

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

THE IDENTITY OF AMERICAN CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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American Catholic higher education has faced and overcome challenges, both from American higher education and Vatican Church officials, in its long and rich history. Georgetown College's founding in 1789 was the first of several Catholic higher education institutions created in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The 20th century brought the challenges of accrediting agencies and mixed communication with The Vatican, including Pope John Paul II's (1990) Ex Corde Ecclesiae. This document attempts to clarify the nature of a Catholic institution's identity.

American Catholic higher education has a rich tradition distinct from other denominations. Catholic higher education takes shape in numerous institutions, has traditionally been independent from Church authorities in governance, finances, and intellectual initiative, and was slow to accept coeducation (Burtchaell, 1998). Catholic higher education's initial purpose was to prepare future clergy. This evolved into educating the Catholic laity and to its current secular structure.

Today's Catholic colleges differ in governance, mission, and students. Scholars are debating whether Catholic universities are losing their identity. Rittof (2001) describes the concept of Catholic identity as the most "prevalent and dominant" (p. 1) issue in American Catholic higher education.

This article will provide a historical overview of American Catholic higher education, including a chronological account of important related Church documents. The article will also provide a literature review on how a Catholic institution's identity is defined.

EARLY AMERICAN CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

The first American Catholics settled in Maryland and Pennsylvania in the late 1600s. Approximately 20,000 Catholics lived in the colonies by 1770, a number that grew to 50,000 by 1800. Education was not a major issue in

early Catholic circles except as it related to the clergy. Instances where Catholic laity spoke publicly about education were extremely rare (Power, 1972).

Georgetown College, founded in 1789 in Washington, DC, by John Carroll, the first Bishop of Baltimore, was the country's first Catholic institution of higher education. Carroll was concerned with America's shortage

Table 1

Catholic Colleges for Men Founded Before 1850

Year	Institution (original name upon founding)	Location
1786	Georgetown College	Washington, DC
1799	St. Mary's Seminary	Baltimore
1807	St. Thomas Aquinas College	St. Thomas, KY
1808	Mt. St. Mary's College	Emmitsburg, MD
1813	New York Literary Institute	New York City
1818	St. Louis College	St. Louis
1819	Louisiana College	New Orleans
1819	St. Joseph's College	Bardstown, KY
1821	St. Mary's College	St. Mary's, KY
1821	Washington City College	Washington, DC
1822	The Philosophical and Classical Seminary of Charleston	Charleston, SC
1828	St. John's Literary Institute	Frederick City, MD
1829	St. Charles College	Ellicott City, MD
1830	Spring Hill College	Mobile, AL
1831	Xavier College	Cincinnati
1831	Jefferson College	Convent, LA
1835	Laurel Hill College	Philadelphia
1836	St. Philip Neri College	Detroit
1836	St. Gabriel's College	Vincennes, IN
1837	St. Charles College	Grand Coteau, LA
1839	Columbia College	Dubuque, IA
1839	St. Mary's College	Wilmington, DE
1840	St. Vincent's College	Cape Girardeau, MO
1841	St. John's College	Fordham, NY
1841	St. Vincent's College	Richmond, VA

Table 1 *continued**Catholic Colleges for Men Founded Before 1850*

Year	Institution (original name upon founding)	Location
1842	University of Notre Dame	Notre Dame, IN
1842	St. Thomas of Villanova College	Villanova, PA
1843	St. Joseph's College	Willamette, Oregon Territory
1843	The College of the Holy Cross	Worcester, MA
1844	University of our Lady of the Lake	Chicago
1846	St. Vincent College	Latrobe, PA
1846	St. Dominic's College	Sinsinawa, WI
1847	Immaculate Conception College	New Orleans
1847	College of the Holy Name of Jesus	New York City
1847	St. Francis College	Loretto, PA
1848	Sacred Heart College	Rochester, NY
1848	St. Mary's College	St. Mary's, KS
1848	St. Andrew's College	Fort Smith, AR
1849	St. Aloysius College	Louisville
1849	St. Joseph's College	Buffalo
1849	Sts. Peter and Paul College	Baton Rouge, LA
1849	St. Mary's Collegiate Institute	Charleston, SC

Note: Source (Power, 1958).

of priests and believed Georgetown could train youth and educate priests (Power, 1972). Georgetown was the first of 42 Catholic schools founded before 1850 (see Table 1) whose mission was to prepare and educate clergy, provide structure for missionary activities, and ensure cultivation of religious and moral values in young men (Power, 1958). Intellectual development at these early institutions abated to offering boys preparatory training to enter the seminary, creating a center for mission activities to spread the Catholic message, and instilling discipline into young men (Power, 1972).

