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Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education

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Santa Clara University

BANNAN CENTER FOR JESUIT EDUCATION

explore

An examination
of Catholic identity
and Ignatian character
in Jesuit higher education

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Dear Friends,

“**W**hat do you want to be when you grow up?” we would ask each other in grammar school. It was a good question because it gave us hope that the future was in our own hands and that the choices that we made could add up to something. That question is at the heart of the essays in this issue of *explore*. Once again, generous members of the Santa Clara faculty, staff, and students have tried to put into words their own experience of vocation, of finding their way to a life of value and meaning. A job is “just a job.” A career connotes a greater focus of energy, serious preparation, and sustained commitment to a line of work or profession. A vocation is something more; it connotes a life that contributes to something larger, that responds to the world’s needs in a unique way. For many it points to One who invites them into a unique path.



William C. Spohn

Santa Clara recently received a grant from the Lilly Endowment for almost two million dollars to encourage campus-wide reflection on vocation over the next five years. My essay tries to show the natural connection between Ignatian spirituality, the Jesuit commitment to faith and justice, and discovering one’s calling. Aleksandar Zecevic of electrical engineering muses on how engagement with the beauty of mathematics has shaped his own dedication to engineering, and how that calling has developed over the years. Mick McCarthy, S.J., of religious studies and classics traces the interweaving of his invitation to the Society of Jesus and his attraction to the life of the mind over twenty years of scholarship and ministry. Lulu Santana, graduate of the Pastoral Ministries program, tried the traditional Catholic path of “vocation” but found it led her into a newer meaning of the term as a lay woman serving in Campus Ministry, the residence halls, and El Salvador. André Delbecq, former dean of the Leavey School of Business and professor of management, describes the successful Ignatian Faculty Forum that convenes faculty for regular reflection and discernment based on the values that shape their lives. Margalynne Armstrong of the School of Law rediscovers a rich family legacy emerging in the twists and turns of her own career experiments.

Finally, three students and two faculty express the collaborative promise of the new Residential Learning Communities that are reshaping undergraduate education on campus. When members of one generation cooperate to introduce young people into the promise and suffering of the world, learning can be sparked by grace. May these stories of invitation and discovery offer some light as the clouds of war darken our world.

William C. Spohn
Director, Bannan Center for Jesuit Education

BY WILLIAM C. SPOHN

Director, Bannan Center for Jesuit Education, Santa Clara University



DISCOVERING THE PATH:

*Santa Clara's New
Initiative on Vocation*

“What ought I to do?” is the Socratic question that drove the tradition of liberal arts that has been the core of Western education. In Christian communities that question has often been framed as one of vocation, “What am I called to become?” That question is especially urgent for undergraduates who must choose a path for their lives. Faced with a multitude of career options and often uncertain about their own gifts and aspirations, they can frequently let other voices determine what they will do. Family expectations, the opinion of peers, and the demands of the marketplace often dictate what shape their lives should take. Estimating the level of income necessary to maintain a desired level of social status and then working backwards to determine the job that will best produce that income is a doomed strategy for attaining a meaningful life. It also reduces the undergraduate years to career preparation. The Jesuit tradition that guides Santa Clara University has always emphasized that education has a moral purpose beyond providing specific job skills. This tradition has also taught the practice of spiritual discernment to listen in faith to God’s invitation about what path to choose.

In contemporary Jesuit higher education, however, Socrates’ question has been broadened to become “How ought all of us live together in this world?” The globalization of the economy as well as of problems of poverty, mass migration, and environmental degradation raise questions beyond national borders. The dimension of justice stretches the horizon for the serious individual beyond the confines of personal fulfillment.

Recently Santa Clara received a grant of nearly two million dollars from the Lilly Endowment to encourage reflection on vocation across the campus. The grant will launch the DISCOVER Program over the next five years to enable students, faculty, and staff to reflect on the direction of their lives in relation to their deepest beliefs and the pressing needs of the world.

DISCOVER stands for “**D**eveloping and **I**nspiring **S**cholarly **C**ommunities **O**riented toward **V**ocational **E**ngagement and **R**eflection.” This title spells out the project’s key ingredients and brings together the two new developments at Santa Clara. The elements of the first half of the title—Developing and Inspiring Scholarly Communities—express the University’s shift to Residential Learning Communities which seek to integrate students’ academic, social, and spiritual experience. It reflects the conviction that learning happens best in community, where the whole person can be engaged. The spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola centers on the graced discernment of God’s particular call to individuals. That process seeks to discover God’s inspirations in one’s fundamental desires through prayerful reflection. The Jesuit commitment to teaching and scholarship reflects the conviction that God’s Spirit also works through the critical search for truth and meaning.

The elements of the second half of DISCOVER—Oriented toward Vocational Engagement and Reflection—capture the unique Ignatian approach to discovering God’s call at the intersection where faith engages the world. The Superior General of the Jesuits, Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., set a new standard for Jesuit education in his address two years ago at Santa Clara by calling for our students to become “persons of well-educated solidarity” whose faith aligns them with those most in need. From the perspective of Ignatian spirituality, we find our vocations by engaging the world and reflecting on how that engagement elicits fundamental desires to heal, serve, and create. Because God’s Spirit speaks through both the world’s realities and the gifts of the individual, vocation arises from this interaction of faith and justice, the heart and the world. This Ignatian understanding of vocation is captured in the words of Herman Hesse from his book, *Magister Ludi*:

There are many types and kinds of vocations, but the core of the experience is always the same: the soul is awakened, transformed, or exalted so that instead of dreams and presentiments from within, a summons comes from without: a portion of reality presents itself and makes a claim.



From the perspective of Ignatian spirituality, we find our vocations by engaging the world and reflecting on how that engagement elicits fundamental desires to heal, serve, and create. *Because God’s Spirit speaks through both the world’s realities and the gifts of the individual, vocation arises from this interaction of faith and justice, the heart and the world.*

This project will bring together the religious wisdom of spiritual discernment with the concern for justice by specific programs that will change the issue from choosing a career to discovering a calling. It will develop faculty and staff to become wise mentors who can help students discover their true gifts and connect them with what the world needs from them. This program will strive to put into operation the University's statement of mission that is meant to guide all of its efforts: *Santa Clara University will excel in educating men and women of competence, conscience, and compassion.* Intellectual excellence and professional expertise (competence) need a moral compass (conscience) to engage the world with all its problems and possibilities (compassion). Knowledge without conscience is blind; compassion without professional competence is ineffective.

Thinking about one's calling in Silicon Valley and in the diverse student population of Santa Clara provides special opportunities. The University has a student body that represents the emerging diversity of this nation and brings many of the issues of globalization directly onto campus. Over 40 percent of our 4400 undergraduates are students of color. Approximately 60 percent of them have a Roman Catholic background, including sizable numbers of Hispanic/Latino, Filipino, and Vietnamese students. Many other religious traditions are represented by students from the Pacific Rim and those drawn from around the world to Silicon Valley. Our location in California, where one out of four current residents was born in another country, evokes reflection on social conditions because it juxtaposes technological innovation and corporate affluence with the poverty of many recent immigrants. It also calls attention to the societies from which they emigrated. This rich context should expand the question of vocation beyond personal growth.

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA ON VOCATION

The contemporary Catholic and Jesuit spirituality that drives Santa Clara's mission is particularly apt for reflecting theologically on vocation. Since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), Roman Catholicism has broadened its understanding of vocation. Instead of being reserved for those called to ordination or religious communities, "vocation" extends to all the baptized. All who are part of the Body of Christ are equally called to holiness and service to make God's Kingdom a reality in the world. Ignatian spirituality believes that people outside of religious traditions can discover an analogous sense of calling in their own lives because it is confident that grace works through ordinary human experience.

Discernment of vocation is central to the Jesuit tradition. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, drew on his own conversion experience to compose his classic, *Spiritual Exercises*. This sixteenth century soldier and courtier learned the art of spiritual discernment as he struggled to discover his own calling over a 20-year period. Looking back at those years of searching, Ignatius called himself a "pilgrim." Today we would probably call him a "seeker," one of those restless people who are dissatisfied with ordinary life and inherited traditions and who insist that there must be more to life than the status quo.

The experience of invitation is central to the *Spiritual Exercises*. It doesn't come like a bolt from the blue or a "mission from God" with the clarity of the Blues

Brothers. It is not a command, but an invitation addressed to our freedom. If this invitation were simply marching orders, Ignatius would not have spent twenty years of trial and error learning wisdom the hard way. Without those mistakes, he would not have learned how to help others find the path for their freedom to take. Instead, Ignatius asks us to look into our own personal consciousness and ask, “What am I attracted to? What draws me over time in a certain direction? What are the roots of my motivation, the deepest desires of the heart, not the surface attractions or what others expect me to want?” Ignatius was convinced that our fundamental hopes and desires would speak life’s deepest invitation to us.

Ignatius asks us to look into our own personal consciousness and ask, “What am I attracted to? What draws me over time in a certain direction? What are the roots of my motivation, the deepest desires of the heart, not the surface attractions or what others expect me to want?” Ignatius was convinced that our fundamental hopes and desires would speak life’s deepest invitation to us.

Those fundamental hopes and desires, however, are only half of a real invitation. There has to be an external part as well, an actual situation where our hopes can be realized. Hopes without any grounding in reality, any actual prospects of realization, are delusions bound to be frustrated. Time and again, Ignatius found that his dreams didn’t correspond with the facts on the ground. He couldn’t be a shaggy hermit and also be of service to people in the public arena. He couldn’t preach the gospel without going back to school to learn Latin, philosophy, and theology. He and his companions couldn’t fulfill their dream of going to the Holy Land because there was a war on. They wanted to be itinerant preachers but found out that what their world actually needed was schools and solid learning.

