

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND HER UNIVERSITIES - A VIEW FROM HISTORY

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You will be doing the greatest possible benefit to the Catholic cause all over the world, if you succeed in making the University a middle station at which clergy and laity can meet, so as to learn to understand and to yield to each other- and from which, as from a common ground, they may act in union upon an age, which is running headlong into infidelity.¹

In the 113 years since Newman wrote those words to George Fottrell, an alumnus of the Catholic University of Ireland, the Catholic Church has witnessed considerable progress in, so to speak, closing the gap between the clergy and laity in the academic communities that operate under the Church's auspices, a progress that has been clearly manifest in the 234 Catholic colleges and universities of the United States. It remains, however, a prime requisite in 1986 if these institutions are to prosper and to fulfill their dual responsibility to maintain the highest academic standards and at the same time preserve their distinctly Catholic character and tradition. Failure to sustain the former renders them suspect in the eyes of their American secular counterparts, a suspicion they can ill afford; failure to sustain the latter calls in question their fidelity to the truths that nurtured their origins and that have given warrant for their espousal as valid representatives of the Church's commitment to the world of learning. Parenthetically, it is to be hoped that the synod to be held in Rome a year from now on the role of the laity will lend strength to this clerical-lay Partnership in a way that will enhance the laity's meaningful participation. For if the synod should fail to provide for the laity to be heard, that is, for the clergy to listen and take seriously the responsible lay voice it may, indeed, do more harm than good in further alienating laymen and laywomen, and thus deprive the world's Catholic community of their special talents and skills.

That the reconciliation of these lofty goals in the context of the Catholic university -and here I mean to include Catholic colleges and seminaries as well as institutions that bear the name of universities -has been, is, and will continue to be at times extraordinarily difficult, giving rise to occasional anguished confrontations, must, I believe, be taken for granted. True, it is a somber thought, but one that finds documentation in the Church's history in an unmistakable way. Never has there been an extended period during those nearly 2,000 years that has failed to furnish examples of what is meant, that is, a clash of minds between persons of varying views, each in his and her own way acting in what they believe to be the Church's best interests, even when they were diametrically opposed on a given question.

The New Testament affords any number of examples that illustrate the facts, such as that in the synagogue of Caparnaum when Jesus taught the doctrine that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. In describing that scene Saint John remarked, 'After hearing it, many of his followers said, "This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?" . After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.'² To cite an even more striking instance, when Peter and Paul met at Antioch and had their dispute over the observance of Jewish practices of the old law, Paul declared, "I opposed him to his face, since he was manifestly in the wrong."³ Without intending to lend to this exchange at Antioch an unwarranted contemporary application, the account suggests that the conservative stance of Peter was overruled by the more open and progressive attitude of Paul.

Thus has it been from the apostolic age to our own day, and thus will it continue in one form or another to the end of time. The situation partakes of the mystery foreshadowed by Simeon when he told the Mother of the Babe in his arms, "You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected ..." ⁴ Nor did the adult Christ foretell otherwise. "Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth?", he asked. "No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on a household of five will be divided three against two and two against three ..." ⁵ For those who are believers these words of the aged prophet and of the Master himself have an enduring value that helps to explain the periodic conflicts that arise in Catholic university communities over the interpretation of the Church's teaching on doctrinal and moral issues.

If these words pose a genuine mystery they yet assist in the sense that they make more understandable that a final solution will not always be found in such controversial areas. Each case must be judged on its own merits with the opposing sides given open and fair hearing and investigation to enable the conflicting parties, if possible, to arrive at a settlement that will both respect the Church's teaching and at the same time give recognition to the individual's rights of expression. No one in his or her sane mind will maintain that this procedure will be other than difficult, indeed, on occasion difficult to the point of anguish; nor will a realist anticipate that the final result will fully satisfy all the contending parties. A procedure of this kind, however, is about the best that can be expected when one allows for the inevitable limitations that attend every endeavor, due to humankind's all too fallible judgment.

The Catholic Church's association with universities is a centuries-old phenomenon, marked by repeated sharp conflicts that often entailed prolonged and impassioned controversies between faculties and the local bishop, as well as occasioning disputes that involved the pope when the contending parties appealed to his jurisdiction. This is not the place to attempt a summary of those conflicts that beset not only the Catholic universities of the Middle Ages but those of the modern era as well. Let the University of Paris in the lifetime of Saint Thomas Aquinas illustrate the point. When, for example, the newly founded mendicant friars appeared on the scene they met immediate and fierce opposition from such diocesan priest professors such as William of Saint-Amour, Gerard d'Abbeville et al., who were determined to keep the friars out of teaching posts in the university. It was only through an appeal to the pope that the friars overcame the opposition of the diocesan clergy and the Bishop of Paris.

