

# President's ADDRESS

*Delivered to faculty, administrators and staff on opening day  
Mount St. Mary's University*

*August 20, 2006*

Good morning. I want to welcome you to the start of the 2006-07 academic year. This will be a year that promises to be full of excitement as we continue our collective work to fulfill the promise of the Mount begun 199 years ago. An academic community in service to God, the Catholic Church and our nation. This year we come together to ensure that we realize the promise of that vision as we reach the next level of excellence as a university.

This summer Fr. Bill Parent received the papal appointment as Monsignor. Let us congratulate Monsignor Parent on his new appointment.

## OPENING PRAYER

Monsignor Parent will lead us in the opening prayer.

Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—

we praise you and thank you for your many gifts:

For faith that enables us to enter into communion with you who are love.

For discovery that is our ongoing academic effort to unite faith and reason in truth.

For leadership that puts truth into action in the service of others, especially the poor and vulnerable.

For community that binds us to one another and to the universal Church in every time and place.

Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, our patroness and hope, we ask you to continue to bless Mount St. Mary's University with these gifts. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

## OUR PEOPLE

Our University is first and foremost the many people who make this a special academic community. It is our people who provide the heart and soul of the Mount. We, collectively, provide the passion that makes the Mount who we are. Last year we used the West African saying, "I am because we are" as a way to capture the definitions of ourselves individually and collectively.

As a University we have always been interdependent. Our collective success depends on our individual success and vice versa. Therefore it is fitting that we start our new academic year with introductions of the newest members of Mount St. Mary's community who will add to our community and shape who we are.

## INTRODUCTIONS

I have asked each of the Vice Presidents to introduce the new members in their divisions.

- Mr. Dan Soller, our Executive Vice President
- Dr. David Rehm, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Monsignor Stephen Rohlf's, Vice President and Rector of our Seminary
- Mr. Mike Malewicki, Vice President for Business and Finance
- Mr. John Butler is our newest Vice President for Advancement. John began his service to the Mount this past July. Previously he was President of Archbishop Carroll High School in Washington D.C. John has his undergraduate degree from St. Michaels in Vermont and his graduate degree from Howard University in Washington, DC. As a former Trustee, John knows the Mount well and has already hit the ground running to lead our advancement, fund raising, alumni and communication programs. Let us welcome John to the Mount.



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*As I start this year, please know that I will strive to incorporate what I learned in my work and interactions with you with the hope of serving our campus better.*

#### WE ARE BLESSED BECAUSE OF EACH OTHER

We are blessed. We are blessed because we have the privilege of working with many talented and caring colleagues. This morning, I want to recognize one group in our community who serve as an example of the excellence and commitment that characterizes the Mount.

If you have been on our campus this summer you know first hand of the hard work, the dedication and attention to excellence of the physical plant team. Their work is essential to all we do at the Mount. Publicly, and on behalf of our community, I want to thank you for all you do for our campus. We are proud that you are our colleagues and we are a better University because of your work with us.

#### *Would all the physical plant team please stand?*

Also I want to recognize two women who work behind the scenes at the Mount doing a tremendous task for all of us. This summer I visited with them as they were changing the combination locks on the 1627 mailboxes in our post office.

Helen Wuethrich and Annie Eyler we appreciate all you do to support the Mount.

#### *Helen and Annie would you please stand to be recognized?*

#### NEW BEGINNINGS

Today as we start the last year of our second century, I hope that this will be a year of new beginnings for all of us at the Mount. Last year, as a community, we accomplished a great deal and chief among those accomplishments was the learning we did as an academic community.

We learned about each other. We learned how to deal constructively with several challenges we faced.

Like you, I learned a great deal last year, mostly about myself and the challenges, responsibilities and great opportunities I share with you. As I start this year, please know that I will strive to incorporate what I learned in my work and interactions with you with the hope of serving our campus better. It is my hope that we will look forward to the future, informed by what we have learned, realizing that we are all in a stage of becoming and not bound by mistakes or problems of the past. It is my hope that we start the new year with a new commitment to be a beacon of what a university community can and should be.

#### **Our university must be:**

- A place where the focus is on our continual learning;
- A place with a firm commitment to develop our faith and spread Christ's message of love and inclusion;
- A place where we help our students and each other discover the world and develop virtues;
- A place where we speak and listen carefully and respectfully to each other;
- A place where we honor different views; yet strive to find the common ground of our mission; and,
- This holy mountainside is a place where we prize our relationships and celebrate each others' successes.

So as we close our second century, let us move forward with the optimism of new beginnings; especially with each other.