A genuine invitation comes when both aspects come together: when our deepest dreams meet the world’s greatest needs. The DISCOVER program rests on the conviction that faculty and staff at Santa Clara have found here a productive “fit” between their gifts and what the enterprise needs. We have talents that energize us: the desire to learn our discipline or the ability for a specific form of administration. We got into the discipline of history or economics because we were driven by certain questions. We became painters or actors because we loved that form of expression. We went to law school because we were deeply troubled by the injustice in society. We found we liked to work with young people, so we went into student services work.

At some point those hopes and desires found a home at Santa Clara. Faculty and staff can help students discover their own path by reflecting on some key questions: Why did we come here? Why do we stay? What motivates us at the deepest level to be involved in educating our students, in the many ways that we do? No one can answer those questions for anyone else. Those who commit themselves to the work of the University have probably found a convergence between their hopes and talents and what the students need. They are not here just because it is a job; rather they are responding, consciously or not, to a profound invitation to pass life on to the next generation, to pass on meaning and vision to the young.

These reflections can lead faculty and staff to become mentors for students as they try to discover how they should spend their lives. They won't tell young people who to become because that would violate their freedom. But they can help them ask the right questions. I know a young graduate of a Jesuit university who was interviewing for a position with a large financial services firm in Boston. They wanted him to be part of a project to set up a national on-line services network. The recruiters told him the work was challenging, and would demand 60 to 70 hours a week, but the compensation was excellent. Eventually he asked them whether they enjoyed the work they were doing. There was an awkward pause. It seemed that none of them had thought of that. They replied that maybe the work wasn't all that enjoyable or meaningful, but the salary and perks were great. At that point, he knew he was not going to take the position. Helping students ask such fundamental questions is the aim of DISCOVER.

The experience of invitation, of finding the fit between our desires and the world's needs, is a central human dynamic. People from religious traditions will interpret that experience in the symbols and language of their community, like Ignatius did. He believed that the human desire to serve is the echo of the divine compassion, that the concern for healing the world in our small arena of job and family and community stems from God's desire to heal the world. He wanted people to find where their deepest desires would lead them to serve because he believed that would be the place where they would find God, or rather, where God would find them.

Ignatius did not believe that God dealt with human beings only in general terms, creating general physical structures or establishing moral principles. His own experience had taught him that God makes a unique invitation to each person, an invitation specifically tailored to that person's talents and the needs of their situation. It was not a fixed blueprint for them to discover, but more of a pilgrimage, a journey of trial and error that could bring wisdom and meaning. What is needed is not a road map, but a compass.



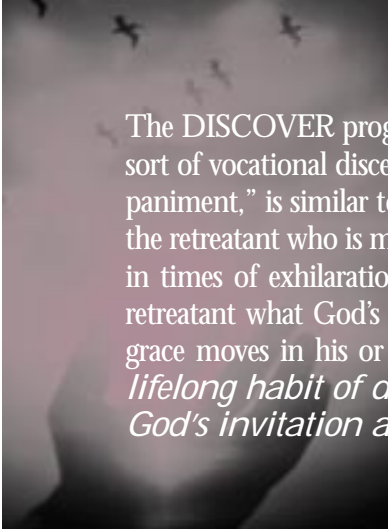
How does God call us to the right path? Usually this awareness comes through a process of discerning where our deepest gifts and desires meet the world's greatest needs. God's Spirit works in the depths of our humanity to help us become aware of our gifts and aspirations, and the same Spirit works through our experience to point out what the world needs from us.

AN IGNATIAN INTERPRETATION OF CALLING

The contemporary commitment of the Society of Jesus to integrate faith with the work of justice adds a special dimension to reflecting on vocation today. Traditionally, Jesuit institutions have been guided by a Christian humanism that sought to “educate the whole person” intellectually, morally, aesthetically, and spiritually. Emphasizing the personal good of education was meant to support the common good of society. Now, the common good of the whole world has taken on new urgency and is seen to embrace the personal good. The incarnation of the Word of God in Jesus Christ means that all of human history and experience is open to redemptive transformation. His cross and resurrection locate that transformation at the heart of human suffering and oppression. Because this biblical concern for justice is rooted in love of neighbor and the realization of God’s covenant with humanity, people of faith must pay special attention to the children of God who are suffering.

How does God call us to the right path? Usually this awareness comes through a process of discerning where our deepest gifts and desires meet the world’s greatest needs. God’s Spirit works in the depths of our humanity to help us become aware of our gifts and aspirations, and the same Spirit works through our experience to point out what the world needs from us. The Spirit attunes us to notice those problems and possibilities that our talents are uniquely suited to address. Grace connects these two poles like a spark that arcs between them. Faith and justice work together to insure that both poles receive equal consideration in the discernment of vocation. A deepening faith gives self-knowledge and trust in God’s help, while the virtue of justice sharpens our perception of what is distorted in the structures of society. The practices of faith and of justice locate our sense of calling in the real world, rich with possibilities and fraught with brokenness. Without the light of faith and honest awareness that we have been gifted, the world’s needs can seem an overwhelming burden. Without a knowledge of the actual conditions of our society and world, personal aspirations can be self-serving and gifts can be reduced to talents that serve career ambitions.

No one can dictate another’s calling because each of us possesses a unique vision and set of talents. One student may conclude that what the world needs most is



The DISCOVER program is intended to create structures in and outside the classroom where this sort of vocational discernment can be sustained. This mentoring role, which could be called “accompaniment,” is similar to the relationship between the retreat director giving the *Spiritual Exercises* and the retreatant who is making them. Ignatius cautions the director to provide balance for the retreatant in times of exhilaration and in times of discouragement. The director is not a guru who tells the retreatant what God’s will is. Rather, the director helps the retreatant learn to recognize how God’s grace moves in his or her experience. *This self knowledge should form the basis for a lifelong habit of discernment, so that future choices will be made in response to God’s invitation and direction.*

a physician dedicated to work with the gravely ill. A second may see through the lens of her talents that the world greatly needs business leaders of sound moral principles. A third may discern a call to religious ministry or see himself called to meet the world's need for beauty by writing fiction or composing music. The DISCOVER program will help all types of students to envision their life work as a contribution to the common good and, for those who are believers, an act of gratitude to God.

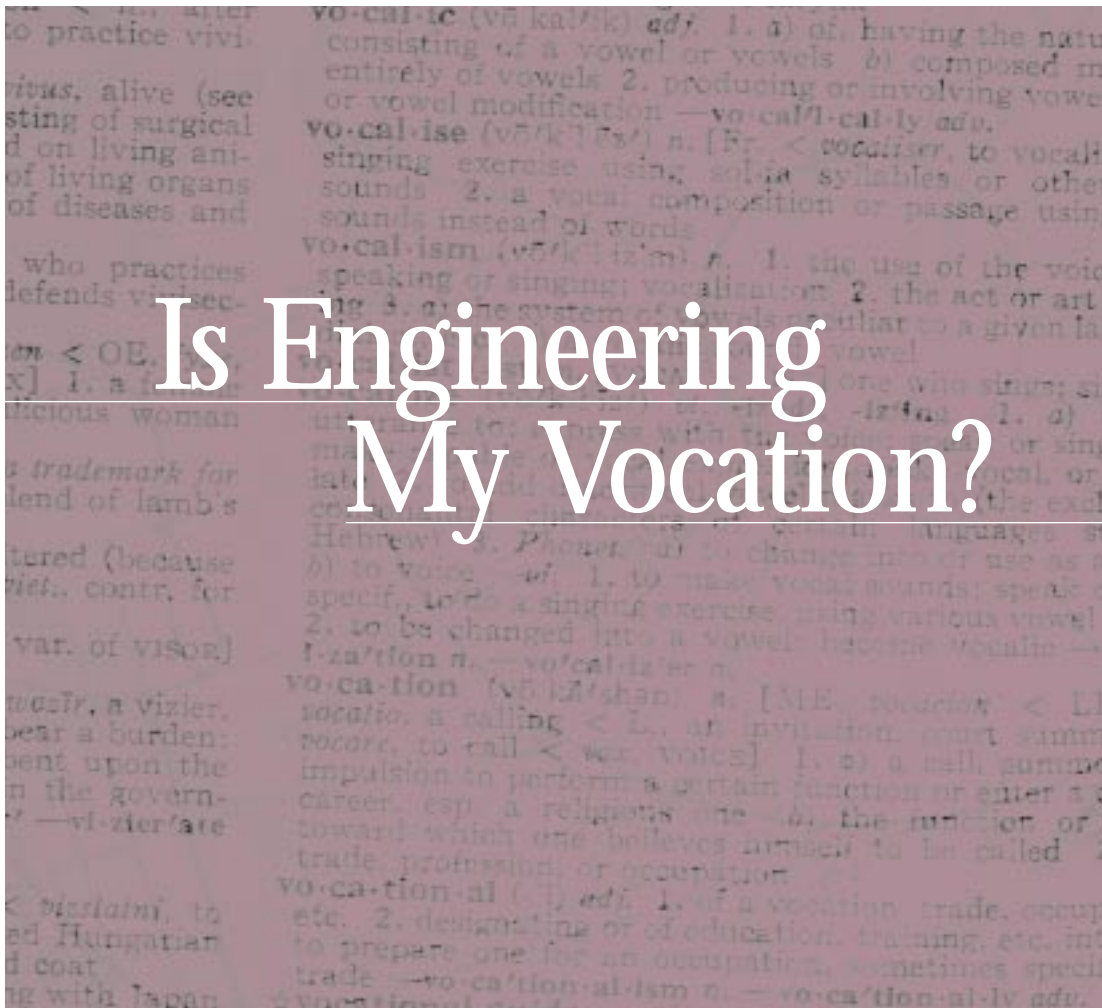
Wise mentors are an important component of the pedagogy of engagement that Santa Clara University is developing, a pedagogy that expresses the Ignatian spirituality of engagement. The Ignatian tradition realizes that the search for a life path needs the wisdom of a mentor and confirmation by actual results. Young people especially need the assistance of good mentors and a broader tradition to distinguish their own authentic aspirations from the expectations of others. Wise mentors can help students discover that they have gifts from God and become responsible adults by using their gifts generously. The DISCOVER program is intended to create structures in and outside the classroom where this sort of vocational discernment can be sustained. This mentoring role, which could be called "accompaniment," is similar to the relationship between the retreat director giving the *Spiritual Exercises* and the retreatant who is making them. Ignatius cautions the director to provide balance for the retreatant in times of exhilaration and in times of discouragement. The director is not a guru who tells the retreatant what God's will is. Rather, the director helps the retreatant learn to recognize how God's grace moves in his or her experience. This self knowledge should form the basis for a lifelong habit of discernment, so that future choices will be made in response to God's invitation and direction.