Nor were the academic feuds at Paris in those years confined to rivalry between the diocesan clergy and the religious orders. A decade later trouble arose because of ideological differences pertaining to the espousal by Aquinas and his followers of certain teachings of Averroes who, in turn, had leaned heavily on Aristotle. To the traditionalists this was a betrayal of Saint Augustine's scholasticism which had been their principal source of inspiration. Here Thomas Aquinas paid the penalty of having introduced a new approach and occasioned a dispute that ultimately led to a condemnation of 13 Averroist theses. Thereupon the university was thrown into such turmoil that in 1272 there ensued a suspension of all lectures and other academic activities for a period of several months. Similar happenings could be cited for other Catholic universities of the medieval and modern periods, but this brief sketch of events at Paris in the mid-thirteenth century will, I hope, be sufficient to indicate the nature and lengthy history of the problem.

It is a truism that each succeeding age has its predominant ideology or ideologies, and that men and women are influenced for or against the contemporary currents of thought that swirl around them. For example, Catholics in an academic context inevitably think quite differently if their society accepts the supernatural as a prime

element in their lives -as was the case in the time of Thomas Aquinas or if they find themselves members of a society that expressly excludes religion from the public domain, leaving that aspect of life entirely to the private domain with each individual free to settle matters according to his or her conscience. Thus when Catholics in the early days of the American Republic took the first feeble steps to inaugurate a system of education on their own, their approach was conspicuously at variance with that to which Aquinas would have been accustomed in that so-called age of faith.

This fundamental fact can be exemplified by noting the emphasis in an early prospectus published by what was destined to become Georgetown University, the first Catholic college of the United States. Here is the way in which the founders of that school in 1798 envisioned as its leading motivation and purpose:

Persuaded that irreligion and immorality in a youth, portend the most fatal evils to subsequent periods of life, and threaten even to disturb the peace, and corrupt the manners of society at large: the directors of this Institution openly profess that they have nothing so much at heart as to implant virtue and destroy in their pupils the seeds of vice-Happy in the attainment of this sublime object, they would consider their success in this alone, as an ample reward for their incessant endeavors⁷

One need not remark that today Father Timothy Healy, his Jesuit confreres, and their lay associates would hardly express Georgetown's goals in those terms. Yet, *mutatis mutandis*, that was the prevailing ideology that brought into being Mount Saint Mary's College in Emmitsburg (1808), Notre Dame (1842), and other Catholic institutions of higher learning throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In this regard, however, the Catholic institutions were not especially unique, for up to and beyond the Civil War most of their non-Catholic counterparts operated under much the same auspices. Student conduct was closely supervised in all American colleges where the principal in loco parentis was enforced. Thus among the regulations governing student life at Notre Dame there was a rule in 1868 that read:

No book, periodical or newspaper shall be introduced into the College, without being previously examined and approved by the Director of Studies. Objectionable books found in the possession of Students, will be withheld from them until their departure from the University.⁸

In an atmosphere of paternalism and an authoritarian spirit of this kind it was not surprising that the issue of academic freedom as we know it today scarcely existed either in Catholic circles or in most academic communities out- side the Church. Among the latter it first appeared in the guise of religious freedom for professors who in the generation after the Civil War espoused Charles Darwin's highly controversial theories of evolution.

Evolution was a subject that remained all but a terra incognita among Catholics until the nineteenth century was drawing to a close. It then came to the surface when a proposal was made by Bishop John J. Keane, first Rector of the Catholic University of America, backed by Archbishop John Ireland of Saint Paul, to engage the English biologist and evolutionist, Saint George Mivart, a convert to Catholicism, for the new university scheduled to open in Washington in November, 1889. Opposition to Mivart was raised by Archbishop Michael A. Corrigan of New York, who had the support of Archbishop Patrick J. Ryan of Philadelphia and as a consequence Mivart's appointment was set aside. A few years later when Father John A. Zahm, C.S.C., of Notre Dame published his book, *Evolution and Dogma*, in 1896, he incurred censure for his Darwinian sympathies by the Congregation of the Index, whereupon Zahm quietly accepted Rome's decision, and as one biographer stated, "Thereafter he published nothing more on science or on the relations of science and religio."⁹ And John Zahm was only one in a series of losses to Catholic scholarship that was to characterize the years immediately ahead, a period bedeviled by the so-called heresy of Americanism and the graver crisis known as Modernism. While Zahm took his departure from academic pursuits in a humble and submissive way, it was not without a somewhat significant observation in a private letter to his brother, Albert, also a scientist, in which he said:

