Engaging the Mission Seminars and
*Conversatio* Round Table Discussions

2015-2016

Session Outlines and Glossary
Engaging the Mission Seminars/Conversatio Roundtable Discussions 2015-2016

Development Team: Tim Marin (chair), Eric Goodwin, Al Martin, Rob Rebman, Alicia Cordoba Tait
Moderator (2015-2016): Sister Karen Nykiel, OSB
Engaging the Mission Seminars: Second Thursdays, 4:30-6:15pm, Interreligious Room, Kindlon 422
Conversatio Round Table Discussions: Second Fridays, 3-4:30pm, Kindlon 5th Floor

Objective: The Engaging the Mission Seminar Series with subsequent discussion the following day at the Conversatio Roundtable Discussion is designed to empower university employees with the tools necessary to engage, promote, and live the university mission in their everyday work. Topical focus will change on a monthly basis. Seminars (with pre-readings and discussion questions) and Conversatio (scholarly overview of seminar topic with discussion) will be led by a facilitator or co-facilitators well-versed in the Benedictine tradition. Both sessions are geared toward empowering employees with knowledge of our Benedictine mission, values, and hallmarks, and the Catholic intellectual tradition with the expectation of application studies during a summer institute/workshop in how to apply learned material in the workplace.

Goals:
1. Help employees gain a better understanding of what distinguishes us as a Catholic and Benedictine institution of higher education.
2. Enrich the workplace by empowering University community members with information and tools to better serve the University mission and, as a consequence, enrich the student experience.
3. Develop a stronger, more engaged, mission-focused institutional culture through seminars that discuss topics that relate the University mission to operations – both academic and service.
4. Instill a desire for further and more intense mission integration workshops.

Monthly Topics:
- Overview of Catholic Higher Education
- Overview of Benedictine Higher Education
- Hospitality and Living/Working in Community
- Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue
- Academic Freedom in the Context of the Church
- Service and the Common Good

- Aid in identifying needs of support for mission integration by developing indicators and behaviors of successful learning strategies for continuous improvement, leadership training, assessment and application.
- Learn the language of mission integration as it related to particular programs.
- Discuss the application of mission to daily work and job requirements.
- Address how each person’s job/role at the University promotes the University mission in its own unique way.
- Provide an understanding of how each person’s job/role at the University directly affects a successful student experience.

Assessment Plan
- Goals and objectives reflect institutional accreditation as related to the University’s System Portfolio.
- Evaluation questionnaires are based on ACCU endorsed best practices for faculty/staff development and student engagement and mission achievement.
Session 1: Overview of Catholic Higher Education

Dates: Thursday, September 10 and Friday September 11, 2015
Facilitator: Abbot Austin Murphy, OSB

Objectives
- Defining terms associated with Catholic mission integration
- Seeing the mission of the Catholic university in the context of the mission of the Catholic Church
- Discussing the importance of the Christian presence in the University

Catholic Characteristics:
1. Christian inspiration in individuals and the university community
2. Reflection and research on human knowledge in the light of the Catholic faith
3. Fidelity to the Christian message in conformity with the magisterium of the Church
4. Institutional commitment to the service of others

Catholic Intellectual Tradition:
- Worth and dignity of each person
- The solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life
- The goodness of creation and its sacramental potential for disclosing the transcendent
- The interconnectedness of truth and the compatibility of faith and reason in the search for truth

Pre-Readings:

Questions:
1. Why did you choose to work at a Catholic University?
2. What do the following terms mean?
   a. Catholic intellectual tradition
   b. Catholic social teaching
   c. Common good
   d. Benedictine wisdom tradition
   e. Four Catholic Characteristics
   f. Academic Freedom
   g. Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue
   h. Stewardship and Sustainability
   i. Search for the truth
3. How are the four Catholic characteristics represented on campus?
4. Are there ways you can support the mission as a Catholic or non-Catholic – in the classroom, as a mentor/advisor, administrator, staff member, etc.?
Session 2: Overview of Benedictine Higher Education

Dates: Thursday, October 8 and Friday October 9, 2015
Facilitator: Fr. Philip Timko, OSB

Objectives:
- Understanding the purpose and intentionality of the Benedictine University mission
- Integrating the mission of Benedictine University
- Discussing the uniqueness of the Benedictine education experience in comparison with other institutions of higher education, both secular and non-secular