#### WE ARE BLESSED THIS YEAR BY AN EXTRAORDINARY INCOMING CLASS

Next Wednesday at our Convocation we will induct the Class of 2010 and our new seminarians into Mount St. Mary's University. Our freshman class is very impressive group. We will enroll 432 freshmen. I want to thank **Dean Steve Neitz** and his talented team for their efforts to recruit and enroll this group of students.

Thanks to the work of so many of you and the improvements we have made on campus our retention rate is up to 85%. With the new freshman and the returning students we will have the largest undergraduate class in our history.

The enrollment in the Seminary also looks good. 52 new seminarians are expected this fall, bringing the overall Seminary enrollment to 152 from 33 sending dioceses and three

religious orders. We now have over 1000 priests from the Mount serving in parishes throughout the United States.

Also Dean Martinak has reported that we are expecting some 75 new students in our Frederick campus.

Our overall enrollment is expected to be approximately 2200 students.

#### TECHNOLOGY AND OUR NEW STUDENTS

Over the summer months I usually spend some time thinking about the new students who will be arriving with their parents, their all too many boxes and with all their hopes and dreams for the future. Will we be ready? Certainly we have the rooms ready, classes are scheduled, faculty are in place, books are in, activities have been scheduled and orientation ready to go. But, are we ready in a different sense in how we will interact with these new students?

Last week I was privileged to hear Ian Jukes at the Frederick County Schools staff development day that **Dr. Barbara Palmer** helped to organize. Ian is a national expert on instructional technology.

In his keynote address he chronicled the tremendous changes in our society due to technology. Quoting George Moore, the inventor of Intel, he noted that technology doubles in power and costs decrease by half every 12 months. This trend, according to conservative estimates, will continue for the next 20-30 years.

Think for a minute about technology in your own life. Ten years ago few of us were using e-mail. Now we all have too much e-mail! Ten years ago few of us used the Internet. Now most of us rely on it. It has changed the way we learn and gather information.

This past year I finished writing a book and I needed to include a section on the latest information on genetics. What would have typically meant time in the library and weeks of searches and reading became a task at my home computer, reading the latest research and corresponding with researchers from the United States and the United Kingdom. What would have taken weeks took me a few days. I was convinced that my research was more thorough and I was better able to ensure my readers that my information was as current as possible.

Google now has 60,000 books on-line and that number is expected to double next year. While many of us still enjoy reading books and newspapers, young learners are as comfortable reading information on their hand held computers. Young learners are constantly plugged in and can gather information and communicate with the world in ways we could hardly dream of a few years ago. Perhaps a few years from now we will be assigning websites, not text books.

Carol Twigg, an internationally recognized expert in the application of instructional technology warns us that the learning landscape for these young learners is shifting rapidly. Students are moving from passive note takers to active, experimental learners, who easily use their technology resources as a natural part of their discovery and communication processes.

Carol Barrone in *EduCause*, notes that the new students we educate organize and integrate information much differently than the students we educated a few years ago. For them the course is not the container, teaching space can be anywhere and personal instruction does not mean "in person." Even at residential colleges, like ours, students blur the lines between physical and cyberspace. Contemporary students expect to control when, where, how and how fast they will learn.

And now these students and those with more advanced technology expertise will be coming to our campus in the near future. The question for us is, "Are we ready?" Are we ready to engage them in their self discovery using new learning styles which are so dependent upon the advances in technology?

Two weeks ago I was at a family celebration and my nephew, a new high school graduate told me, much to my despair, that he was opting out of college to do his own learning via his computer. He is an "A" student, great SATs and will bypass our system for his own self-directed learning. When I lamented about the need for a degree, he responded, "No

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the truth.*

problem, Uncle Tom, I'll get one on-line if I need it." My nephew may be a rare exception today, but will he be in the future?

As I drove home I wondered what our campus will be like in ten years when today's eight-year-olds are ready for college.

Ian Jukes talked about the new problem with our technological world that he called "infowhelm." As a society we are becoming overwhelmed with information which comes to us at an ever increasing speed. I have to believe that our task at the Mount is to help our students sift through this information as they seek the true, the good and the beautiful—to help them make judgments about how they will use these powerful technological tools to enhance life, not overwhelm it. This will require more from us, as faculty, as librarians, as instructional technologists. At a very basic level, we will need to fully embrace these tools ourselves in order to speak our students' language—to engage their imagination and help them use these tools well.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS

At a deeper level, however, in the midst of "infowhelm," the liberal arts have never been more important. Our society's genius and obsession with information all too easily lead to an impoverished understanding of education as almost exclusively the acquisition of information and technical expertise. I'm afraid that this is how my nephew understands education. But we know that information is not wisdom.