With possibly one or two exceptions among the younger priests, not one at N.D. has the faintest conception of the wants of a university, and the demands of the age in which we live.¹⁰

Unfortunately, that state of mind persisted in Catholic academic ranks long thereafter, and among the clergy, who then dominated these institutions, it was by no means confined to the Holy Cross community at Notre Dame.

It is not that Catholics of that time had no source from which to learn the true character of a university, for nigh to a half century before these happenings involving Mivart and Zahm, a description of what constituted a university worthy of the name had been published when Newman's article entitled, "What is a University?" appeared in 1854. His answer to the question posed in his title is as valid today as it was nearly 140 years ago. He answered the question in these words:

It is a place ... in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge...¹¹

In my judgment, it would be difficult for the most sophisticated educational theorist of the 1980's to improve on that definition.

In all that pertains to the tangled skein of relations between ecclesiastical authority and the Church's academic communities the historical record clearly reveals periods of relative quiet which are, in turn, succeeded by the renewal of high tension and sharp conflict. The latter have normally been induced by the rise of new concepts, such as those represented by Americanism and Modernism at the turn of the present century, by theological developments that begot Pius XII's warning encyclical, *Humani generis* in August 1950, and by Vatican Council II from the interpretation of which emerged contrary schools of thought, the effects of which are still with us. In other words, this relationship displays an ebb and flow strongly influenced by new currents of thought championed or opposed by strong personalities on both sides, most of whom have been motivated by what they thought were the best interests of the Church.

If the result has been strained tempers, occasional angry encounters, and at times almost exhaustive combat that must be expected and patiently borne. It is a situation that has been exemplified in the ecumenical councils of the Church where the statement of the distinguished historian of the councils, the late Monsignor Hubert Jedin, can be equally applied to the Catholic universities. The assistance of the Holy Spirit, said Jedin, guarantees the decisions of a council to be free from error, but, he added it

does not dispense with the most strenuous efforts to arrive at the truth; on the contrary, it presupposes and demands such efforts. Truth is reached in any community by means of an exchange of opinions, by arguments for and against, that is, by means of an intellectual struggle ... the toll paid by human nature in the councils is the price which the visible Church has to pay for being in the midst of the human race.¹²

In certain instances the conflict will have touched only a very few and will have ere long died away as was the case with Americanism. At other times the strong and decisive action of ecclesiastical authority will have broken the opposition and brought about its demise as was true of Modernism. Still other cases have resulted in temporary losses to scholarship when progressive and creative minds such as those of Yves Congar, Jean Danielou, and John Courtney Murray- to name only three of several dozen who suffered punishment in the wake of *Humani generis* -were fully vindicated some years later by Vatican Council II in which they, and others of their mind, played influential and honorable roles. It is, then, a mixed picture that admits of no fixed formula or pattern of development, no more than it suggests the possibility of a ready- made solution. On the contrary, history's testimony supports the thesis that there is no precise line of action that will always apply or succeed. In one form or another the problem will be with us until the end of time, and that because of the built-in tension that has ever, and will ever, obtain between the teaching of

the Church and that of the world.

Allowing for these facts, and keeping in mind the magisterium's right and duty to safeguard the depositum fidei, the situation calls for the highest degree of prudence, balance, and caution. Yet it does not follow that the Church is best served by an immediate stop to all discussion with each statement from ecclesiastical authority. To adopt that attitude would be equivalent to stifling all research and thus render Catholic universities devoid of their life blood. In that connection I would call attention to the article of Gerald Fogarty in *America* of October 11, 1986, where an account of the case of Henry Poels who taught Old Testament at the Catholic University of America from 1904 to 1910 is highly instructive. In that instance a grave injustice was done to a devoted priest-professor, an instance which at the same time illustrates the enormously complicated character of these theological disputes.