1850-1900

Catholic higher education received little financial support from philanthropic organizations, large benefactors, or the institutional church during the first half of the 19th century (Leahy, 1991). Only 12 of the first 42 institutions (see Table 2) founded before 1850, slightly more than one-quarter, survived

financial exigency. This survival rate was, however, 5% higher than the rate of other colleges (Hutchison, 2001).

The survival rate of the 152 Catholic colleges chartered from 1850 to 1900 was approximately 30%. The slight increase may be attributed to the greater attention paid to Catholic higher education and the growing number of Catholics. The American Catholic Church had escalated to 2 million members by 1850 and ranked as the largest denomination in the country. There were an estimated 6 million Catholics in 1880 and 12 million in 1900, largely due to an influx of immigrants (Leahy, 1991). Catholics were seeking collegiate training in larger numbers by 1865 as they emerged from the lower rungs of labor to skilled craftsmen, small shopkeepers, and city employees.

Table 2

Catholic Colleges Founded for Men Before 1850 Still Operating as a Higher Education Institution (according to current institutional name)

College of the Holy Cross	St. Francis College
Fordham University	St. Louis University
Georgetown University	St. Mary's College (KS)
Loras College	University of Notre Dame
Mt. St. Mary's College	Villanova University
Spring Hill College	Xavier University

Note: Source (Power, 1958).

Catholic higher education changed during the latter part of the 19th century. The original closeness of bishops to the colleges decreased when separate seminaries were created for aspiring priests (Gleason, 1997). Catholic colleges evolved from serving primarily as educational centers for men interested in the priesthood to providing an education for young men with more secular interests (Rittorf, 2001).

Curricular structure also began to change as Catholic colleges attempted to accommodate the university era (Leahy, 1991). A practical and scientific education was sought to accommodate the industrial expansion. Catholic schools broadened their curriculums, expanded their definitions of the student population, and modified the purposes of Catholic higher learning.

Saint Louis University became the first Catholic college to offer a 4-year traditional curriculum in 1887. The “Saint Louis plan” was a contrast from the traditional model of 3 years of academic coursework similar to preparatory school followed by 3 years of humanities. Catholic colleges moved increasingly toward the pattern of parallel courses being established elsewhere (Rudolph, 1990).

American Catholics believed research was in contradiction to religious faith (Hutchison, 2001). Pope Leo XIII and the United States bishops founded the Catholic University of America in 1887 as an attempt at reform and as a national institution of learning that would integrate faith and science. The Catholic University offered graduate training in philosophy and theology (Leahy, 1991), resembled the research-oriented model of higher education, and was to be a significant effort to respond to the challenges of modernity on an institutional and ideological level (Rittof, 2001).

EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Fifty-three Catholic colleges were founded in the first half of the 20th century and enrollment at Catholic colleges increased from 16,000 in 1916 to 162,000 in 1940 (Rittof, 2001). These colleges were faced with accrediting agencies. Accreditation began in the late 19th century with the standardization of curriculums and was a crucial factor in requiring Catholic institutions to conform to the nation’s educational norms (Gleason, 1997). The curriculum necessary to achieve accreditation often conflicted with Catholic colleges’ missions to prepare good Catholics. In 1913, the University of Notre Dame was the only Catholic institution accredited by the North Central Accrediting Association. Catholic University and Fordham University, also in 1913, were the only two (out of 119) Catholic institutions recognized as offering college-level instruction (Leahy, 1991). The Catholic Educational Association (CEA) was formed and published a list of members meeting minimum standards, but the American Medical Association (AMA) refused to accept its information. The AMA (1920) accredited undergraduate programs at only 11 Catholic institutions in 1920 (see Table 3) while the American Council on Education’s (Capen, 1920) list of accredited institutions included only 26 Catholic schools (see Table 4). Approximately 60% of Catholic colleges did not qualify for membership in regional accrediting associations in 1930 (Leahy, 1991). That same year the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU) identified only 13 schools (see Table 5) in their “list of approved institutions whose qualified graduates are admitted to the graduate schools of the Association of American Universities” (AAU, 1948, p.133).

