

CATHOLIC IDENTITY & EX CORDE ECCLESIAE

- Topic: In this Matter of a School's Catholic Identity: From *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* to What?
- Convener: John C. Haughey, Woodstock Theological Center
- Moderator: Richard Liddy, Seton Hall University
- Presenter: John C. Haughey, Woodstock Theological Center

John Haughey gave the well attended workshop an overview of his forthcoming book, *Where is Knowing Going: The Horizons of The Knowing Subject* (Georgetown University Press, 2009). He explained that he wrote it because he felt there has been a three-fold poverty of theory – ecclesiological, educational, and cognitional – about how a Catholic institution of higher education needs to see itself, given Catholicism's religious purposes and a university's educational purposes.

The data for Haughey's book came from in depth listening to some 250 faculty from seven different Catholic universities over the course of the past three years. The question they were asked to respond to in small workshops was: What is the good you are seeking to accomplish through your academic work? Haughey's reflections on their own personal missions seen in the light of the Catholic mission of their respective institutions found that the "wholes" they were seeking to name had theological impact. He became convinced that if the hierarchy heard the good that faculty seek to accomplish through their academic work, a relationship of mutuality and cooperation would be much more likely rather than one of surveillance and suspicion between these schools and the church.

Insofar as the majority of faculty are pursuing their research, teaching and writing in a way that transcends self interest, the objectivity of their findings should be grist for the mill of the Catholic intellectual tradition. So, rather than seeing their efforts as independent of the Church's teaching mission, Haughey sees them as actually contributing to that mission even if they do not have that mission in mind. His positive reading of faculty research comes from several insights. One of these is his differentiating the Catholic intellectual tradition from the Catholic doctrinal tradition. The former has been a major source of the development of the latter since the patristic era. And the latter has been a source of continuity for the former for those who have some knowledge of that doctrinal tradition. The Second Vatican Council is the most recent evidence of this interdependence.

Although the volume covers such subjects as *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and the matter of worship on these Catholic campuses, it is also a reflection on the implicit spirituality of cognition that is done with and from an authentic subjectivity. Haughey uses Lonergan's insights to understand this, especially his distinction between a notion and a concept. The notions point the person to the near infinity of concretizations of being, the good and meaning. The subtext of both the volume and presentation was the emergent character both of Catholicism and of knowledge. The connection between the marks of the Church as eschatological, in

particular the mark of “catholic,” and the still-to-be-known makes the role of scholarship done or communicated in Catholic institutions an invaluable contribution to the mission of the Church.

A number of interesting issues were brought up by the audience and a rich exchange took place about how to make immediate use of the thesis of this volume in the schools represented in the room. There are suggestions about this in its seventh chapter.

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