The various components of DISCOVER converge on this art of discerning. Students will integrate their academic, personal, and spiritual experience through the Residential Learning Communities and immersion trips working in poor communities locally and abroad. Some will engage in internship ministries in church organizations. Faculty and staff will have several ways to come together in reflection on their life paths, from the monthly Ignatian Faculty Forum to a two week long Faculty/Staff Vocation Reflection Seminar offered every summer. As faculty and staff reflect on their own professional identity and calling, some will want to act as mentors to accompany students and provide sustained resources for vocational discernment through courses, workshops, and other means. These continuing reflections will be more likely to inculcate a habit of discernment than a single event or brief experience. Since today's graduates will probably have several careers in their working lives and numerous points of decision about how to integrate their work and family obligations, discernment cannot fix on a single path for the rest of their lives. It has to be a habit of wisdom that is flexible enough to work in new and unforeseen contexts.

At this moment in Santa Clara's long history the University is embarking on two new initiatives in undergraduate education: the move from large residences to focused Residential Learning Communities and the drive to bring the faith that does justice into every academic pursuit. The DISCOVER program will develop targeted programs to deepen both these initiatives through a critical exploration of vocation, the personal calling that links faith and justice, heart and world. *



By William C. Spohn
Director,
Bannan Center for
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In his old age, Voltaire was in the habit of saying, “If you wish to speak with me, first define your terms!” No doubt, Voltaire’s intent was (at least in part) to discourage intellectual inferiors from wasting his time. He was, after all, a busy man, and not a particularly friendly one. But there is also a deeper significance to this statement, one that has to do with the importance of words and the precision with which they are used. It is in that context that Voltaire’s comment is of interest to us, since the essence of this paper lies in the proper interpretation of a single word.

Defining the word “vocation” is easy enough—all that is needed is a good dictionary. If, however, my objective is to determine whether engineering is my vocation and not just my profession, matters become considerably more complicated. So much so, in fact, that I doubt whether I can provide a clear answer to this question. What follows should, therefore, be viewed more as a progress report than a definitive response.

I will begin with a quote from one of my favorite books, Aldous Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy*:

St. Ignatius Loyola was once asked what his feelings would be if the Pope were to suppress the Company of Jesus. "A quarter of an hour of prayer," he answered, "and I should think no more about it." This is, perhaps, the most difficult of all mortifications—to achieve a "holy indifference" to the temporal success or failure of the cause to which one has devoted one's best energies.

Taken literally, Loyola's model is very difficult (if not impossible) to emulate. His attitude toward worldly success is fascinating, but I can not see myself achieving anything even remotely similar. If, however, we were to take this anecdote primarily as a guideline and framework for reflection, it could lead to some surprisingly practical criteria. With that in mind, I asked myself the

I can honestly say that I am not distressed any more by the fact that math (and science in general) did not meet my original expectations. In fact, over time I found something deeply comforting in the realization that we will never know all the answers.

When one thinks about it, a life without mystery seems like a rather bleak prospect.

following question: "If discovering one's vocation can ultimately lead to the kind of 'holy indifference' that Huxley refers to, how would such a process *begin* for an engineer?" The best that I could come up with was a set of necessary conditions, which I summarized in the form of two questions.

Question 1. Would I continue to work as an engineer if outcomes turned out to be very different from what I expected and desired?

Question 2. Is my research work driven by more than just the ego (in the following, I will use the word "ego" to describe the desire to be recognized and to be better than others)?

I believe that for engineering to be one's vocation and not just a profession, the answer to both questions must be positive. I proceed with that in mind.

Reflections on Question 1

My thoughts regarding Question 1 are tied, oddly enough, to Gödel's theorem. Kurt Gödel was one of the greatest mathematicians of the 20th century, whose main contribution was the so-called Incompleteness Theorem. For our purposes, it suffices to say that Gödel established that mathematics is ultimately incapable of expressing the complete truth, despite our best efforts to achieve the opposite. As an engineer, I see three possible responses to this result.

I could be devastated by the realization that I invested years of my life into something that is fundamentally flawed. What is particularly painful in this case is the fact that in mathematics (unlike natural sciences) humanity had the opportunity to make up all the rules, and failed anyway.

I could feel liberated by the fact that there is no need to order and structure the universe, since it simply cannot be done.

I could completely ignore Gödel and his theorem, and go about my usual business (which seems to be the typical response).

For quite a while I hovered somewhere between options 1 and 2, but I ultimately found myself firmly aligned with the latter one. I can honestly say that I am not distressed any more by the fact that math (and science in general) did not meet my original expectations. In fact, over time I found something deeply comforting in the realization that we will never know all the answers. When one thinks about it, a life without mystery seems like a rather bleak prospect.

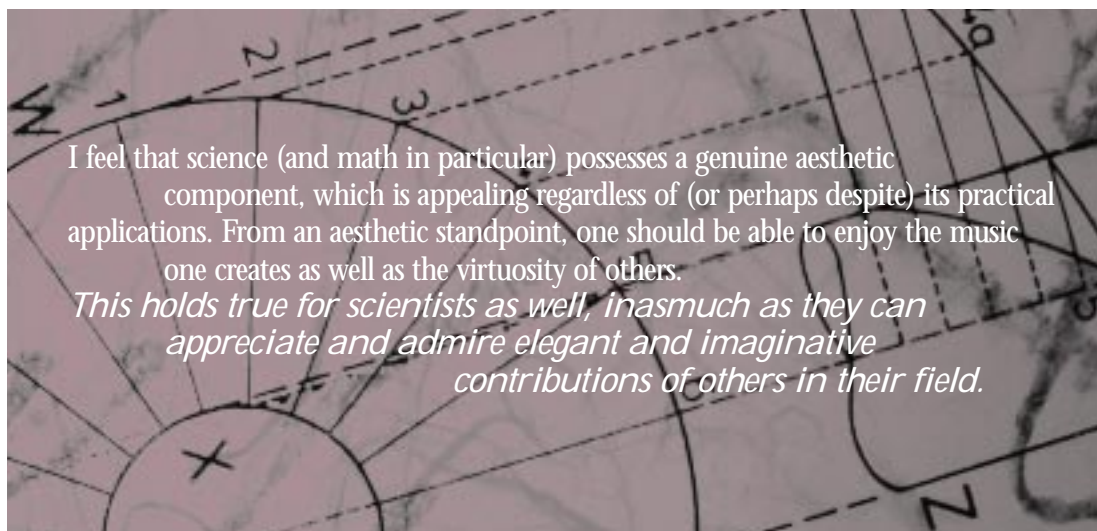
Gödel's theorem is also a unique lesson in humility. As Bertrand Russell put it in the conclusion of his "A History of Western Philosophy":

Man, formerly too humble, begins to think of himself as almost God ... In all this, I feel a grave danger, the danger of what might be called cosmic impiety. The concept of "truth" as something outside human control has been one of the ways in which philosophy hitherto has inculcated the necessary element of humility. When this check upon pride is removed, a further step is taken on the road towards a certain kind of madness ... I am persuaded that this intoxication is the greatest danger of our time.

The preceding discussion legitimately raises the question of what one should look for in science if

the truths it uncovers are necessarily limited and incomplete. Perhaps the best way to approach this is by attempting to put science in its proper place in the overall scheme of things. To me, searching for definitive truths in and through science is not unlike searching for music within an instrument. The search is obviously futile, but it does not follow that we can not take great pleasure in mastering the instrument. The analogy with music goes even deeper, because I feel that science (and math in particular) possesses a genuine aesthetic component, which is appealing regardless of (or perhaps despite) its practical applications. From an aesthetic standpoint, one should be able to enjoy the music one creates as well as the virtuosity of others. This holds true for scientists as well, inasmuch as they can appreciate and admire elegant and imaginative contributions of others in their field. In trying to make this point, I have often argued that an elegant mathematical proof is similar to a beautiful poem. My claim has been that the objective in both cases is to say very little while implying a great deal, and to give form to something previously formless. I am by no means alone in this opinion. Perhaps George Santayana put it best in "The Sense of Beauty": "All theory is a subjective form given to an indeterminate material."

One can, of course, contend that Santayana's logic may apply to theoretical science, but not nearly as much to engineering, which is necessarily practical. I don't think that this is true. Practicality and aesthetics can coexist very nicely, as in



the case of architecture. Or consider, for example, medieval art—while its purpose was primarily didactic, few will dispute the intrinsic beauty of Dante’s “Divine Comedy”, the stained glass windows of Chartres or the frescoes of Giotto.

Reflections on Question 2

The second question is perhaps harder to address than the first one. At the time when I was deciding on a major, I found far more pleasure in history, art and literature than in engineering. My career choice was guided by a mix of curiosity, challenge and the prospect of economic well-being (not necessarily in that order). In later years, there was also a certain measure of professional success, which considerably increased the overall appeal. It takes very little introspection, however, to recognize that every one of these motives is primarily ego-driven (in the sense defined earlier).

