

From the Editor

Volume 2, Issue 2 of *Integritas* addresses the question of how the study of liberal arts helps cultivate the virtues of friendship and contemplation. “Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods,” wrote Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. More recently, in his survey of Western treatments of friendship, A.C. Grayling offered two thoughts: “That it is an ethical obligation actively to pursue friendship; and that friendship as the desired terminus of all relationships therefore trumps other relationships.”¹ In this issue, Marian K. Díaz wonders how Catholic universities seek to cultivate this basic human good in the context of all the other (potential) goods that members of a university community seek in their shared work.

She begins by placing the goods of friendship and contemplation squarely within the cross hairs of university life. Her argument is straightforward: our networked, globalized world requires friendship for the development of other goods, both personal and professional; and the liberal arts provide the fertile soil within which practices of friendship and contemplation can take root. She draws from Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas to develop an understanding of friendship, and goes on to explore obstacles to authentic friendship rooted in unjust structures on our campuses.

In his response, William C. Mattison III reminds us that “as much as we all strive to make our universities forces for good in the world, for our students and other community members, that ‘project’ is born from, reflects a grasp of, and is ultimately servant to the truth.” Echoing Díaz’s enthusiasm for a shared pursuit of understanding through the liberal arts, Mattison goes on to ask what this shared pursuit means on our campuses when we welcome those who do not share Catholic faith. He argues that “self-giving loving communion of persons is the heart of our faith,” and that the university rooted in Catholic faith thus has a missionary summons to friendship as a virtue of university life.

Together, these essays and the lively conversation that followed pointed to how an emphasis on liberal arts education—and more broadly, on friendship and contemplation as goals of that education—might raise questions about both curriculum and university life, particularly when in the latter there are sometimes significant social barriers between students.

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¹ A.C. Grayling, *Friendship* (Yale University Press, 2013).