Admittedly, no recourse to past events can resolve contemporary problems; but they can offer signals, so to speak, of what to avoid lest one repeat the mistakes of those who have gone before us. And here, it seems to me, we can all learn from certain respected and tested voices from the past concerning the spirit in which these delicate questions involving the policy of Catholic universities should be conducted. Permit me to quote two such witnesses whose names, I believe, bear witness to their fundamental loyalty to the Church's authority, even if on occasion they may have been in advance of their time and thus incurred censure by opponents of their views. In the course of his famous Dublin lectures of 1852 which the learned world knows as *The Idea of a University*, Newman stated:

I say, then, that it is a matter of primary importance in the cultivation of those sciences, in which truth is discoverable by the human intellect, that the investigator should be free, independent, unshackled in his movements; that he should be allowed and enabled, without impediment, to fix his mind intently, nay, exclusively, on his special object, without the risk of being distracted every other minute in the process and progress of his inquiry, by charges of temerariousness, or by warnings against extravagance or scandal.¹³

A half century later John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, spoke in a similar vein in the Church of the Gesu at Rome on the topic, "Education and the Future of Religion, when he declared:

To forbid man to think along whatever line, is to place oneself in opposition to the deepest and most invincible tendency of the civilized world. Were it possible to compel obedience from Catholics in matters of this kind, the result would be a hardening and sinking of our whole religious life. We should more and more drift away from the vital movements of the age, and find ourselves at last immured in a spiritual ghetto, where no man can breathe pure air, or be joyful of strong of free.¹⁴

These were strong words, to be sure, yet uttered by two churchmen who though perhaps in advance of their contemporaries, as I remarked above, were men whose subsequent careers proved beyond doubt their fundamental loyalty to the Church.

Does that infer that there is then no limit to dissent within the Church? It does not. To be valid, dissent must bear with it a strong measure of modesty, humility, and basic loyalty, as well as an implicit recognition that the dissenter in the end may be proven to have been wrong. I have never found the point better expressed than by Henri de Lubac in his volume of a generation ago, *The Splendour of the Church*. Thinking in terms of what he called 'the man of the Church', he put it this way:

Certainly, as long as the order is not final he will not abandon the responsibilities with which he has been invested by his office or circumstances. He will, if it should be necessary, do all that he can to enlighten authority; that is something which is not merely a right, but also a duty, the discharge of which will sometimes oblige him to heroism. But the last word does not rest with him. The Church, which is his home, is a 'house of obedience'¹⁵.

It was in that sense that Pierre Teilhard de Chardin addressed the General of the Jesuits when charges had been lodged against his orthodoxy, "It is on this important point of formal loyalty and obedience," he wrote:

"that I am particularly anxious -it is in fact my real reason for writing this letter- to assure you that, in spite of any apparent evidence to the contrary, I am resolved to remain a 'child of obedience'."¹⁶

I confess that testimony of a similar kind from Thomas Merton to Abbot James Fox of Gethsemani, of Newman to his ordinary, William B. Ullathorne, O.S.B., Bishop of Birmingham, of John Courtney Murray to his superiors in the 1950's, and more recently of Leonardo Boff, O.F.M., the Brazilian theologian, have impressed on me the importance of this principle. It is an impression that has taken on a deeper and abiding meaning when I reflect on the sad cases of Felicite de Lamennais, of Johann Ignaz Dollinger, of Alfred Loisy et al. These were all men of singular intellectual gifts, scholars whose life stories have enlivened and enriched the Church's history. In that regard, most of those mentioned here measured up - if a few did not-to the Master's caution when speaking of the final judgment that awaits each one of us when he told his disciples:

When a man has had a great deal given him, a great deal will be demanded of him; when a man has a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him.¹⁷

In all that pertains to the relationship of ecclesiastical authority vs. academic freedom, and this is especially true in the American context, there inevitably arises the question of admittance or denial of due process. If it is given great emphasis in American institutions of higher learning, they by no means invented the concept. The central idea behind due process has an ancient line- age, aspects of which appear in the New Testament. During the course of the trial of Jesus, Nicodemus interposed and asked his fellow Pharisees, "But surely the Law does not allow us to pass judgment on a man without giving him a hearing and discovering what he is about?"¹⁸ And years later when Saint Paul was held prisoner at Caesarea, Festus, the governor, explaining the background of Paul's case to the visiting King Agrippa remarked concerning Paul's opponents.