At this point in my life, I cannot honestly say that the old motives have completely disappeared, but they have been supplemented. In discovering a connection between science and aesthetics, I was able for the first time to find a bridge between what I do for a living and what I do in my spare time. As a result, my research has become more than just a competition with others—it now carries a component of pleasure, which is largely independent of external recognition. And not only that. As my interests turned more toward philosophy and its relationship with religion, I realized that my scientific background can actually provide some very effective tools for understanding abstract concepts. We should not forget, after all, that engineers are trained to deal with infinite dimensional spaces, chaos, bifurcations and the like, and can sometimes produce rather unconventional connections and interpretations. Let me illustrate this with a simple example. In one of the undergraduate classes I teach, I was asked what it would take to get an A in the course after two poor midterms. Before I could respond, one of the students said (not altogether incorrectly), “a total miracle.” Observing a number of depressed faces, I decided to diffuse the situation by asking the whole group to consider how an engineer would define a miracle. After some debate, the consensus was—an event with probability zero. I then asked the following

question: “If an event has zero probability, does that necessarily imply that it is impossible?” To those less versed in math, let me point out that the correct answer to this question is an unequivocal “no.”¹ Of course, none of the students with poor midterms got an A, which demonstrates how experience teaches us to accept what is “probable” and doubt the “merely possible.” In this context, I cannot resist adding the following quote by Bertrand Russell, which is mathematically accurate: “It is not certain that I will die, only extremely probable.” He almost proved his point by living to be 98.

Concluding Remarks

Am I now any closer to establishing whether engineering is my vocation? I am not sure. I think it is fair to say that engineering is my vocation to the extent that it contributes to my understanding and appreciation of truth and beauty. In that respect, my attitude toward engineering has clearly evolved, and I feel I have made some progress. Progress is not one of my favorite words, but this is perhaps the only context in which it makes complete sense. *

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Tracey Kahan, Thomas Schwartz, S.J., and my wife, Jelena, for many helpful comments in the preparation of this paper.

¹ Suppose I pick an arbitrary number, and ask you to guess what it is. What is the probability that you will succeed? There is only one favorable outcome, out of infinitely many possible ones. The probability is therefore one over infinity, which tends to zero. However, it is clearly *possible* that you could guess correctly.



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BY MARGALYNNE ARMSTRONG
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Writing about vocation has been an incredibly difficult process for me. Although I have been an attorney since 1981 and in the legal academy since 1985, when I tried to identify my vocation it took me months to come up with my still fuzzy answer-in-progress. Early on, I turned to my biggest, fattest English dictionary for some assistance. It provided several definitions of vocation: 1. a particular occupation, business or profession; 2. a strong impulse or inclination to follow a particular activity or career; 3. a divine call to God's service or to the Christian Life; 4. a function or station in life to which one is called by God.

An essay that addresses only the first definition, describing “how I became a law professor and what it means to me,” seems inadequate. The invitation to write on vocation was, I believe, a chance to examine and, well, *Explore*, my own “strong impulses or inclinations” or my response to a higher calling. The process of writing this piece has convinced me that a person's occupation is her vocation only to the extent to which it is informed by some or all of the last three dictionary definitions mentioned above.

"I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas," but I went to Law School Instead

as I entered college I planned to be a pre-med major. I now realize that I wanted to be a doctor for my mother's sake. My mother was a registered nurse, a very good one, and incredibly smart. Once she showed me a crumbling clipping of an article that reported she had received the highest score in the Illinois state nursing boards the year she sat for them. Mom could have become a doctor had the opportunity been available. But racial, gender, geographic, and class restrictions were such that it was improbable that a black girl from a family of modest means in St. Louis would become a physician in the early 1950s. Two remarkable decades of progress, a change of locale to Chicago, and a middle class upbringing had improved the prospects for that girl's daughter.

Unfortunately, a person's proclivities and talents do not necessarily run to the next generation. I dropped chemistry and physics and my pre-med major during a particularly lousy Indiana winter. In a depressive meltdown that left me dangerously close to quitting school, I began to read a lot of T.S. Eliot. By spring quarter I had decided it was time to face reality. I became an English major, finally acknowledging my true vocation (definition 2.), that of a poet.

Eighteen months later, I was in a senior in Manhattan, participating in an off-campus program, working as an apprentice to an animated filmmaker. We made cartoons for Sesame Street (anyone remember *How Many Cats?*), and I copied and painted animation cels. Sometime during my junior year I had surrendered to my latest true vocation (definition 2). I was meant to be a filmmaker, for I loved movies and seemed to know more about them than anyone I knew. And I really needed to get out of Indiana.

The year 1976 was a wonderful time to love movies, for art-house cinema was alive and well. Film festivals, classes and retrospectives presented an incredible range of options, spanning the history of motion pictures. Chaplin, Truffaut, and Altman were the directors that most inspired me. I lived a few blocks away from a theater that was presenting a Katharine Hepburn film festival. Every Wednesday night I could see these great old proto-feminist films on the big silver screen. I was having the best time I had ever had in my life, but I was also feeling pretty guilty. My parents (particularly my father) weren't putting me through college so that I could become a marginal artiste. I was their brainy kid and was supposed to "do something" with my talents and opportunities.

I returned to Indiana and graduated with an English major and minors in philosophy and fine arts. I moved to Philadelphia, then to Washington D.C. to live with friends from college. I had some pretty dull jobs; my B.A. didn't seem to impress anyone. I started thinking about graduate school, spent a day at Georgetown University Law School with a friend who had enrolled there, and took the L.S.A.T. I decided to move back in with my family in Chicago, apply to law school and save up some money. I didn't completely disconnect with my love for filmmaking. One of the three jobs I worked at the time included teaching an after-school animated filmmaking class at the local Jewish Community Center. I was admitted to the U.C. Berkeley School of Law, Boalt Hall class of 1981. After graduation, I practiced law for several years with Legal Services of Alameda County, representing low-income persons in housing and benefits cases. In 1985 I left practice to direct the Academic Support Program at Boalt Hall. In 1987 I began teaching law at Santa Clara University and continue to do so.

Who, shall I say, is calling?

Until I began these reflections on vocation I had long thought that I just fell into the profession of law. It was by chance that I spent a day at Georgetown, and that I have a proclivity for doing well on standardized tests that don't rely too heavily on math. It just so happened that I found studying law to be challenging and interesting; it resonated with whatever it was inside of me that caused me to minor in philosophy. It also satisfied my parents' aspirations for my success. But I never really felt that law was my special calling. This is not to say that I don't believe that practicing law can be a vocation. I hold in reverence inspired and gifted attorneys such as William Hastie and Thurgood Marshall who served as architects and instruments of tremendously important social change. Those were lawyers who embodied the practice of law as vocation in that "any true work for the improvement of human life (is viewed) as a sacred undertaking."²

I feel close to having a vocation when I help students to discover the law's imprint and influence in everyday life and help them comprehend the capacity that they will have as attorneys to create a better or a less cruel society. *When I research, write, and lecture about the role of law in creating racial and economic justice in society, it feels like my work is dedicated to improving human life.*

I have been more inclined to consider teaching the law as my vocation. I do not claim that I am a gifted teacher. In fact, I admit to having days of doubt. But I feel close to having a vocation when I help students to discover the law's imprint and influence in everyday life and help them comprehend the capacity that they will have as attorneys to create a better or a less cruel society. When I research, write, and lecture about the role of law in creating racial and economic justice in society, it feels like my work is dedicated to improving human life. When I used my position as a law professor to help organize the Society of American Law

Teachers' march in support of affirmative action, wherein hundreds of law professors and others marched through downtown San Francisco in academic regalia, it felt like I was responding to a calling.

So I find, finally, the presence of some higher calling in my own life, but run smack into the fundamental difficulty I have with the concept of vocation. As Leonard Cohen so succinctly stated: "Who, shall I say, is calling?"³ I don't want to go into where I am on my faith journey. Right now I cannot wholeheartedly embrace those definitions (3. and 4.) of vocation that involve being called by God. Suffice it to say that I'm constantly wavering between being convinced by current astronomical research that life is solely the product of subatomic reactions, and an inability to observe the spring green hills that now surround the Bay Area without wondering how I can doubt that God exists.

Yet I have come to believe that I am called to do what I do. And I now see that the call harkens back to my youthful desire to satisfy my parents' ambitions. For almost twenty years my father, Charles B. Armstrong, was the editor and publisher of a weekly newspaper. It was a very political newspaper and I often found myself at odds with my father's positions. I was proud of my father but had not wanted to follow in his footsteps. When he was killed, I went back to Chicago, but determined that I would not stay to run the newspaper. I returned to San Francisco and eventually the newspaper closed down. This has long been a source of pain and remorse for me, but I knew publishing the paper was not my calling. Still, this process of exploring my vocation has revived memories that my father's life greatly influenced my profession and my vocation. In writing this essay I researched some electronic newspaper files and found an obituary of my father. It read in part "former schoolteacher, political activist, and human rights crusader." I had known that my father was a teacher, and I had been with him to march in picket lines demanding to integrate businesses that took black people's money, but refused to hire us. But the intervening memories had overwhelmed these obvious connections to the very things I have described as my own callings. Miraculously, through writing this essay, I discovered that a person's proclivities and talents do not necessarily miss the next generation. ✨

ENDNOTES:

¹ "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," by T.S. Eliot.

² Discovering Vocation (The Lilly Project at Alma College) www.alma.edu/academics/vocation/pho.

³ *Who By Fire*. Copyright Leonard Cohen and Sony/ATV Music Publishing Canada Company.



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BY MICK McCARTHY, S.J.
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CONFESSIONS

“Brother Polycarp says I have a vocation.”

“Holy farmer above, what nonsense is this?”

“I thought you’d be pleased if I was to be a brother.”

“And what about the shop? . . . I don’t understand you, Jim. You’re not *cosmos mentis* at all.”

The boy waited at the door. His thin face had the look of being wedged in the jar.
“Look, Da, if I’m not to be a brother, what am I to be?”