Table 3

Catholic Colleges Identified on the 1920 American Medical Association's Tentative List of Approved Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Junior Colleges

Catholic University of America	Mt. St. Joseph's College
College of St. Catherine	St. Clara College
College of St. Teresa	St. Louis University
College of St. Thomas	St. Mary of the Woods College
Creighton University	University of Notre Dame
Fordham University	

Note: Source (American Medical Association, 1920).

Table 4

Catholic Colleges Included in the American Council of Education's 1920 List of Accredited Higher Institutions

Boston College	Loyola College
Canisius College	Manhattan College
Cathedral College	Marquette University
Catholic University of America	Mt. St. Mary's College
College of St. Catherine	Niagara University
College of St. Elizabeth	Rock Hill College
College of St. Teresa	St. Clara College
College of St. Thomas	St. Francis Xavier College
College of the Holy Cross	St. John's College
Creighton University	St. Louis University
Dubuque College	St. Mary of the Woods College
Fordham University	University of Detroit
Georgetown University	University of Notre Dame

Note: Source (Capen, 1920).

Catholic educators recognized the importance of accreditation yet remained aloof to mainstream American higher education. Only one Catholic school sent a representative to the National Educational Association (NEA) convention in 1900 and fewer than 10 institutions belonged to the organization in 1906 (Leahy, 1991). Saint Louis University vetoed membership in the North Central Association because it believed the organization received too much money from the Carnegie Foundation, a perceived agent for secularization.

Table 5

Catholic Colleges Identified on the 1930 List of Approved Institutions Whose Qualified Graduates are Admitted to the Graduate Schools of the Association of American Universities

Boston College	Fordham University
College of New Rochelle	Georgetown University
College of St. Catherine	Incarnate Word College
College of St. Elizabeth	Loras College
College of St. Teresa	Saint Louis University
College of the Holy Cross	University of Notre Dame
Dominican College (CA)	

Note: Source (Association of American Universities, 1948).

Catholic colleges did attempt to satisfy the acculturative component of standardization (Gleason, 1997). Catholic educators began to conform in attitudes and policies concerning electivism, a broader curriculum, and graduate studies (Leahy, 1991). A movement began in the late 1930s and early 1940s to make theology, rather than scholastic philosophy, the integrating core of Catholic undergraduate education (Gleason, 1997). The Jesuit Educational Association was established in 1934 to unify and coordinate Jesuit education at all levels. Jesuit institutions, including Saint Louis University and Fordham University, adopted academic departments while other Catholic institutions reorganized administrative procedures and paid greater attention to graduate studies (Leahy, 1991). These efforts were rewarded. Seventy-six percent of Catholic institutions became regionally accredited by 1938 and Phi Beta Kappa Society awarded its first chapters to Catholic schools in 1937 (Leahy, 1991). The latter was embedded in contro-

versy. Phi Beta Kappa was accused of discriminating against Catholic institutions, stating the applicants lacked academic excellence, were too involved in athletics, or were controlled by the church or religious community. Other critics believed Catholic schools should not desire to give up Catholic values to receive such recognition (Gallin, 2000).

Foundations had also largely ignored Catholic higher education. The Carnegie Foundation and the Rockefeller General Education Fund were unfriendly to Catholic higher education in the first half of the 20th century. The first significant grant was in 1956 when the Ford Foundation awarded grants to 23 Catholic colleges to improve faculty salaries (Gallin, 2000).

Conflict between Catholic college educators and church hierarchy surfaced during the first half of the 20th century. Prominent Catholic college and university officials launched a campaign in 1907 to convince the hierarchy to provide them the same aid and encouragement as they did for parochial schools. They also requested that funds stop going to the Newman movements at secular colleges so Catholic institutions could see greater enrollments (Leahy, 1991). The bishops wanted guarantees of academic quality and religious orthodoxy in return for their support. The membership of the Catholic Educational Association passed a declaration in 1926 “that secular colleges could not supply the religious and moral training available in Catholic institutions” and that “the presence of Catholics in non-Catholic higher education was not all desirable but at most in certain circumstances tolerated” (Leahy, 1991, p. 41).