#### *The liberal arts offer students like him so much more:*

- The liberal arts offer not only knowledge and technical expertise but also wisdom and moral virtue.
- The liberal arts form not only the intellect but also the whole person.
- The liberal arts engage students in a life-long love of learning as an end in itself, not merely as a means to an end.
- The liberal arts uphold a notion of truth that entails not only a depth of learning in one's area of expertise but also a breadth of learning that is inherently interdisciplinary.

#### *Through the liberal arts we apprentice our students to a life-long search, which is:*

- Guided by faith and reason;
- Touched by beauty;
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- Girded by simplicity; and,
- Awakened by discovery.

Robert Connor notes that through the liberal arts we help students confront the big questions in life. "Who am I?" "What am I going to do with my life?"

Connor reminds us that the big questions in life were the questions of others from Homer to Toni Morrison. Through the liberal arts we give our students the tools, a rich vocabulary, the analytical techniques, the moral virtues and an historical perspective to help them answer those questions. The grounding in the liberal arts that we provide our students is truly helping them to be professionals and leaders who will enhance our human condition.

Information and technical expertise are certainly important components of education. I certainly want the surgeon who's preparing to cut me open to have the best information and excellent technical expertise. But I also want my surgeon to have a deep understanding that I am more than the flesh that she cuts and sutures. I want her to appreciate that I am a person with inherent dignity, that I am not merely a body but also a spiritual being, and that even if I cannot be cured I should be loved. In other words, I want a surgeon who has been formed by the liberal arts and therefore has a view of life that is both deeper and broader than surgical technique.

For almost 200 years, Mount St. Mary's has formed students in this deeper and broader view of life that is the hallmark of a liberal arts education. Amid the technological challenges of our information age, we are unequivocally committed to continuing to provide our students the benefits of a liberal arts education.

## OUR CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Our commitment to the liberal arts is intrinsically linked to our mission as a Catholic university.

To a very large degree, a Catholic understanding of higher education and a liberal arts understanding of education overlap. Both understandings view education as formation of the whole person through personal relationships in a free and rigorous pursuit of truth. As we seek truth, we recognize a responsibility to criticize ourselves and everything else we value. This is what Cardinal Newman taught us: a university is a gathering of learners of all ages, in search of the truth. To a very large degree, to be an authentically Catholic university is simultaneously to be an authentically liberal arts university.

While the Catholic and liberal arts dimensions of our mission overlap to a large degree, there is also something distinctive about being an authentically Catholic university. Specifically, as Pope John Paul II described the nature of a Catholic university, our “privileged task” is to use scholarship to unite two perspectives that are often thought to oppose each other; “the search for truth, and the certainty of already knowing the fount of truth.”

In short, faith and reason do not contradict each other.

In this view, to know the fount of truth, to know God through Christ and the Church, is not an obstacle but rather a great advantage in our search for truth. Faith and reason are complementary modes of seeking a unified truth about ourselves and the world around us.

So often today when Catholic university communities reflect upon their identity and mission as Catholic, the discussion breaks down into labels like “conservative” or “liberal.” Such labels completely miss the point.

An authentically Catholic university transcends political labels because an authentically Catholic university seeks not political alliances but truth—always the truth. At times the world will label us as “conservative” because we uphold the right to life for the unborn. At other times the world will label us as “liberal” because we uphold the right to life of those condemned to capital punishment. But these are worldly labels that we should refuse to apply to ourselves. The confounding constant that eludes those who try to label us, the only label that ultimately fits, is “Catholic” and all that it implies. And at the Mount, we are unabashedly proud to be Catholic.

***Last year we spent considerable time formulating our strategic plan which is now being reviewed by our Trustees. As we formed this plan we engaged in lively discussions about four dimensions of our mission—about:***

- Being Catholic;
- Being a university;
- Being a liberal arts college; and,
- Being a university that grants professional degrees.

Our discussions about these four dimensions of our mission are certainly far from complete. In fact, as we are always in a state of becoming, it is proper that these conversations never cease. Though I expect that we will continue to have many legitimate differences of opinion about the details, I hope that we can all agree in principle on this much: specifically, that these four dimensions of our mission are not mutually exclusive, but overlap and complement one another.

To those who would say that at some point we face stark choices between being either Catholic or a university, or between being either liberal arts or professional, we refuse to accept the terms they offer—terms that impose false dichotomies upon us as individuals and as a true community of learners.

