

## EDITORS' COMMENTS

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The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s in the United States, spearheaded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., spread to other segments of American society. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees equal protection under the law and due process to all citizens was applied to other “minority” groups, who had been historically denied these rights. Students with special needs were among these groups. Public Law 94-142, enacted in 1975, mandated that public schools serve all students with disabilities. Three years earlier, in *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the American bishops, using the terminology then common, had declared the right of all “handicapped persons” to receive a religious education. And centuries before that, Jesus himself practiced a very inclusive ministry, welcoming all, especially the marginalized by society.

The focus section of Volume 10, Number 4, deals with the issue of serving students with special needs in Catholic schools. W. Patrick Durow, in “Including and Serving Students With Special Needs in Catholic Schools: A Report of Practices,” reminds us that the mission of the Catholic Church, which includes its schools, is inclusive. In 2002, the bishops wrote in *Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities* that costs must never interfere with this teaching, because it is a “pastoral duty.” Durow goes on to state that while the number of students with special needs in Catholic schools is imprecise, their number is larger than commonly thought. This essay, based on a survey of 19 Midwestern dioceses, reports that elementary schools are more likely than secondary schools to have programs for students with special needs, and lists the barriers, with cost high on the list, to Catholic schools providing these services. Durow ends the thoughtful essay with suggested solutions to the barriers, a description of notable current practices, a treatment of emerging themes in both mission and practice, implications and recommendations for Catholic schools and policymakers, and with questions for further study.

The next two essays present illustrations of several ways in which Catholic schools are attempting to meet the challenge of educating students with special needs. The first of these, written by a trio of educators at The Catholic University of America (CUA), is entitled “Preparing Special Educators to Assume Collaborative and Consultative Roles.” It describes the program developed at the CUA, in collaboration with the Joseph P. Kennedy Institute that is also located in Washington, DC, which prepares educators by means of content knowledge and field-based programs, and enrolls both parochial and public school personnel as students.

The second follow-up essay, “Supporting Children With Disabilities in the Catholic Schools,” sets forth the model of instructional aides, called

paraeducators, as an effective way to educate students with special needs in the limited resource, inner-city elementary schools of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC.

Three other essays complete the article portion of this volume. They deal with the athletic multiplier, currently being used against athletic teams from Catholic high schools in some states; the role of the internship between “Marketplace and Liberal Arts Education” in the Catholic higher education tradition; and a treatment of gay and lesbian students in Catholic high schools, in which the author concludes with the statement that “Catholic schools seem to have failed” in achieving one of their educational goals, that of integration, in dealing with their gay and lesbian students.

Six book reviews complete this edition, which the editors are pleased to present to our readership.

*Thomas C. Hunt, Ronald J. Nuzzi, Editors*