WORLD WAR II AND BEYOND

The latter half of the 20th century brought further change. The GI Bill had “a profound impact on social culture, tearing down assumptions of ethnic, religious and racial superiority” (Bennett, 1996, p. 249). The legislation implicitly led to a 10% increase in colleges and an even larger number of college enrollments, including at Catholic colleges. American Catholics doubled in size to 42 million between 1940 and 1960 and became more accepted into mainstream society (Leahy, 1991). The percentage of Catholics age 17 to 25 that enrolled in college increased from 19% in the 1930s to 45% in the 1960s.

Catholic colleges increased their size and scope to meet this demand and to gain financially after lean times before and during World War II (Leahy, 1991). Forty-one 4-year Catholic colleges and 20 junior colleges were founded from 1945 to 1967. Fifty colleges for women religious, “Sister Formation Colleges,” were founded between 1950 and 1964 (Gleason, 1997). Enrollment at the approximately 300 total institutions grew to near 400,000

(Rittof, 2001).

The number of qualified priests, brothers, and nuns could not match these increasing enrollments. Laypersons were hired in larger numbers and Catholic educators largely abandoned the preoccupation with the integration of the curriculum around a core of neoclastic philosophy and religion in favor of a pursuit of excellence, defined by non-Catholic institutions such as Harvard and the University of California at Berkeley (Gleason, 1994). The influx of the laity among the administrators, faculty and trustees “meant the relationship of the college to the church no longer had a canonical character as an apostolic work of a religious community” (Gallin, 2000, p. 112).

The period after the Second World War also introduced several counter-currents to traditional Catholic life. The war and its emphasis on democracy sensitized Catholics to core American values such as freedom, equality, and tolerance for diversity (Gleason, 1997). Church beliefs on issues such as birth control became obsolete to a majority of the laypersons. Catholics left their ethnic neighborhoods and followed the Protestants into the suburbs (Gleason, 1994; Leahy, 1991).

A debate was initiated during this time period as to what constituted a Catholic college. The Vatican created the International Association of Catholic Universities and called the inaugural meeting in 1949. Membership criteria were debated, created, and initially limited to pontifical schools, those chartered by or recognized by the authority of the Holy See. The Catholic University of America was the only American institution fitting the criteria, but Notre Dame, Fordham, and Boston College also were admitted, in part due to the United States’ power. Giusuppe Cardinal Pizzardo of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities wanted all other Catholic institutions to verify their Catholic credentials with Rome. He allegedly persuaded Pope John XXIII to stipulate all Catholic universities, operated with or without papal charter, were subject to Rome. This became a critical issue when Pizzardo declared in 1963 that Catholic institutions could not confer honorary degrees without his approval. The renamed International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) combated Piazardo by electing Fr. Theodore Hesburgh of the University of Notre Dame as its leader, an election Rome did not recognize. The subsequent battle resulted in Pizzardo and Rome compromising that honorary degrees are civil in nature and that American tradition would find approval from trustees unnecessary to perform a civil act (Burtchaell, 1998).

PACEM IN TERRIS

The Second Vatican Council led to profound change in Catholicism and Catholic higher education. Pope John XXIII's (1963) document *Pacem in Terris* indirectly opened the door. The message included "all men of good will" (§1) with those in communion with the Apostolic See in his greeting. The pontiff indirectly called for Catholics to end their segregation of themselves with the world. Though he did not call for Catholics to compromise in matters of faith, he admonished them to "show themselves to be animated by a spirit of understanding and unselfishness, and ready to co-operate loyally in the objects which are good in themselves, or conducive to good" (§157).

This document immediately changed American Catholic higher education. Enrollments at Catholic high schools decreased, religious scholars attended institutions such as Harvard and Yale in greater numbers, and the Catholic college curricula were revised to include separate theological courses for non-Catholic students (Gallin, 2000).

SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Prior to 1960, most Catholic schools had a common culture, including a commitment to liberal arts, character formation and a sense of campus community (Gallin, 2000). Catholic identity was "manifested through its strong relationship to the institutional church through the founding religious order. The academic curriculum reflected the values and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and students were required to attend Catholic religious services on campus" (Rittof, 2001, p. 38). The Second Vatican Council was convened from 1963 to 1965 to involve Catholics in contemporary culture and bring the Church out of isolation and into the modern world (Dulles, 1997). Pope John XXIII sought to move Catholics from a position of isolation of modern culture to one of involvement in contemporary culture. The Second Vatican Council enhanced secularization, changing the Catholic Church and Catholic higher education. Vatican II opened the doors of the Catholic Church to a new attitude of renewal and freedom of conscience for Roman Catholics around the world (Rittof, 2001). It stressed the importance of laity, ecumenical activities, and collegial forms of government in the Catholic Church (Leahy, 1991). The laity became more involved in Catholic higher education. Only 20% of the speakers at conventions (pre-Vatican II) for the National Catholic Educational Association were laity, though laity made up a majority of the faculty.