Benedictine Hallmarks:
1. Love of Christ and neighbor
2. Prayer: A life marked by lectio, liturgy and mindfulness
3. Stability: commitment to the daily life of this place
4. Conversatio: the way of formation and transformation
5. Obedience: a commitment to listening and consequent action
6. Discipline: a way toward learning and freedom
7. Humility: acceptance of the demand for realism and accountability
8. Stewardship: respect for the beauty and goodness of creation as a sacrament of God
9. Hospitality: call to openness
10. Community: call for service to the common good and respect for the individual

Benedictine Values:
- a search for God by oneself and with others
- a tradition of hospitality
- an appreciation for living and working in community
- a concern for the development of each person
- an emphasis on a life lived in balance
- a dedication to responsible stewardship of the earth
- a commitment to academic excellence

Pre-Readings:
2. “Benedictine University – Diverse, Catholic, Making a Difference,” Benedictine University
3. Center for Mission and Identity web site, www.ben.edu/cmi

Questions:
1. What do you feel makes Benedictine University different than other universities or colleges both religious and secular?
2. How do the values and hallmarks with the Catholic characteristics, the Catholic intellectual and social teaching compare?
3. What are ways the Catholic and Benedictine mission and identity flow through the programming in your department or area of expertise?
4. What do you do differently here at Benedictine that is different than if you were at a secular institution or other non-Benedictine Catholic institution?
Session 3: Hospitality and Living/Working in Community

Dates: Thursday, November 12 and Friday, November 13, 2015
Facilitator: Fr. David Turner, OSB

Objectives:
- Understanding our unique Catholic culture and traditions while embracing diversity
- Developing community by seeing the other as Christ
- Expressing gratitude for every community member’s contribution to the university

Catholic Characteristics:
1. Christian inspiration in individuals and the university community
2. Reflection and research on human knowledge in the light of the Catholic faith
3. Fidelity to the Christian message in conformity with the magisterium of the Church
4. Institutional commitment to the service of others

Catholic Intellectual Tradition:
- Worth and dignity of each person
- The solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life

Benedictine Hallmarks:
1. Love of Christ and neighbor
3. Stability: commitment to the daily life of this place
7. Humility: acceptance of the demand for realism and accountability
9. Hospitality: call to openness
10. Community: call for service to the common good and respect for the individual

Benedictine Values:
- a search for God by oneself and with others
- a tradition of hospitality
- an appreciation for living and working in community
- a concern for the development of each person
- an emphasis on a life lived in balance
- a dedication to responsible stewardship of the earth

Pre-Readings:
1. Ex corde Ecclesiae, Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities (1990), Part IB3
3. “Education within the Benedictine Wisdom Tradition,” Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities, (2007), Hallmarks 9 (Hospitality) and 10 (Community)
4. “Principles of Good Practice in Student Affairs,” Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (2010), Principles 1, 4, 5, 7
5. Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 53

Questions:
1. On a Benedictine campus, what are the expectations of a Catholic to be “welcoming” and “hospitable”? What are those of a non-Catholic?
2. How well do our welcoming activities for new students, staff members, and faculty members celebrate our institution’s Catholic and Benedictine identity and what could we do better?
3. How well do we treat each other as ourselves and respect the other as Christ (Matt 22:37-39; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27; RB Ch. 53)?
4. What more could each of us do to help our colleagues and co-workers feel valued and appreciated?
Session 4: Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue

**Dates:** Thursday February 11 and Friday February 12, 2016  
**Facilitator:** Dr. Rita George-Tvrtkovic

**Objectives:**
- Welcoming to campus
- Becoming part of the community
- Interpersonal experiences

**Catholic Characteristics:**
1. Christian inspiration in individuals and the university community
2. Fidelity to the Christian message in conformity with the magisterium of the Church
3. Institutional commitment to the service of others

**Catholic Intellectual Tradition:**
- Worth and dignity of each person
- The solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life
- The goodness of creation and its sacramental potential for disclosing the transcendent
- The interconnectedness of truth and the compatibility of faith and reason in the search for truth

**Benedictine Hallmarks:**
1. Love of Christ and neighbor
9. Hospitality: call to openness
10. Community: call for service to the common good and respect for the individual

**Benedictine Values:**
- a search for God by oneself and with others
- a tradition of hospitality
- an appreciation for living and working in community
- a concern for the development of each person