“You’re to follow me in the shop of course. There’s your vocation. To learn to be a better shop-keeper.”

It surprised what the boy said then. It surprised the way he said it.

“Well it may so be a vocation isn’t like that. It may so be a vocation is like a friend you might make. You don’t choose a friend. A friend would come to you. And you don’t turn him out, no matter what others would say. You’re only too thankful if you found him.”

—Jamie O’Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys* (New York: Scribner, 2001), 124-5.

Please forgive me if I freeze up before the question set by the editors of this magazine: “What are your personal reflections on what it means to be called to vocation as a Jesuit in higher education?” You must understand that such queries frequently sent me into an anxious cringe. Since the day twenty years ago when, as a freshman at Stanford, I announced that I was leaving college to enter the Society of Jesus, I have faced a constant line of interrogators—sometimes suspicious, sometimes sanctimonious, always curious—on the subject of “vocation.”

Never once have I felt any sense of mastery when speaking about “vocation”: There is something elusive, something mysterious and indeterminable about that word. I sympathize, frankly, with the boy in the novel quoted above. Language of “vocation” simply has no place in the practical world of his father, the Dublin shopkeeper. To him the boy speaks “nonsense,” to him the boy is *non cosmos mentis* [sic]. And so he calls his son back to the horizon that he himself knows and controls: “You’re to follow me in the shop of course. There’s your vocation.”

The boy, however, intuits that he and his father are living in different thought-worlds. To the boy there is something narrow, confining, even crushing about the horizon of his father; his face has the look of being “wedged in the jar.” Life, for Da, makes sense on account of its familiar and determined patterns. What I like best about this passage is the way the boy handles his father. His answer comes from a place he himself hardly controls or determines. What he says *surprises* him; indeed, even the way he says it *surprises* him. Perhaps, he suggests, “a vocation isn’t like that ...”

Whenever I myself have addressed people’s curiosity, I have usually felt “wedged in” by a common presumption: that my vocation comprises some sort of grand plan, which I clearly recognized or conceived long ago and which at every turn I consciously seek to fulfill, point by point. I must therefore confess that I have no grand plan. If I ever did, I assure you it was frustrated and short-lived.

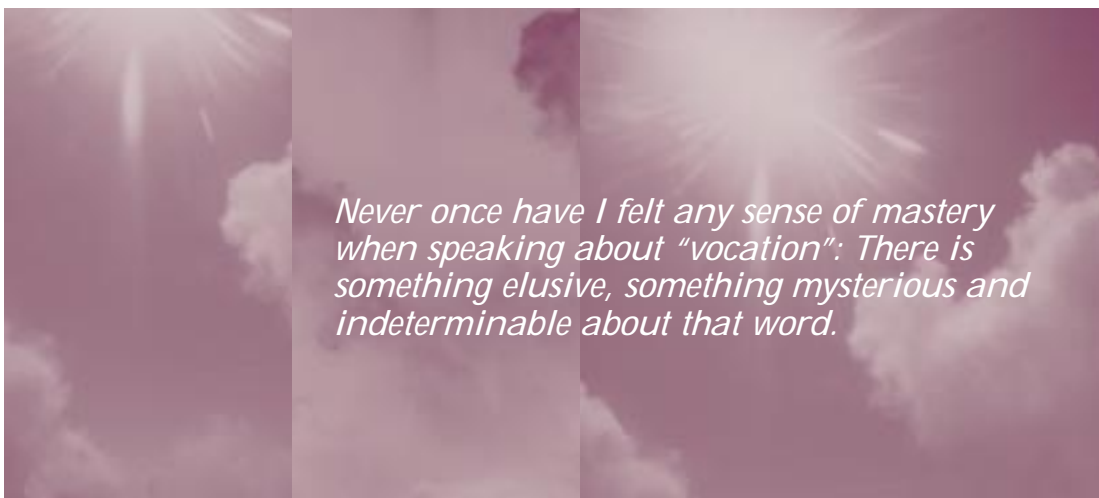
I do recognize in my life, however, a rich and surprisingly coherent history of desire and attraction. I do discern a succession of discoveries in persons and events I had neither imagined nor looked for. This mysterious history gives form to the vocation that has led me here.

I was born with the name (certainly) and the temperament (perhaps) of an Irish politician. As the youngest in a family of six kids growing up in San Francisco, I quickly determined that the path of civic responsibility was the natural destiny of someone whose immigrant grandfather was a city beat cop and whose father taught English at City College. At some point in high school, though, the horizons started to expand. I found myself immersed in a community that stressed to me the importance of being a “Man for Others.” In a way, you could say that I was thoroughly minted by the rhetoric in currency during the last thirty years at Jesuit schools and universities.

In another way, however, I truly believe that such language only helped me access and discover what, at a far more profound and mysterious level, I so desired: a life marked by an emerging pattern of warmth, generosity, large-heartedness, compassion, friendship, intelligence, service, and outgoing love—a love that would even include an element of free self-offering and sacrifice. I have not exactly lived such a life. And while, frankly, I shrink to expose such pious desires knowing full well how poorly I live them and how notorious are the tragic failures of men who have similarly espoused them, still I find considerable peace and joy at the promise of daily re-committing myself. For me, this commitment is irreducibly tied to the person of Christ, in whose self-donation I find my most constant source of inspiration and the most complete revelation of God: “Here is my body . . . for you. Here is my blood, poured out for you.”

“It may so be a vocation is like a friend you might make. You don’t choose a friend. A friend would come to you. And you don’t turn him out, no matter what others would say. You’re only too thankful if you found him.”

So I never became that Irish politician. Instead, during the last twenty years I have spent the vast majority of my working hours poring over ancient texts. Why? There was never any grand plan here, but early on I stumbled (literally, as I remember) into the office of someone who initiated me into the mysteries of the Greek language. At first I was simply attracted by its exotic alphabet. Through that alphabet, though, I eventu-



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ally discovered Homer, whose vision of human life is so complex, so fresh, and so bold that it arrested me. Its poignant beauty arrested me. Achilles (read him carefully!) still moves me to be a “contemplative in action” as much as Ignatius of Loyola does.

When I was given the opportunity to study classics for four years in Europe, it was not something I had asked for. At first I demurred because (as any 22-year old will likely tell you) it seemed a waste of time and an unnecessary luxury. Over the course of those weekly tutorials discussing works of immense human beauty with my Oxford don, though, I came gradually to discover that, on some level, for the sake of my soul I had to attend to the life of the mind, as pretentious as that sometimes sounds. Finally, through the example of Dr. Parker—exact, critical, engaging, kind—I came to see the intellectual life as a vocation of its own, one that required a certain contemplative space/leisure, true discipline, and deepening humility. It was the humility of my tutor—he the Wykeham Professor of Ancient History at Oxford!—that especially moved me to imagine the academic life as an occasion of generosity and joy.

Through a mysterious confluence of interests and desires, I ended up going into Patristics, the study of early Christian theology. For the past three years I have been doing research on the biblical interpretation of Augustine, that massively influential and complex and controversial fifth-century bishop of North Africa. I confess that I was first attracted to Augustine because I discovered his Latin to be so very beautiful, but this seduction was only the initial movement in what is a far more powerful and enduring draw.

Augustine, like all early Christian writers, was trying desperately to make some sense out of his life, to find some order in his world. Given a diversity of cultural resources, his love both of the classical and the Christian traditions, situated as he was within multiple political, social, and ideological tensions, set in a position of ecclesial power and pastoral responsibility, possessed of intense, often conflicting desires, and committed to Christ, he had to discover his own way. His discovery came through blazing imperfections and mistakes. His way, he confesses, was that of a conspicuously “restless heart.” And (I confess) I return to him because, for all the complex differences and similarities between his life and mine, between his world and ours, he provides a rich, reflexive framework or mirror wherein to see myself as someone also longing and discerning for a beauty “ever ancient, ever new.” I believe that, on some level, each of us is engaged in some such process.

I love to think and write and talk about these things. I love to do so in various spheres and with differing degrees of complexity and specialization, both personal and academic, secular and religious. I feel a certain joy when I am around people who take seriously what many traditions call the “contemplative life” and who are deeply concerned to live justly. I believe that, at its best, Santa Clara comprises such a community, and I trust that in this context I may make some contribution to what Ignatius called “the good of souls.” Right now, then, working at Santa Clara as a teacher-scholar-priest seems to be an eminently satisfying way to spend this next part of my life. Because it fits into a history of desire and attraction that I recognize as my own, I can quite happily claim my work here as the next stage in the emerging drama I dare to call a vocation. ✱



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BY LULU SANTANA
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VOCATION OF PRESENCE

During one of our annual family visits to Mexico 24 years ago, my sister, Lilia, and I celebrated our first communion. To prepare ourselves for this celebration, we attended daily catechetical sessions alongside a large group of other children who would celebrate their first communion on Christmas Eve, but Lilia and I would not be ready by then. Our catechist, Señorita Elena, agreed to devote additional time to Lilia and me, so every afternoon she would meet with us in the church. Lilia and I would sit with her on a pew and we would all talk about God, Catholic traditions, and how we could live out our faith. Señorita Elena's welcoming presence and conversational approach made us feel comfortable, and Lilia and I looked forward to sitting and talking on that pew every afternoon.

After a number of months, I arrived at the conclusion that religious life was not part of my calling. But I did begin to uncover other pieces of my vocation. *The women with whom I lived gave me the freedom, guidance, and support to more fully appreciate my vocation as a woman, as a person of faith, as a person longing to make this world a better place.* The word vocation had shed its narrow definition, and I continued on my journey to discover more layers of my vocation.

On Jan. 6, 1979, Lilia and I celebrated our first communion. Rather than wear the white, lacy dress girls traditionally wore, Lilia and I decided that we wanted to dress like my dad's cousins who were Religious of the Blessed Sacrament. And so we had small nun's habits made for us; Lilia even got to wear the superior's big rosary. We did look cute!