LAND O'LAKES

The Second Vatican Council's momentum spread into higher education. The IFCU met at Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, in 1967, marking the first official effort made by a broad group of Catholic educators to define the nature of Catholic higher education (Gleason, 1997). Their report, "The Nature of the Contemporary Catholic University," was a statement of independence from Catholic higher education to the universal Church (Gallin, 2000). It stated a Catholic university must have a true autonomy and academic freedom.

The Catholic university today must be a university in the full modern sense of the word, with a strong commitment to and concern for academic excellence. To perform its teaching and research functions effectively the Catholic university must have a true autonomy and academic freedom in the face of authority of whatever kind, lay or clerical, external to the academic community itself. To say this is simply to assert that institutional autonomy and academic freedom are essential conditions of life and growth and indeed survival for Catholic universities as for all universities. (IFCU, 1997, p. 119)

The Land O' Lakes Statement also addressed the following components: the theological disciplines, the primary task of theological faculty, the interdisciplinary dialogue in the Catholic university, the Catholic university as the critical reflective intelligence of the Church, the Catholic university and research, and the Catholic university and public service (Gallin, 1992). The document stated "theological investigation today must serve the ecumenical goals of collaboration and unity" (IFCU, 1997, p. 120). It also stated Catholic institutions will support research in all fields. They will "be prepared to undertake by preference, though not exclusively, such research as will deal with problems of greater human urgency or of greater Christian concern" (Gallin, 1992, p. 9).

These statements caused much controversy, but often overlooked are equally important parts of the document. The Land O' Lakes Statement clearly stipulates Catholicism must remain a part of a Catholic college's identity. It also states Catholicism must be perceptibly present and effectively operative. It stated that the Catholic university must acknowledge theology as a legitimate discipline (Burtchaell, 1998) and has an obligation to carry on public service activities. The document concludes by stating "the Catholic university of the future will be a true modern university but specifically Catholic in profound and creative ways for the service of society and the people of God" (IFCU, 1997, p. 121).

BETWEEN LAND O'LAKES AND *EX CORDE ECCLESIAE*

The search for Catholic identity after the Land O'Lakes Statement and the resulting change in Catholic higher education continued in the late 1960s and 1970s. A major curricula change occurred in the religion and philosophy areas. What had previously been two components of a unified search for the truth became two distinct disciplines. Philosophy was no longer a foundation for theology (Gallin, 2000).

The Decree on Ecumenism in Higher Education was released in 1970. This document was subsequent to the 1964 Decree on Ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council (Gallin, 2000). The document contained much language revolutionary and indicative of the change in American Catholic higher education:

Moreover, some, even very many, of the most significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church....Sacred theology and other branches of knowledge, especially those of a historical nature, must be taught with due regard for the ecumenical point of view, so that they may correspond as exactly with possible with the facts. (as cited in Gallin, 2000, pp. 26-27)

Three noteworthy meetings occurred during this time period. The American Association of Catholic Colleges (AACC) reaffirmed its support of the 1940 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) "Statement on Academic Freedom" at a 1969 joint meeting. This meeting was held largely due to faculty strikes, including the notorious strike at St. John's University, and threats of strikes over individual faculty academic freedom (Gallin, 2000). In 1976, the University of Notre Dame hosted a meeting entitled "Vatican Council: Ten Years Later." This meeting incorporated the group Call to Action and produced the recommendation that Catholic universities undertake research useful to bishops and other groups working on social policy.

The Purpose and Identity Committee of the AACC appointed a subcommittee to produce a statement in 1977 on Catholic identity that could be used specifically for institutional self-studies. A desire existed to retain a Catholic identity, but an unwillingness to create a controversy over faculty hiring also surfaced (Gallin, 2000).