**Pre-Readings:**
1. *Nostra Aetate – Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, Pope Paul VI (1965)

**Questions:**
1. Considering the reading from Swidler, define dialogue: what is it, what is it NOT? What attitudes are essential for good dialogue? Where might you integrate interreligious “dialogue” (as a skill more than content) into your academic field/job at Benedictine?
2. What is the difference between ecumenical dialogue and interreligious dialogue?
3. Based on the *Nostra Aetate* and *Lumen Gentium* readings, what are key elements of the Catholic approach to dialogue? Do you see any tension in these two documents, and if so, between what (seemingly) competing ideas?
4. How does the notion of hospitality outlined in the *Rule of St. Benedict* relate to interreligious dialogue?
Session 5: Academic Freedom in the Context of the Church

Dates: Thursday, March 10 and Friday, March 11, 2015
Facilitators: Drs. John Kloos and Al Martin

Objectives:
- Engaging the intellect without neglecting faith and personal experience with God
- Seeking the compatibility and integration of faith and reason in the search for the truth
- Engaging the community (both on and off campus) in the discussion of faith and reason

Catholic Characteristics:
1. a continuing reflection in light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research;
2. fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church;

Catholic Intellectual Tradition:
- the interconnectedness of truth and the compatibility of faith and reason in the search for truth.

Benedictine Hallmarks:
4. Conversatio: the way of formation and transformation
5. Obedience: a commitment to listening and consequent action
6. Discipline: a way toward learning and freedom

Benedictine Values:
- a search for God by oneself and with others
- an appreciation for living and working in community
- a concern for the development of each person
- a commitment to academic excellence

Readings:

Questions:
1. How is academic freedom important and essential to the mission of the Catholic university, and what is the Catholic university’s unique task that may not pervade the thinking of scholars in more secular schools?
2. Who should determine what teachings, ideas, presentations, or events are appropriate for a Catholic university? (Clergy, faculty, administration, student groups…?)
3. While supporting academic freedom in an increasingly secular society, how does the university continue to be perceived by faculty, alumni, and supporters as ‘effectively’ and ‘operationally’ Catholic?
4. How does the Catholic university apply academic freedom to everyone, including students and the staff who keep the university operating on a daily basis?
Session 6: Service and the Common Good

Dates: Thursday, April 7 and Friday, April 8, 2016
Facilitators: Ms. Carrie Roberts and Dr. Vince Gaddis

Objectives:
- Understanding the concepts of Catholic social teaching and their mandate for service to humanity
- Identifying the impact of the way that the prioritization of material needs and individualism impacts societal drives and outcomes
- Applying concepts of stewardship and sustainability to the university and to ourselves as we live in and relate to the world

Catholic Characteristics:
1. Christian inspiration in individuals and the university community
2. Reflection and research on human knowledge in the light of the Catholic faith
3. Fidelity to the Christian message in conformity with the magisterium of the Church
4. Institutional commitment to the service of others

Catholic Intellectual Tradition:
- Worth and dignity of each person;
- Solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life
- Goodness of creation and its sacramental potential for disclosing the transcendent

Benedictine Hallmarks:
8. Stewardship: responsible use of creation, culture, and the arts
10. Community: Call for service to the common good

Benedictine Values:
- an appreciation for living and working in community
- a concern for the development of each person
- an emphasis on a life lived in balance
- a dedication to responsible stewardship of the earth

Readings:

Questions:
1. Other than obvious environmental issues, to what can stewardship and sustainability concepts be applied? Is the university in a stewardship position with respect to its students?
2. How do the concepts of Catholic social teaching connect to our Benedictine Hallmarks and values?
3. How can you and your program area, department, and the university demonstrate priority of the search for truth and the objective of service to the common good and the Church?
4. What are the ways that you and your area can contribute to stewardship and sustainability at Benedictine? Does the University have an obligation for outreach efforts as an institution or through student groups?
Glossary
(Important Terms to Know)

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) – Founded in 1899, this group of 236 institutions serves as the collective voice of U.S. Catholic higher education. Through programs and services, the Association strengthens and promotes the Catholic identity and mission of its member institutions so that all associated with Catholic higher education can contribute to the greater good of the world and the Church. Through research, publications, conferences, consultations, special programs, and standing relationships with other agencies, ACCU encourages and facilitates sharing of ideas and cooperative efforts among its member institutions. ACCU’s journal, Journal of Catholic Higher Education, is published semi-annually, and its electronic newsletter, Update, quarterly. Contact with the Catholic hierarchy is maintained principally through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Congregation for Catholic Education of the Holy See.

Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities (ABCU) – This consortium of 14 Benedictine Colleges and Universities across the USA and Canada is committed to academic and professional excellence in the Benedictine tradition. In this work they concretize Gospel values as interpreted by the Rule of St. Benedict and therefore take seriously: 1. the primacy of God and the things of God; 2. reverent listening for the varied ways in which God is revealed; 3. the formation of community built on respect for individual persons who are each regarded as Christ himself; 4. the development of a profound awareness of the meaning of one’s existence; 5. the exercise of good stewardship. Through these emphases Benedictine Colleges and Universities strive to promote the common good of Church and society and assist individuals to lead lives of balance, generosity and integrity.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) – The Gospel of Christ and the teachings of His Church guide the work of the USCCB. The work of the Conference is rooted in three general mission goals and organized into three key areas of responsibility: 1. to act collaboratively and consistently on vital issues confronting the Church and society; 2. to foster communion with the Church in other nations, within the Church universal, under the leadership of its supreme pastor, the Roman Pontiff; 3. to offer appropriate assistance to each bishop in fulfilling his particular ministry in the local Church. In addition to these long-term mission goals, the bishops choose four to five priority goals for each planning cycle. The proposed priority goals for the 2013-2016 planning cycle are as follows: 1. strengthening marriage and family life; 2. faith formation and sacramental practice; 3. affirming the life and dignity of the human person; 4. supporting religious liberty

Ex corde Ecclesiae – an apostolic constitution written in 1990 by St. Pope John Paull II that identifies the common characteristics of all Catholic colleges and universities, every Catholic University is an academic community which, in a rigorous and critical fashion, assists in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of a cultural heritage through research, teaching and various services offered to the local, national and international communities. It 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 with shared Christian vision and goals, reflection in the light of faith, fidelity to tradition, and commitment to service.

USCCB Application of Ex corde – The General Norms for Catholic universities as outlined in Ex corde Ecclesiae are applied by the USCCB concretely by engaging in episcopal conferences, taking into account the status of each college and university and, as far as possible and appropriate, civil law. Accordingly, recognizing that the Apostolic Constitution Ex corde Ecclesiae is normative for the Church throughout the world, the USCCB seeks to apply its principles and norms to all Catholic colleges, universities, and institutions of higher learning within the territory encompassed by the USCCB. From this
document and *Ex corde Ecclesiae* itself, many terms and concepts came into regular use in Catholic higher education, including the following:

**Communio** – The Church is made up of individual faithful and communities linked with one another through many active ecclesial relationships. A true understanding of these dynamic relationships flows from the faith-conviction that God the Father, through His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, has revealed His desire to incorporate all people into the life of the Trinity. It is in the Church, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that this relationship of all persons and communities with the Triune God takes place. In the light of communion, the teaching responsibilities of the hierarchy and of the Catholic universities retain their distinctive autonomous nature and goal but are joined as complementary activities contributing to the fulfillment of the Church’s universal teaching mission.

**Diversity** – The Benedictine tradition calls for service to the common good and respect for the individual. The hope is for solidarity with other communities across the world, monastic and non-monastic, Christian and non-Christian, religious and non-religious that make practical efforts to foster human well-being. Benedictine educational institutions seek to recognize the service their members give to promoting human well-being on campus, as well as off.

**Faith and culture** – refers to the necessity for Catholic universities and colleges to understand and maintain the impact and place of the Church and its teachings in modern culture. Though the Church may have to withdraw from elements in a particular culture that opposes gospel values, it should also select what in particular cultures is true and good, purify what is selected, and elevate the fruits of human endeavor by transforming them into instruments for the transmission of the faith.

**Faith and reason** – Human knowledge of the truth stems from the gift of human reason and divine revelation. According to St. Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.

**Mandatum** – Catholics who teach the theological disciplines in a Catholic university are required to have a mandatum granted by competent ecclesiastical authority. The mandatum is fundamentally an acknowledgment by Church authority that a Catholic professor of a theological discipline is a teacher within the full communion of the Catholic Church. Those who have received a mandatum teach in their own name in virtue of their baptism and their academic and professional competence, not in the name of the Bishop or of the Church’s magisterium. The mandatum recognizes the professor’s commitment and responsibility to teach authentic Catholic doctrine and to refrain from putting forth as Catholic teaching anything contrary to the Church’s magisterium.