At the age of six and throughout most of my life, I understood the word "vocation" to describe one's calling as a nun or a priest. My first communion garb reflected a recurring thought about my future vocation. I absorbed the idea that somehow being a nun or a priest was what would please God the most, and that such a vocation was a great way to serve people. These thoughts lay dormant for a number of years until my senior year in college. In the midst of the overwhelming question ("What am I going to do after I graduate?") I unearthed my childhood musings on religious life and began to seriously look into that possibility.

For a couple of years, I thought I knew clearly what was my calling in life: I would undergo the formation to enter a religious community and also complete graduate work in pastoral ministry so that I could be an effective minister in a church community. During my first year of graduate studies at SCU, I lived with a community of religious sisters to help me with the discernment process. After a number of months, I arrived at the conclusion that religious life was not part of my calling. But I did begin to uncover other pieces of my vocation. The women with whom I lived gave me the freedom, guidance, and support to more fully appreciate my vocation as a woman, as a person of faith, as a person longing to make this world a better place. The word vocation had shed its narrow definition, and I continued on my journey to discover more layers of my vocation.

In fall 1996, I made the move from convent to college campus; I became a Resident Minister on the seventh floor of Swig Hall. The position sounded interesting, but my attention was more focused on finishing my master's degree and working at a parish—at least this is where I thought my attention should be focused. It did not take long for me to realize that I was enjoying Resident Ministry much more than my work in the parish. I found the interaction with the students very enriching and energizing. I loved the impromptu conversations about politics, religion, relationships, classes, music, culture, etc. I had been told that Resident Ministry involved a “ministry of presence.” So that's what I tried to do: be present when students were homesick, frustrated with classes, excited about a relationship, confused about faith, studying for exams, and so on. The students were often appreciative and affirming of the fact that I was making a difference in their college life.

When it was time to start thinking once again about what to do after I graduated, a friend suggested I apply for a position in Campus Ministry. I dismissed the idea right away since I had been preparing myself to work in a parish—not with college students. But I thought more about my experience on the seventh floor of Swig. I was making a difference in the lives of some of those students and I was enjoying the experience. Why dismiss something that was calling to me with such clarity?

I am now in the middle of my sixth year as a Campus Minister, and last year I served my sixth and last year as a Resident Minister. I continue to be amazed and grateful at how much I enjoy what I do in my job. What I love the most, and what I think I am best at, is listening, sharing an insight, challenging a student's assumptions about him or herself or of others, encouraging students to use their gifts, nurturing students' understanding of faith and service, offering support during a difficult time, and sharing the joys of life. All of this does not happen because of one particular program we offer, but through many different opportunities for interaction and conversation. The outcomes are not easily measurable or quantifiable, but throughout the years, the feedback from students continues to affirm that I have found my vocation.

Campus Ministry in itself is not my vocation, but what I have been invited to do at Santa Clara University during the past six years certainly is. My training is as a catechist—one who echoes faith—and in a programmatic sense I have done so in preparing students for the Sacraments of Initiation, coordinating retreats, leading immersion trips, mentoring students, training liturgical ministers, assisting

At this time in my life I am at peace that I am living out my vocation by being a Campus Minister. I look forward to each day and feel energized by the students whom I am privileged to serve. Sure, there are challenging, frustrating, and disappointing moments—and they are part of my calling as well. They call me to grow in patience, understanding, wisdom, hope, and courage. *Within the University's desire to educate the whole person, there is no doubt that my day-to-day interactions with students continue to educate me and give me insights into how I am living my vocation today.*

When it was time to start thinking once again about what to do after I graduated, a friend suggested I apply for a position in Campus Ministry. I dismissed the idea right away since I had been preparing myself to work in a parish—not with college students. But I thought more about my experience on the seventh floor of Swig. *I was making a difference in the lives of some of those students and I was enjoying the experience. Why dismiss something that was calling to me with such clarity?*

the *Comunidad Latina* with liturgical events, and even advising a sorority. These have all served as conduits to my being present to the needs and interests of students and hopefully to help them begin or continue to discover their vocation.

I have come to believe that my vocation is to be present in the present. Every experience of my life has been a calling; each moment and each person has spoken to me in some way. I have not always been attentive; rather, for most of my thirty years I have been looking down the road and imagining what or whom it is that I think is calling me when my true calling was right in front of me.

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Last year I realized that too many Decembers had passed without my being in Mexico. I packed my bags and spent several weeks visiting various family members. I stayed for a few days in Ciudad Guzmán, the city where I had spent most of my time during my childhood visits. One weekday morning, I decided to go to mass with my Tía Lety to the church, where, among other things, I had celebrated my first communion. Mass had just started when I noticed a woman a few pews in front of me. A shawl was draped around her shoulders, just like it was 24 years ago. Her long, black hair had more gray strands, though. Could it be her? I leaned over to my Tía Lety and asked her if that woman was the catechist who prepared my sister and I for our first communion. "Yes, that is Señorita Elena," she responded.

My eyes began to fill up with tears and I was overcome by a deep gratitude for this simple, faith-filled woman, who 24 years ago had talked with me, listened to me, challenged and encouraged my faith. When mass ended, I went up to her and began to explain who I was. She stopped me in mid-sentence, "You're the one from that picture!" And she gestured a veil over her head. "I look at it almost every day," she told me. When I told her that I was a catechist and campus minister, she got teary-eyed. I thanked her for not only *what* she taught me, but more so for *how* she taught me. Underneath my words, I suppose I was thanking her for having been attentive to her vocation, and for being a spark in helping me understand my vocation. *



Lulu Santana
Campus Minister,
Santa Clara University

BY ANDRÉ L. DELBECO

Thomas J. and Kathleen L. McCarthy University Professor, Leavey School of Business



I am a blessed individual. From the moment I embarked on my doctoral studies, I knew I wanted to be a scholar-teacher. Someone wrote that the test of a “calling” is to find the burdensome aspects of your career a small price to pay for the pleasure of its engagement. I pass the test! Academic “drudgery” (e.g. grading exams, dealing with publication refusals and rewrites, and the occasional pedagogical or research failure) has never tarnished my overall joy each September when the academic year commences.

This is not to say difficult choices are absent in the life of the scholar-teacher. Some strategic career decisions are intermittent and others perennial. These decisions pivot an academic career toward greater inner freedom or shallow careerism. Intermittent decisions in academic life are typical of any career: Should I remain at my present university or move (take advantage of greater research support?; serve more needy students?; provide for personal growth?; join an educational culture more in line with my own val-

ues?); All careers are shaped by such choices, and for these decisions we often seek and have counsel available.

However, perennial decisions are no less important and shape the career of the scholar-teacher in subtle ways. Examples might be: Should I undertake the difficult intellectual and political process of proposing a new course? How should it be designed and taught? Is there material specific to the Jesuit, Catholic tradition that should be included? This is not a trivial decision sequence. Curriculum design impacts students’ lives over several years by shaping the character of the educational experience. In a similar fashion, scholarship choices involve long lines of causation. Should my present research program be closed down or re-conceptualized? Who do I need to partner with if I venture into a new arena of intellectual inquiry? Among competing needs, whose problems should I address? How do I include the voice of the marginalized in my scholarly inquiry?

When puzzling over such decisions, a Jesuit, Catholic university hopes its faculty asks where the voice of God is within these choices. Its tradition also suggests there is something in Ignatian Spirituality that can provoke a unique perspective regarding discernment. But how can the University aid its faculty in these decisions?

There is also discernment regarding university service. Should I accept (volunteer for) appointment to this controversial committee? How will I continue scholarly inquiry and a teaching rhythm if I accept this administrative post? Should I advance to a new administrative role or return to full-time teaching and scholarship?

As I look back over my own career, there were times when I made such decisions in true inner freedom, congruent with my gifts, and even selflessly. There were other occasions when anxiety, perceived career pressures, and personal ambition distorted my choices.

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INTROSPECTION IN JESUIT, CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Jesuit Higher Education is undergoing a period of deep introspection. What does it mean to be a “Jesuit” University as we begin a new century? What should be the partnership between faculty and Jesuits in the unfolding future?

Santa Clara University has been involved in an intensive dialog regarding institutional mission and University level programs as part of its Strategic Plan. Still, for the individual faculty member,

the implications of Jesuit identity can remain more elusive.

“I am not a Jesuit so I am not sure exactly how the Jesuit dialog really fits with my life.”

“I have extensive professional, scientific and career pressures to work through. I welcome the Jesuit cultural heritage, and many of its values, but scholarship has to remain a primary concern. I often feel my legitimate professional pressures are only partially acknowledged in the discussion of what a Jesuit University should be.”

“I already feel overwhelmed with the demands associated with trying to balance teaching, scholarship, and family. The ‘Jesuit’ conversation seems to ask for additional commitments.”

“I am not Catholic. My religious tradition and its insights do not seem included in conversations regarding ‘Jesuit Education.’”

As a faculty member I hear comments like these quietly spoken by colleagues. Further, there is much about the Jesuit ethos that is shrouded in mystery. Phrases like “discernment” and the “*Spiritual Exercises*” aren’t always understood. Yet in the end, Santa Clara University will be fully Jesuit only if faculty members integrate dimensions of the Ignatian tradition into their individual choices.

Twelve faculty members from a variety of academic disciplines, different career stages, and representing multiple religious traditions have been invited to meet once each month for shared professional discernment. *The objective is to uncover the intersection of a modern Ignatian spirituality with individual faculty choices—not an abstract, idealized dialog but rather an opportunity to learn through the current struggles of a scholar-teacher.*

INSIGHTS FROM LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

In thinking about a program that might be helpful to faculty discernment, a common premise in current research on both contemporary leadership and spirituality has to be considered. We now understand that both require integration through reflection upon strategic choices. For example, McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) provide scientific evidence that leadership skills develop through the experience of and reflection on decisions such as engaging action, accepting setbacks and reorienting projects, starting endeavors from scratch, turning around failed programs, etc. In like manner, a hallmark of Ignatian Spirituality is discovering the action of God in decisions about everyday life (Lonsdale, 2000, p. 191). In this sense Ignatian discernment is not so much a concept or a technique but rather a way of living (Delbecq et al., 2000).