EX CORDE ECCLESIAE

Some experts believe the Land O'Lakes Statement initiated a movement among Catholic conservatives that eventually led to the historical and controversial *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990). The Congregation for

Catholic Education began the process to formulate a document to define a Catholic university in 1980 (Gallin, 1992). Pope John Paul II (1990) published *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* 10 years later and bishops' committees in each country were to develop local norms. The United States Catholic Conference, in consultation with the American Catholic higher education community, passed and submitted a plan for implementation of *Ex Corde* by a 223-6 vote in November 1996. The plan was sent to the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education for a review and a *recognitio*, or formal approval (Leibrecht, 2001).

The Congregation refused to offer a *recognitio*, submitting its document *Observations of the Congregation for Catholic Education on U.S. Bishops' Application Document* in April 1997 (Leibrecht, 2001). Cardinal Pio Laghi, the Congregation's prefect, declared the ordinances a draft and called for another text (Schaeffer, 1997). The Congregation noted the lack of "the necessary juridical elements" (as cited in Leibrecht, 2001, p. 142) that might be needed for certain tensions, crises, or problems and hoped the bishops' promised study of the mandate Catholic theologians were to receive from their local bishop as described in *Ex Corde* would develop. The bishops passed another draft of *The Application of Ex Corde Ecclesiae* for the United States 223-31 in November 1999. Rome approved the document, which included that a detailed procedure be developed outlining the process of requesting and granting (or withdrawing) the mandatum, in June 2000, (Breslin, 2000; Conn, 2001) and *Ex Corde* went into effect at the beginning of the 2001-2002 academic year. The United States bishops, in coordination with representatives of Catholic colleges, have developed a process to review its impact and a formal evaluation will occur in 2011 (Leibrecht, 2001).

Ex Corde's purpose was to clarify Catholic character and identity in higher education (Rittorf, 2001) and to define the relationship between Rome and Catholic colleges (Lively, 1996). Hutchison described *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* as "an affirmative document aligning the Catholic college and university with the mission of the Church, encouraging ongoing dialogue between faith and culture and emphasizing the role of the university in furthering this dialogue" (2001, p. 8). The document calls for a stronger, more concrete affirmation or articulation of the Catholic character of universities and an organic unity between the Gospel and culture (Buckley, 1997). Catholic institutions are "to make known their Catholic identity by integrating Catholic teaching and discipline in all university activities" (Alexander & Alexander, 2000, p. 1).

Pope John Paul II listed characteristics that make Catholic institutions Catholic.

- A Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such;
- A continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research;
- Fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church; and
- An institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life. (John Paul II, 1990, §13)

Catholic colleges are also to contain the following provisions:

- Announce publicly status as a Catholic university and commitment to Catholic identity;
- The majority of trustees are committed Catholics;
- The president is a practicing Catholic;
- Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in the university's spiritual life;
- Students, with regard to personal freedom, should have opportunities to receive authentic Catholic teachings and participate in the faith; and
- Theology professors are to receive a "mandatum" from the local bishop (George, 2000, pp. 243-244).

Pope John Paul II stated part of the nature of a Catholic university is "to make known its Catholic identity, either in a mission statement or in some other appropriate public document" (1990, Art.2, §3). He added, "The university, particularly through its "structure and its regulations, is to provide means which will guarantee the expression and preservation of this identity" (1990, Art.2, §3).

EX CORDE ECCLESIAE AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Ex Corde Ecclesiae addressed the issues of academic freedom and institutional autonomy brought forth in the Land O'Lakes Statement.

It (every Catholic university) possesses that institutional autonomy necessary to perform its functions effectively and guarantees its members academic freedom, so long as the rights of the individual person and of the community are preserved within the confines of the truth and the common good. (Rittof, 2001, p. 51)

Catholic educators believe other statements from *Ex Corde* are not consistent with this excerpt. George described it as a “shock” to the previous Land O’ Lakes Statement (2000). *Ex Corde* stipulated every Catholic college’s theology faculty who are Catholic are to receive a mandate from the bishop in order to teach. The university is also to recognize the authority of the Church in teaching of faith and morals. The fifth article, “The Catholic University within the Church” opens with “every Catholic university is to maintain communion with the universal church and Holy See” (John Paul II, 1990, Art.5, §1). It grants the bishop the responsibility to watch over the preservation and strengthening of the Catholic character of Catholic colleges and the authority to “take the initiatives necessary” (Art.5, §2) to address problematic situations.