I told them that Romans are not in the habit of surrendering any man until the accused confronts his accusers and is given an opportunity to defend himself against the charge.¹⁹

Infringement of that principle has at times cost the Church dearly and injured her reputation for fair dealing. The nearly twenty centuries of Christian history have witnessed no diminishment in this regard; indeed, it has gained in strength and force as the concept of human rights has moved to center stage in the aftermath of World War II during which these rights were so outrageously violated. In the light of this fact, to say nothing of her own teaching on the dignity of the human person in Vatican Council II, the Church has reason to be especially vigilant on this score. That was uppermost in the mind, of John Courtney Murray when he maintained the year after the council:

What comes to the fore today is the need that the corrective or punitive function of authority should be performed under regard for what is called in the common-law tradition, 'due process' The demand for due process of law is an exigency of Christian dignity and freedom. It is to be satisfied as exactly in the Church as in civil society (one might indeed say, more exactly).²⁰

Whether in explicit terms or by implication the concept of due process has found a place in the mounting literature on the Catholic universities in our time. It is inherent in the defense of academic freedom propounded by the Land-of-Lakes statement of July, 1967, as it has been in the more recent documents issued by the International Federation of Catholic Universities. One might wish that it would have found expression in statements emanating from the Congregation for Catholic Education, such as the proposed schema for the world's Catholic universities that the congregation circulated in April, 1985. That document, as is well known has met with strong criticism

from 100 or more presidents of the Church's colleges and universities in this country, while at the same time winning support from other Catholics in the academic community.

Given present circumstances, it is difficult to see how recurring clashes between these two schools of thought can be avoided if the idea of due process and kindred matters do not win some consideration in the thinking of Roman curia officials. True, it will not be easy to work out a compromise, but to employ a cliché, where there is a will there is a way. Any genuine compromise normally means that each side has yielded something of its ideal to its opposite. Considering what is at stake, certainly no right-minded Catholic will maintain that the effort is not eminently worthwhile. Perhaps a quiet acceptance of a status questionis that is less than ideal in the view of both sides may be the ultimate outcome. If so, they would have a precedent in the situation that obtained for nigh to two centuries during which Rome was not happy with the American constitutional principle of separation of Church and State. Yet they forbore from insisting that American Catholics should work for a change in that regard, until finally in December, 1965, the Declaration on Religious Freedom of Vatican Council II put an end to the awkward and often embarrassing situation for, it is to be hoped, all time to come.

Let me now turn to an aspect of Catholic higher education that, in my opinion, should remain a paramount concern of every one of the 234 Catholic colleges and universities of this country with their more than half million students, as well as of the 319 seminaries with the enrollment of 10,000 candidates for the priesthood. I refer to the perennial need to emphasize a determined effort to achieve excellence as a prime goal of every institution of higher learning worthy of the name. More than thirty years ago, I raised this issue and encountered considerable opposition, although the response was in the main distinctly positive. I raise it here again, for allowing that in this regard there has been marked improvement since the 1950's, I still believe that we American Catholics are far from where we ought to be on the scale of superior achievement in the humanities and liberal arts, areas wherein it may rightly be expected that we should make a conspicuous showing in view of the tradition which is our alleged heritage and to which we so often give rhetorical expression without the accompaniment of solid scholarly production to prove we take seriously what we affirm

Obviously, the attainment of academic excellence is often dependent on material resources as well as on gifted minds professionally trained in their respective disciplines. Up to a generation or two ago we could plead our lack of financial strength, but that is long since gone. As I have frequently phrased it, the United States is teeming with Catholic millionaires, a fact borne out a decade ago in the findings of Andrew Greeley on average family income of non-Spanish speaking white Catholics who were second only to the Jews and ahead of the Episcopalians and Presbyterians.²¹ Today it is a truism to state that Catholics have become a prominent element in the mainstream of the national society. That fact has, I presume, something to do with the presence of five Catholic universities among the 100 with the highest endowments in the country, the five led by Notre Dame (No. 22) with over \$300,000,000, with Loyola of Chicago, Georgetown, Saint Louis, and Santa Clara following in that order.²²

The situation, however, is related to a far more basic matter than the presence or absence of financial resources, important as that aspect surely is. Parenthetically, my own alma mater, The Catholic University of America, has suffered grievously in that regard with an endowment of c. \$25,000,000, far excelled by a number of select secondary schools in New England and elsewhere. Were I to be asked what has been the principal deterrent to Catholic institutions achieving distinction on a scale commensurate with their number and with the more than 52,000,000 Catholics who constitute roughly twenty-two percent of the population of the Republic, I would unhesitatingly say it has been due to a pervasive lack of love of learning for learning's sake. To be sure, it is a national characteristic regardless of people's religious affiliation. Were that not so the late Richard Hofstadter could not have published his large volume entitled *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*.²³ In that regard, alas, Catholics have been 110% American! Catholics have, indeed, made their mark in politics, the professions, and in the world of business and finance; but when one turns to the things of the mind, the picture is much less impressive.