Charles Currie, S.J., president of the Association of Jesuit College and Universities considers finding formats for faculty formation a critical contemporary priority for the Jesuit University. (Currie, 2001). What might be a model for deepening faculty understanding of Ignatian discernment?

AN IGNATIAN FACULTY FORUM

This past fall the Bannan Center has sponsored a new experiment in faculty leadership and spiritual development. Twelve faculty members from a variety of academic disciplines, different career stages, and representing multiple religious traditions have been invited to meet once each month for shared professional discernment. The objective is to uncover the

intersection of a modern Ignatian spirituality with individual faculty choices—not an abstract, idealized dialog but rather an opportunity to learn through the current struggles of a scholar-teacher.

The format for the monthly evening meeting includes a personal and spiritual “check-in,” opening inter-religious meditation, exploration of the salience of pre-assigned readings from the Ignatian tradition and other spiritual and wisdom traditions for professional choices, a simple soup and bread dinner, sharing of individual decision struggles, and a closing meditation.

The design of the forum echoes the critical lesson from such management training program as TEC (The Executive Committee) and YPO (Young Presidents’ Organization)—that we learn habits of the heart and discernment by reflecting on challenges we are wresting with in the present tense.

However, four spiritual elements are overlaid on this well-tested protocol:

Stable Community: Drawn from the spirituality of Benedict, the idea is that in a stable community, over time, trust wins out over fear and the responsibility and challenge to love courageously wins out over the temptation to self-centeredness or the temptation to walk away from spiritual challenge.

Spiritual Discernment: In community we learn to listen for the Spirit, which draws near in love to awaken the self to compassionate service, and to be a self-disciplined, non-anxious presence in one’s organizational setting.

Lectio-Divina: Shared spiritual readings inspire the members of the group to listen to the Spirit speaking in and through both Word and the dialog following meditation.

Hospitality: The Forum becomes a place of hospitality, providing for each member's needs in mutual care, prayer, and sharing of gifts (Phillips and Huntington, 2001).

EXPERIENCE TO DATE

The Ignatian Faculty Forum is now in its fourth month at the time of this writing. Some statements from participants provide a sense of the unfolding experience:

"It is a new experience to be able to share my real dilemmas with a group of colleagues in a confidential setting of trust."

"I can't believe how the four hours fly by. This is the longest and the quickest 'faculty meeting.' I look forward to each month's conversation."

"I am deeply touched to see how thoughtfully other faculty approach these important decisions and try to incorporate spiritual insight. I am becoming more reflective about my own decisions."

"I never realized how much the Ignatian perspective could apply to my personal teaching and scholarship."

"I am learning a great deal. Each topic discussed by other participants has important personal transfers for me."

"This has been the most supportive experience I have had in my faculty career."

The Ignatian Faculty Forum has successfully established an atmosphere of trust where members openly bring forward personal professional challenges and share their heartfelt struggles. Issues raised have included work-life balance dilemmas, sensitive interpersonal collegial problems, struggles regarding organizational priorities, discernment regarding foci for new scholarship, as well as teaching and pedagogical puzzles.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Professionals in many organizations have teams who assist in strategic discernment. The scholar-teacher is often more isolated. This is even more true as intellectual specialization often means that one's intellectual partners are now located in other institutions. While the Internet allows for technical discourse, more intimate support is often limited. Yet, unless the teacher-scholar is supported in discernment regarding how Ignatian insights can interpenetrate professional challenges, there is a danger that many choices will be dominated by the logic of the secular academy rather than creatively linked to the Jesuit mission. The Ignatian Faculty Forum is a hope-filled experiment proving to be a source of both assistance and solace as faculty wrestle with discernment regarding scholar-teacher issues. ✧

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Entering Personal and Global Conversations:

LINKED CLASSES IN XAVIER RLC

Professors Doug Sweet (English) and Robert Brancatelli (religious studies) were awarded a Bannan Center grant to pursue research in El Salvador based on their desire to link two core curriculum courses for entering students through Xavier Residential Learning Community (RLC). An integral element of their plan was to include a peer educator (Stephanie Neustadter, a senior English major) in both the research trip to El Salvador and the daily workings of the two classes. Given this collaborative framework, what follows is an attempt to synthesize the linked class experience by giving voice to some of its participants: the two professors, the peer educator, and two first-year students.

PROFESSOR DOUG SWEET

Several years ago, I was part of a group of faculty in the English Department who worked on teaching a shared text in first year composition. One of the driving motivations for this project was the hope that students would carry on conversations about course materials and ideas outside the bounds of the classroom. I was lucky enough to see that hope materialize this last fall term in the interactions among professors, a peer educator, and students of Xavier RLC. When Robert Brancatelli and I first talked about doing some kind of linked course, we were in El Salvador on an immersion trip sponsored by the Bannan Center and the Arrupe Center. I'm unable to pinpoint the precise moment, or even

identify the specific thought, but somehow we both understood that we wanted to integrate our El Salvador experiences with our teaching in some material ways. Our linked courses this fall marked the fruition of that understanding.

We shared the same students in our individual classes, and designed our curricula to take benefit of that reality. Robert's Religion in Society course and my composition course, "Ideology in Society," provided, I think, an unusually productive pairing. We shared syllabi and designed our readings, our assignments, and our schedules to fit together in ways we thought might stimulate student interest and thinking. Using documentary films, texts written by Salvadorans and Jesuit educators, historical accounts of recent El Sal-

vadoran history and our own personal experiences and academic foundations, we confronted issues of globalization, social justice and personal integrity from different perspectives.

Although I'm clearly and certifiably implicated in the process I'm describing, I'm equally certain that I've never worked with a group of students who accomplished more in terms of broadening their thinking, improving their writing, or staying engaged with the subject. In thirteen years of teaching writing at Santa Clara, I've never sensed more engagement nor actually seen more interaction between students than I witnessed this fall working with Xavier RLC. These students, for the most part, took on extremely difficult academic texts with diligence, curiosity, and energy—what teacher could ask for more?

**CHRISTINA QUATTROCCHI—
XAVIER STUDENT**

The Xavier English and Religion RLC link has been one of the most enriching experiences in my academic career. My RLC experience extended far beyond the classroom, shaping the community in which I live. The experience extended to the relationships I shared with my professors. Their willingness to work together, attend Xavier Monday night dinners, and host discussion groups after Globalization Lectures was more than enriching to our link experience. Our professors' enthusiasm and dedication was spread throughout our entire RLC.

One of the most important relationships the RLC link created for me was with the people in Xavier. With them, I had the chance to engage in heated debates after breakfast, I challenged our professors' ideas, and my dedication to what I was learning intensified. The linked class created a bond between all of its students extending far beyond the classroom and far beyond the dorm. I now

consider my RLC link classes to be one of the most invaluable experiences this school has to offer. It has created a strong link among the people in our RLC, and it brought the issues I learn about in the classroom inescapably into almost every aspect of my life.

**MEREDITH SWINEHART—
XAVIER STUDENT**

Taking the linked courses with my Residential Learning Community was exceptionally valuable for me. I can honestly reflect upon my experience in these classes as one of the most enriching of my academic career.

Each of the two linked courses was taught within the context of El Salvador. However, the material and relevant areas of exploration differed greatly for each course—one was taught from a religious standpoint, and the other focused on an examination of ideologies. Thus, our professors



Robert Brancatelli, Christina Quattrocchi, Meredith Swinehart, and Doug Sweet.

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—CHRISTINA QUATTROCCHI, XAVIER STUDENT

challenged us from every possible angle. We gained extensive education about ways to examine what we learn and what we believe—knowledge that applies far beyond El Salvador.

I believe the aspect of the linked courses through which I learned the most was the environment of the Residential Learning Community, which constantly fostered our educational growth and encouraged us to make connections beyond the classroom. Because we not only learn but also live together, students in the linked courses discussed in the dorm the issues raised by our classes. We did so not in working on an assignment, but because we felt the issues to be important. In doing so, we bonded as scholars and reinforced what we were learning in class. Because of the effect these issues had on us as scholars and as people of conscience, a group of students from the linked classes is currently planning a trip to

El Salvador to make our knowledge a reality, inspired by what we learned and empowered by our ability to apply it in the real world.

I learned an immense amount from the linked courses, and I do not believe I would have learned as much had the two classes not been linked. I feel that all students could benefit greatly from linked classes, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to do so.

STEPHANIE NEUSTADTER—
PEER EDUCATOR

In working with the two Residential Learning Community classes this past quarter, I got the opportunity to continue expanding my experiences in El Salvador with the students. Because there were two classes related to the subject and all the students were involved with both, it was a more personal and involved experience. I got to know the students very well. A few days a week I worked with them talking about my personal reactions to the trip and the classes and shared with them what I could about what they were trying to glean from the quarter.

The reason these linked courses worked so well together is because the overall focus and presentation of the cultural understanding was the same, even though the two classes had a different approach to the subject. It gave the students a chance to keep the conversation going. Instead of having to completely switch gears and trying to focus on a new and unrelated subject, they were able to participate twice a day in this setting and learning environment that provided for a continuation of what they were learning.



Stephanie Neustadter

Personally, it allowed me to relive the experiences of my trip, keep learning more about the politics, religion, and ideology of El Salvador, and be present to the process as these classes evolved. I am grateful for this opportunity and have a high regard for the way the courses were put together for the students.