FACULTY

Catholic identity has been linked to the faculty. Pope John Paul II called for Catholic colleges to have a majority of the faculty be Catholic. Other scholars have used the term critical mass. This term has been interpreted quantitatively to mean a minimum of a simple majority. It has been defined qualitatively as being “active, committed and effective” (Provost, 2000, p. 23). Haughey stated “a Catholic school is only as Catholic as its faculty think and teach catholically” (1997, p. 149) and called for faculty to get on board with Catholic identity. To enact this vision, institutions will have to act their way into a new way of thinking since it is unlikely they will think their way into a new way of acting. O’Brien (2002) believes the topic of Catholic identity will be all talk until it gets down to research choices of the faculty and the institutional rewards (Dwyer & Zech, 1999). Steinfels (1997) cited studies indicating that some faculty bemoan the loss of Catholic identity, others see the concept as merely ceremonial, and yet others resent the idea Catholic identity may have an impact on teaching and research.

Breslin (2000) focused on faculty hiring practices, stating such practices need to be reviewed to ensure the mission and philosophy of the college is maintained. Marsden also believes Catholic identity is

linked to hiring. Once a church related institution adopts a policy it will hire the best qualified candidates, faculty will have a profile like other schools. Their loyalties will be to the national cultures of professions rather than ecclesiastical tradition. (as cited in Steinfels, 1997, p. 201)

Heft, Katsuyama and Pestello’s (2001) research indicates Catholic faculty hired at Catholic institutions feel a greater positive effect of that Catholic

affiliation on all components (i.e., teaching, research, and service) of their jobs.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Catholic identity has also been correlated with the board of trustees. Historically, Catholic colleges' boards were made up of members of the religious founding order. In the mid-1960s, institutions such as Saint Louis University and the University of Notre Dame initiated change by converting their boards to include laity. These conversions occurred at different rates and different stages but by 1969, all 66 Catholic schools in the Middle States Association had switched (Gallin, 2000).

Such moves resulted from three forces: lay participation was a natural growth of the laity's new role in the Catholic Church as defined by the Second Vatican Council; the rapid increases in enrollments after the Second World War created more complex institutions; and the *The Horace Mann League of the United States of America, Inc., et al. v. Board of Public Works of Maryland et al.* (1966) was decided by the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Horace Mann case involved two Catholic colleges and one Methodist college that were found to be sectarian and ineligible for federal funds. This scared Catholic college presidents into expanding the boards as a way of demonstrating their institutions were not entirely religious (Dosen, 2001).

Dosen cited Gallin's five themes of why Catholic colleges brought lay participation into the governance structure. These included the following:

- to achieve the level of educational excellence which would allow them to compete in the academic world with other private universities;
- to gather the needed resources to support this step upward by more efficacious use of the expertise of the lay advisory boards in the areas of finance and management;
- to change the image of the university in the eyes of local communities, states and federal granting agencies...;
- to secure strong lay participation in fundraising efforts through alumni/ae and trustee contacts with foundations and corporations;
- to bring a more realistic understanding of the secular world to the decision-making process. (Dosen, 2001, p. 3)

CONCLUSION

American Catholic higher education has existed for more than 200 years, yet what it means for a college to be Catholic remains unresolved. The recent

debate on a Catholic institution's identity sparked by the document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990) has provided contentious moments. Catholic institutions have again been forced to determine how to balance academic freedom with Catholic tradition and teachings.

Several authors have expressed opinions concerning the primary components necessary to demonstrate Catholic identity. A significant portion of a college's Catholic identity lies within the faculty, the president, and the board of trustees. The hiring and selection process of these three campus constituents must continue to be observed. There is importance in retaining the critical mass of the former, both quantitatively and qualitatively, as Provost (2000) suggests.

Another significant component in defining an institution's Catholic identity is its commitment to demonstrating pride in its Catholicity and its teaching of concepts such as justice and equality. This may take the form of outward symbols, an enhanced emphasis on extracurricular service trips, or through curricular offerings and learning objectives.

Mission statements, learning objectives, and strategic planning at Catholic colleges are focusing on their Catholic identity and how it is best portrayed. Such reflection, in considering the aforementioned concepts of interpreting and balancing *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990), academic freedom, hiring practices, and demonstrating Catholic pride through outward signs and the curriculum, will strengthen American Catholic higher education, an entity that already has had several defining moments throughout its history. The visions for Catholic higher education offered by both Pope John Paul II and the Land O' Lakes document can be realized without diminishing that history.

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