It is no recent phenomenon since it has characterized American Catholic life almost from the beginning. Thus in the year of the nation's first centennial, 1876, the leading Catholic church historian of that day, John Gilmary Shea, who by current terminology would be described as triumphalistic and defensive, went so far as to declare, "In literature, science and the arts, we have made little mark and are behind even the modest position of the country at large".²⁴ In the same centennial year, John Lancaster Spalding maintained that external developments had "crowded out things of the mind" among Catholics, and with a forward glance toward the coming century, he remarked:

We must prepare ourselves to enter more fully into the public life of the country; to throw the light of Catholic thought upon each new phase of opinion or belief as it rises ... All this and much else we have to do, if our God-given mission is to be fulfilled.²⁵

No single Catholic did more to promote that high ideal; yet at his death forty years later he would have been the first to admit the meager results of his life-time campaign in behalf of intellectual excellence among his co-religionists

It is not that Catholic Americans have not been periodically reminded of this leading deficiency in their religious community, and here no one has been more insistent and more eloquent than Professor David J. O'Brien of the College of whose stirring essay in *Commonweal* of June 6, 1986, is one of the most persuasive in furthering that cause.²⁶ What evidence, you may well ask, have you for your lament in this regard? I would answer, first, let due recognition be given to the not inconsiderable number of Catholic men and women whose scholarly endeavors have brought honor to them and to their universities of the 1980's that far exceeds that of their predecessors of generation ago. I believe, however, that these same men and women might well agree that when the 272 winners of Guggenheim fellowships in 1986 numbered only two from Catholic institutions, namely, The Catholic University of America and Seton Hall University; that among the 123 Mellon Fellows in the humanities granted that year by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, only three went to Catholic institutions; and that only thirteen out of 262 fellowships granted by the National Endowment for the Humanities - to name only three of the principal benefactors of those majoring in the humanities and the liberal arts-Catholics can hardly maintain that we have come anywhere near to attaining the kind of rank so notably achieved by our co-religionists in politics, the professions, and the business community. I readily concede that these data do not offer complete and final proof of Catholic deficiency in this respect, but they do, it seems to me, supply sufficient evidence to prompt a serious probing as to why 553 Catholic institutions of higher learning have made so relatively slight an impact in the nation's academic community.

Closely related to the achievement of academic excellence and distinction is the imperative of scholarly integrity. No exercise or activity in the academic world that makes unreal pretensions on the part of institutions or individuals can add any abiding honor to reputation or good name. The recent rash of colleges calling themselves universities without the qualifications for such, sails dangerously close to that defect. Fortunately, with the exception of several Catholic institutions involved in serious athletic scandals, the Church's universities in this country have in good measure been free of the mounting instances of fraud that have tainted the good name of some American universities. It was a point forcefully made by Jaroslav Pelikan in his splendid essay of 1983. He there spoke of the confidence that scholars must have in one another, and of the confidence that others are entitled to repose in them and in the integrity of their work. "Therefore, it is almost impossible", he said, "to exaggerate the damage that can result from a breach of trust ... it can tarnish the entire cause of objective investigation and undermine the credibility of research ..."²⁷

For the foreseeable future the task of the Catholic universities of the United States and of the world will be an exacting and trying experience. Granted the obstacles that lie ahead, they are not insuperable and can be overcome by a dedication to the ideals that brought these universities into existence in the first instance. Those ideals were spelled out by Pope Paul VI in November, 1972, when he received the delegates of the International Federation of Catholic Universities and spoke in words that have lost none of their value in the intervening years. On that occasion, the pontiff declared:

The specific testimony expected of a Catholic university ... is to show concretely that intelligence is never diminished, but is on the contrary stimulated and strengthened by that inner source of deep understanding which is the Word of God, and by the hierarchy of values derived from it ... In its unique way, the Catholic university contributes to manifesting the superiority of the spirit, which can never, under pain of being lost, agree to put itself at the service of anything other than the search for

truth.28

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