**New Evangelization** – Throughout his pontificate, St. Pope John Paul II encouraged renewed efforts in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who seek the truth. The “new evangelization” seeks to share anew the basic Christian message of salvation and faith in Jesus Christ to people of today.

**Pastoral Outreach** – Through the direct giving of spiritual guidance and care, God’s call to serve all those in need is answered with love and compassion. With a myriad of means for service, pastoral outreach can range from home visitations to deliver the sacraments to the bedridden, to aiding to the poor, to spiritually consoling the bereaved.

**Catholic Intellectual Tradition** – A 2000-year-old tradition regarding how knowledge and the human condition are approached, which affirms the intellectual as spiritual and the existence of truth, asserts human dignity and the purpose of life, regards reality as a sign to be deciphered through concerted faith and reason, believes that all cultures hold the seeds for fuller understanding of reality, holds that perfection is approached through grace, and celebrates the great mysteries of life and God’s goodness through the arts and scholarship.
Catechism of the Catholic Church – Promulgated by St. Pope John Paul II in 1992, this document is the exposition of Catholic doctrine which serves as a learning introduction to Catholicism and the sacraments. It is traditionally and most commonly used in catechesis, or Christian religious teaching of children and adult converts.

Catholic Social Teaching – This is the body of doctrine developed by the Catholic Church on matters of social justice, involving issues of poverty and wealth, economics, social organization and the role of the state. Its foundations are widely considered to have been laid by Pope Leo XIII’s 1891 encyclical letter Rerum Novarum, which advocated economic distributism and condemned both capitalism and socialism. Catholic social doctrine has always tried to find an equilibrium between concern for the whole society, especially for the weakest and poorest, and respect for human liberty, including the right to private property. The USCCB outlines seven themes of Catholic social teaching: 1. life and dignity of the human person; 2. Call to family, community, and participation; 3. rights and responsibilities; 4. option for the poor and vulnerable; 5. the dignity of work and rights of workers; 6. solidarity; 7. care for God’s Creation.

The Common Good – A central concept in the doctrine of Catholic social teaching. As laid out in the 1965 Second Vatican Council document Gaudium et spes, according to its primary and broadly accepted sense, the common good indicates the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily to reach the end goal of human life, which is contribution to the good of the overall human condition.

Stewardship and Sustainability – Refers to the conviction that every gift of nature and grace comes from God and that the human person is not the absolute owner of his or her gifts or possessions but rather the trustee or steward of them. These gifts are given in trust for the building of the Kingdom of God. Christians are called to appreciate the spiritual and theological significance of the Earth and to exercise ecological stewardship of the Earth and its resources. The gifts of creation are not simply there for human use, but have their own dignity, value and integrity. Environmental sustainability efforts instill respect for the beauty and goodness of creation as a sacrament of God, and uphold the Benedictine hallmark of stewardship.

Benedictine Wisdom Tradition – A wisdom tradition is the idea that there is a mystic inner core to all religious or spiritual traditions, without the trappings, doctrinal literalism, sectarianism, and power structures that are associated with institutionalized religion. The Benedictine wisdom tradition, which stems from the Rule of St. Benedict, provides a conceptual framework for the development of the inner self, living a spiritual life, and the realization of enlightenment or of union with God through transformation of the human mind and heart. Benedictine education stresses the formation of the whole person rather than the intellect alone. It calls for a lively interplay between rigorous thinking and the development of practices for right living.

Catholic and Benedictine mission and identity integration – Reinforcement of the Catholic and Benedictine mission, vision, and character of the University by articulating, developing, promoting, and assessing the Catholic and Benedictine characteristics and values within all facets of campus life – the curriculum, co-curricular activities, and leadership programs that reflect the Catholic intellectual tradition, Catholic social teaching and Benedictine wisdom tradition.

Vocation – “God calls me through others, for others” (from Awakening Vocation, Edward Hahnenberg). Vocation does not just mean God’s call to be a priest or religious; every person is called to be of service to others in their family, their work, their community and their faith community. Each of us has gifts and talents to use for the common good; we discover our call through other people, in our families, workplaces and communities; and we use our talents in those spaces to build a life of meaning and purpose.