thomas C. Hunt and Ronald J. Nuzzi shared editorial responsibilities with offices hosted at the University of Dayton and the University of Notre Dame, respectively. Under their editorial leadership, domestic and international distribution of the *Journal* expanded to over 85 institutional and more than 550 individual subscriptions.

In 2008 the *Journal's* editorial offices transitioned from the University of Notre Dame to Boston College and are housed within the Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education at the Lynch School of Education. In September of 2010, guided by co-editors Michael James, Joseph M. O'Keefe, S.J., and Lorraine Ozar—with the vision of the *Journal* Governing Board and the expertise and technical support of the staff of Boston College's O'Neill Library—the *Journal* published its first online, open-access issue. The new format and design brought about significant improvement in disseminating free of charge, peer-reviewed research about Catholic education to a world-wide audience of teachers and administrators, clergy and religious leaders, university faculty, families, and individuals.

Unencumbered by the limitations of traditional journal print runs, the new publishing and distribution approach gave us hope that over time the journal would develop an expanded and more highly-engaged readership and a broader spectrum of contributors. However, we never dreamed that we would realize results in such a short period of time. **Since the *Journal* became available online in 2010, users have downloaded over 220,000 individual articles.** According to the statistics maintained by the Online Journal Services at Boston College, *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* is the most downloaded online scholarly publication in the Boston College system. The *Journal* has reached a new milestone in its distinctiveness and quality as the most widely-distributed, peer-reviewed journal about Catholic education in the world.

On behalf of the *Journal's* Governing Board we would like to thank you for your continued interest. We promise to seek even more effective and innovative means of providing the finest in scholarship, dialogue, and examples of good practice that are meaningful to researchers, teachers and practitioners engaged in Catholic education.

This issue of the *Journal* includes six main articles, a Focus Section on mission driven and data informed leadership, and three book reviews. The first of the six main articles is a piece by Rev. Young Kwan Cho who explores the relationship between the faith of Catholic high school teachers and their commitment to their schools. Based on a national survey of 751 Catholic high school teachers, Cho's study finds significant relationships between four dimensions of faith and four dimensions of school commitment. The research suggests that Catholic teachers' living faith is at the center of their intrinsic motivation to teach and a strong predictor of teacher commitment within Catholic high schools. Next, Michael James and Sandra Estanek describe the development of the *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities* (*The Principles*) as a mission-centered resource for student affairs professionals at Catholic colleges and universities. This article further presents the findings of a survey of presidents and senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) at Catholic colleges and universities in the United States and Canada regarding how *The Principles* are being utilized at their institutions to create mission-driven practices in student affairs work. This article concludes with a discussion of the efficacy of *The Principles* to be used in continuing efforts across Catholic institutions of higher education to build a culture of mission integration.

The next two articles by Patrick Manning and John White draw on the long tradition of Catholic education to address current issues of curriculum and pedagogy in K-12 Catholic schools. Manning's study explores both the challenges and opportunities for educators in implementing the U.S. Bishops, *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework* for Religious education. Manning identifies specific pedagogical methods for teaching Religion derived from a reading of texts from both ancient and modern Christian educators. Also drawing on Catholic education tradition, John White's paper argues that the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program may well be one answer to the Church's call for global solidarity by offering an academically challenging, humanities-based curriculum that, when combined with religious formation, prepares students for post-secondary success in an increasingly global and interconnected society. White's study examines how the International Baccalaureate curriculum can strengthen Catholic identity, enhance academic rigor,

and improve how Catholic schools market themselves to students and parents.

Finally, two articles by Yvette Lapayese and David Shriberg et al., address gender-specific media education and participatory action research in Catholic schools. Lapayese's article begins a conversation about the potential role of gender-specific media education in Catholic High Schools. Focusing on the narratives of female Catholic high school teachers, Lapayese explores how gender-specific media education shapes the educational experiences of female high school students. Providing a space for these girls to engage in academic and faith-based inquiry of media images in innovative and relevant ways has the potential to foster the development of authentic female Catholic voices that counter dominant media messages. Shriberg et al.'s study concludes this section of the issue with a description of a partnership between an urban K-8 Catholic school and a Catholic university to develop a culturally-responsive and socially-just collaborative process to engage school stakeholders in school change. Using participatory action research (PAR) as a framework, new protocols were put in place to improve school-family communication. Data are provided on the perceptions of all stakeholder groups on the efficacy of the collaboration and the new protocols implemented.

The Focus Section begins with an introduction by Anthony Holter and James Frabutt that centers on mission driven and data informed leadership. Holter and Frabutt's article provides an overview of the Mary Ann Remick Leadership Program at the University of Notre Dame and its use of action research to teach school leaders how to apply sound educational research methodology and take an "inquiry-based approach to educational improvement" grounded in their schools' unique Catholic mission. The section includes three studies from graduates of the program. First, Thomas Suhy explores the perspectives of Latino parents on the value and accessibility of Catholic education in Dallas, Texas. Findings from stakeholder surveys suggest that while these parents have a high regard for Catholic education, financial and cultural barriers inhibit many parents from sending their children to Catholic schools. Jennifer Beltramo discusses an action research project designed to address literacy needs of students in grades four through eight at a K-8 Catholic school in Los Angeles, California. Beltramo's findings suggest that an empirically based reading program targeting the specific needs of struggling older students resulted in statistically significant gains in fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The Focus Section concludes with Michael Brennan's study that explores the effectiveness of a school-wide house system on changing stakeholder perceptions of community, relationships, and Catholic identity at a

K-8 Catholic school in Phoenix, Arizona. Data from surveys and focus groups revealed that both students and faculty experienced positive change in their overall relationships, their sense of school community, and the Catholic identity of their school after one year of the intervention.

In this issue's Book Review Section, Katherine Ariemma reviews Tom Loveless, Ed. (2007) *Lessons Learned: What International Assessments Tell Us About Math Achievement*, published by the Brookings Institution Press. Ariemma argues that, as the world's largest school system, Catholic school educators and administrators have much to learn about instructional practices and curricula from analyzing the data from international assessments if they are to thrive in the increasingly competitive education marketplace. Doreen Engel reviews Michael J. Boyle's (2010) *Response to Intervention: A Blueprint for Catholic Schools* published by the National Catholic Educational Association. Boyle's book provides Catholic educators with an overview of Response to Intervention (RtI), a prevention-based framework of intervention for students struggling academically and/or behaviorally. The book also addresses many of the challenges Catholic schools face—namely, financial—to implement interventions. This issue concludes with Abigail Hasebroock's review of a 2006 edition of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, reissued by Harper Perennial Modern Classics. Inspired by the 80th anniversary of Huxley's 1932 classic, Hasebroock revisits the novel and argues for its place in the Catholic high school curriculum as a way to stimulate discussion on issues of Catholic values in modern society.

Joseph M. O'Keefe, S.J., Lorraine Ozar, & Michael James, *co-editors*