

**The Catholic and Benedictine traditions inform the mission and goals of Benedictine University and provide the University community with a sense of continuity with the past and a direction for the future.**

**The Catholic Tradition.** In *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the Apostolic Constitution On Catholic Universities, Pope John Paul II identifies four characteristics that must distinguish every Catholic University as *Catholic*:

1. a Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such;
2. 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;
3. fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church;
4. an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life. (*Ex Corde*, no. 13)

Drawing upon the sources of faith, the Catholic intellectual tradition, which extends back to the age of the Church Fathers and to the medieval universities, has built chiefly upon the following convictions:

- the 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.

In fidelity to that tradition, Benedictine University is committed to investigating questions that address the ultimate purpose of life; to the dialogue between faith and culture; and to the promotion of ecumenical, inter-religious, and cross-cultural understanding.

Therefore, Benedictine University encourages openness to all reality, acceptance of truth wherever it is found, and the personal effort to integrate learning as a basis of wisdom for life.

Benedictine University upholds the academic freedom of faculty and students in inquiry and research, while insisting on ethical responsibility.

And preference is given to research and activities that promote human betterment, peace, justice, and the common good, and that use interdisciplinary and collaborative methods.

**The Benedictine Tradition.** Benedictine University is grounded in the spirit of its founders who based their life and work on St. Benedict's sixth-century *Rule for Monks*. Today, the fundamental values of the Rule of Benedict continue to be lived by vowed Benedictine men and women and also inspire the educational endeavors and life of Benedictine University. Those values can be expressed simply as:

- the search for God, alone and with others;
- hospitality;
- a concern for the development of each person;
- a life lived in balance; and
- responsible stewardship.

The Benedictine celebration of community as a gathering of people committed to a common goal is central to the University's tradition. Here all are encouraged to build a community of scholars committed to excellence in the pursuit of knowledge and personal growth, tempered by respect for truth and the common good.