PROFESSOR ROBERT BRANCATELLI

Since coming to Santa Clara four years ago, the focus of my research and teaching has been on transformation in the context of catechesis and liturgy. Why do people change, how do they change, and what, exactly, is the nature of change? Not all of this involves religious conversion or ritual, and one of the most surprising experiences for me has been the transformation that takes place among many students during the short space of a quarter. I had witnessed this prior to teaching in the Xavier RLC and even had become accustomed to it, or so I thought. But I was not prepared for the changes that occurred in

Why do people change, and how did so many in this class of first-quarter freshmen change so drastically? I'm not sure. I may never be able to isolate the mechanics of transformation, but I believe that the change was due to more than their leaving home to become independent adults at the University. Doug Sweet, Stephanie Neustadter, and I shared our experiences in El Salvador with them. We lectured, told stories, looked at photos, helped them make conceptual connections, and created an environment that encouraged them to continue the dialogue outside of the classroom. Perhaps this is where most of the real learning occurred. And perhaps this is the professors' role in this situation: to spark, ignite, and inspire "after hours" learning. If we can facilitate that kind of interaction, we may be able to realize the hope for these communities.

There is another element of this linked class that I believe was crucial to its success. Although our objectives and methodologies differed, Doug and I taught our classes out of a shared consciousness about El Salvador, which developed from having

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—PROFESSOR ROBERT BRANCATELLI

so many students in the English Composition—Religion and Society link this past fall. In my class they read a variety of texts, from a novel set during the Salvadoran Civil War to Oscar Romero's pastoral letters and a complex treatise on the relationship between liberation theology and economic globalization. They wrote a great deal and argued even more from the beginning of the course until the last class. They were engaged and serious about issues that are at the heart of religious faith and human freedom. Many changed their political opinions and even worldviews during the ten weeks we spent together.

spent time there together. We share many opinions about the country, the people, and the role of institutions within it, such as the church. We also had our own stories to tell, which certainly helped in the classroom. All of this made for the transformation of professors as well as students.

Linked classes in the Residential Learning Communities need linked professors just as much as they need integrated syllabi, curricula, readings, and assignments. It is the sum of these elements that results in transformative learning for everyone. ✨

Justice Conference participants discuss ways to integrate justice into research and teaching in Jesuit Higher Education

Fifty-seven delegates from Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States gathered at Loyola University Chicago Oct. 11-13, 2002, to discuss ways to integrate faith and justice into the academic life of the university. In her opening address to the conference Dr. Catharyn Baird, professor of business at Regis University, pointed to one of the major challenges in talking about justice in the classroom. She noted, "Intentionally engaging in conversations about justice in venues other than peace and justice classes can be a daunting task. [Faculty] are often reluctant to open the door without help in developing strategies to overcome barriers and ask hard questions while respecting academic disciplines and diversity of approaches."

Organized by the Bannan Center and co-sponsored by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and Loyola University of Chicago, this gathering was the follow-up to the three-year national process to integrate justice into curriculum and research, the main functions of the university. Each school presented a case study in which they reported on new justice initiatives that have taken place. On the last day of the conference the delegates put in place a structure to facilitate continuing the momentum into the future.

Five interest/action groups had been identified by the delegates prior to the conference: 1) advancing

a justice group within AJCU, 2) developing collaborative immersion programs for faculty, staff and students, 3) integrating justice perspectives into the internal administrative structures of the academy, 4) promoting ethics and justice in the curriculum across disciplines, to include professional schools, and 5) networking service learning and community service projects of AJCU schools.

To maintain the momentum of the conference action agenda, an eight-member steering committee was established on the last day of the conference with the following mission: "To facilitate the building of an infrastructure to coordinate, convene, communicate, and connect our members in support of the integration and development of the faith, knowledge, and justice mission of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities."

In his closing remarks, Bill Spohn, chairperson of the conference planning committee, reiterated the challenges that surfaced at the October 2000 justice conference. First, we must continue to guarantee that justice initiatives on our campuses are moved beyond the margins and integrated into the core of what it means to be a university, into our research and teaching. Secondly, we need to develop our understanding of the beliefs that undergird or impede our discussions of justice.*



Mary Ellen Carroll and Bryan Plumley, Regis University



One of the many table discussions at the conference, which gathered 57 delegates from Jesuit colleges and universities across the U.S.

Leaders from Jesuit institutions gather to discuss the impact of globalization on developing countries

On Nov. 7-10, 2002, this conference gathered 27 leaders from Jesuit Institutions in 20 developing world countries along with thirty-eight leaders from Jesuit Colleges and Universities in North America. Organized by the Bannan Center and co-sponsored by the Institute on Globalization, the conference aimed to explore ways in which a Jesuit university can positively influence the basic factors of globalization through research and curriculum, and to provide the framework for international connections to foster collaboration.

The outcomes of the conference on globalization can best be described in the words of two participants:

"I leave Santa Clara with a deep sense of satisfaction for having come to this conference and interacted with so many resourceful, loving, and caring persons. After all, globalization could be resourceful and ennobling, if it is guided, presented, understood, and perceived as we attempted to do here.... Here in Santa Clara we conceptualized through contacts; and we came closer to one another through discussions."

—George Pattery, Reader in Philosophy and Religion, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, India

"While some spoke of our gathering in scriptural images from Babel to Pentecost, it seemed more like Emmaus. 'We had so hoped that He would be the salvation of Israel' are some of the saddest words in scripture. *We had so hoped the Spirit would lead us to learn how to tame globalization.* But didn't our hearts burn within us when Claudia Villigran (from Guatemala) described the struggle in Guatemala now that the world no longer cares?...Or when Ben Nebres (from the Philippines) and Phillippe Dubin (from Cameroon) spoke of tapping into the dynamism and motivational power of the poor?...From our table conversations here, we all have found the courage to go back to our Jerusalems, strength-



Paul Locatelli, S.J., and keynote speaker Michael Czerny, S.J.

Chryso Pieris, S.J. (Sri Lanka) and Mauricio Gaborit, S.J. (El Salvador)

ened in faith which does justice, to struggle with the Roman Empire of our time, Globalization."

—Joseph Daoust, S.J., President, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, California

In order to organize their work following the conference, delegates formed four interest/action groups.

Group 1, Institution to Institution Collaboration, will explore ways that Jesuit institutions can collaborate on programs such as faculty exchange, student exchange, and bilateral sharing of resources and expertise.

Group 2, The International Jesuit Network for Development (IJND), will coordinate research and the production of educational materials with an eye toward advocacy opportunities at the international and national levels.

Group 3, Collaborative Research, will explore ways that faculty can collaborate internationally through their academic disciplines on the topics treated at this conference and beyond.

Group 4, Grass Roots and Higher Education, will explore how groups who work with particular local cultures and peoples can forge collaborative relationships with higher education institutions and vice-versa. *



SANTA CLARA LECTURE

In 1994, through the generosity of the Bannan Center, the Department of Religious Studies of Santa Clara University inaugurated the Santa Clara Lectures. This series brings to campus leading scholars in theology, offering the University community and the general public an ongoing exposure to debate on the significant issues of our time. Santa Clara University will publish these lectures and distribute them throughout the United States and internationally.

JAMES W. FOWLER

Psychological Faith Development and Vocation

February 4, 2004



Named a Candler Professor at Emory University in 1987, James W. Fowler earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University in religion and society in 1971, with a focus in ethics and sociology of religion. He taught at Harvard Divinity School (1969-75) and at Boston College (1975-76), and he pursued post-doctoral studies at the Center for Moral Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (1971-72).

In 1977 he joined the faculty of the Candler School of Theology. His pioneering research and the resulting theory of faith development have earned him international recognition. His best-known book, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Development and the Quest for Meaning*, is in its 35th printing, and has been translated into German, Korean, and Portuguese.

Since 1994 Fowler has served as the first full-time director of the Center for Ethics at Emory University. In the fall of 2000 he began his second term in that position. He continues to teach frequently in the Candler School of Theology and in the Graduate Division of Religion, and directs the Person, Community and Religious Practices program of the Graduate Division of Religion. He is a minister in the United Methodist Church. *

WESTERN CONVERSATIONS

Each fall, six western Jesuit universities sponsor a conference called "Western Conversations in Jesuit Higher Education" bringing faculty delegates together for in-depth discussions on important topics related to the Jesuit Catholic educational mission. Participating institutions include Gonzaga, Loyola Marymount, Regis, Santa Clara, Seattle University, and the University of San Francisco.

Santa Clara University hosts the conference on October 17-19, 2003, with a theme of "Contributions of Jesuit Universities to American Higher Education." The keynote address will be given by Dr. Robert N. Bellah, Professor Emeritus, University of California at Berkeley. Bellah is one of the leading sociologists of religion in the U.S. and the author of numerous publications, including *Habits of the Heart* and *The Good Society*.

For more information, contact the Bannan Center at 408-551-1951 or www.scu.edu/bannan-center. *

next issue:

As we go to press with this issue, the war on Iraq has begun.

This war reflects a major shift in United States policy: This country now embraces preventive or pre-emptive war, a course of action that the just war tradition has always been skeptical about.

War in general and this war in particular has raised so many questions and fears. Why did we go to war? Can one be patriotic and yet anti-war? Is there such a thing as a just war? If so, how do we define it? What are the ethical rules of war and how can they be enforced? How are war and terrorism connected? Will this war end terrorism or inspire more of it?

In our next issue, we will explore this deeply dividing struggle that our nation finds itself in. In essays and reflections, faculty and staff from SCU will share their many different perspectives on conflict and peace.

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The views expressed in **explore** do not necessarily represent the views of the Center. We welcome your comments.

Founded in 1982, the Bannan Center for Jesuit Education at Santa Clara University assists in maintaining the University's Catholic and Jesuit character. The center offers grants for faculty, staff, and students. It sponsors retreats, lectures, and conferences, and brings religious scholars and leaders to the University to engage in educational activities.

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