If God is indeed the fount of all truth, then at some level truth is not divided into Catholic fragments, university fragments, liberal arts fragments and professional fragments. These four dimensions of our mission are really just four perspectives on truth and these four perspectives necessarily converge at truth’s fount. Whether we are Catholic or Jewish or Protestant or atheist, whether we are teacher or student or staff, whether our field of scholarship is Philosophy or Biology or Business, amidst all of our diversity, I believe that

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*Last year we worked hard as a team. Each of these accomplishments required a team effort and despite our regular busy work-load we accomplished much and collectively we have a right to be proud of these achievements.*

our mission as a community is to seek truth from at least these four perspectives—Catholic, university, liberal arts, professional—confident that they will lead us closer to one another. To be confident that truth will unify us does not mean that our path will be easy. We are imperfect creatures in an imperfect world, and we often perceive the truth only dimly. Truth, or at least our limited perspective on it, can easily become a blunt instrument we use to bludgeon those who disagree with us.

We have probably all fallen into this trap at some point in time. I'm ashamed to say that I have done so. We have certainly all witnessed this trap in the unjust wars nations have fought and continue to fight in the name of some dim, collective notion of truth.

Therefore from my perspective, just as important as our commitment to truth as a Catholic university is our commitment to love.

Pope Benedict XVI last January reminded us of the importance of love in his first encyclical letter, entitled God is Love. The supreme truth about God revealed in Jesus Christ is that God is love: God loves us and invites us to love him and one another—love that burns with holy desire and that is also selflessly sacrificial. The ultimate measure of all human activity is love. The most brilliant scholarship, the most dazzling campus grounds, the most innovative student life program—all of it is worthless without love.

As we continue to discuss our mission as a Catholic university, we must all speak the truth as we perceive it—freely, clearly, passionately. There is no love in withholding truth.

Yet we should also speak the truth humbly, patiently, mercifully, respectfully—in a word, lovingly—always conscious that as an institution we are committed to the belief that the fount of truth is love incarnate.

To be a Catholic university means that we are a place where we can see and experience God's love on our campus. I believe the Mount truly is such a place. I am dedicated, as I know all of you are, to helping the Mount continue to be such a place in fulfillment of our mission. We are committed to be such a beacon of love for our society.

#### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We have thoughtful and provocative mission statements, for the undergraduate college, for the seminary, for our Grotto and developing missions for the graduate programs. All assert that Catholicism is a driving force on our campus and that we are called to help our students mature spiritually regardless of their own faith perspective. Our missions note our commitment to help our students discover the truth and pursue free and rigorous inquiry. We are united in our goal of preparing responsible, leaders who live by high moral and intellectual standards. And our missions declare that we are committed to sending forth graduates who are called to respect the dignity of all persons, to resolve the problems facing humanity and to build better communities.

To help us remember these solemn missions, I find it helpful to describe the four pillars of the Mount, which in essence are our calling and our promise to our students and to society.

#### *Faith, Discovery, Leadership and Community*

No matter what we do individually at Mount St. Mary's, let this be our common ground. Our missions so eloquently stated and displayed are not mere words but expressions of our commitment to serve our students and society by seeking truth in a community of learners animated by love.

***Our faculty know that teaching is their first responsibility. Our faculty recognize a simple tenet: they transform lives, one sacred interaction at a time.***

#### A TRIBUTE TO OUR FACULTY

I want to say a few words about our faculty. Our university is first and foremost our faculty. I am particularly proud to say that this is the best faculty I have had the pleasure to work with in my 27 years in higher education.

Our faculty know that teaching is their first responsibility. Our faculty recognize a simple tenet: they transform lives, one sacred interaction at a time.

Our faculty understand the true meaning of education- to lead, to guide, to draw out. They inspire our students to follow them into the deep waters of knowledge, to new destinations as they move from the comfort of the known to the uncertainty of the unknown. To be transformed forever.

There is no higher, no more important, position on campus than the position of professor. As faculty in our undergraduate programs, our seminary and our graduate programs our faculty hold a special trust.

As we begin our academic year, we collectively recognize your primary role as stewards of our academic program. I salute you and pledge my continued support to serve you in a manner to help you meet your solemn responsibilities.

Let us recognize and thank our faculty.

#### A TRIBUTE TO OUR ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF

While our faculty has a primary role in our academy, we all know that many others have significant and essential roles in fulfilling our mission. Our administrators and staff, through their dedication to excellence, their tenacity and goodwill make our work easier and more enjoyable. It is a simple fact that the Mount could not function without you. Make no mistake. The faculty and I understand your critical importance to our academic mission. As President and on behalf of our Trustees and the faculty I want to publicly thank you for your many contributions to academic life.

I ask the faculty to join me in recognizing your good work.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR

***As we begin another year it is important that we pause for a minute and consider some of the accomplishments of last year. I want to highlight a few of these accomplishments:***

- We developed a new Strategic Plan for our University that built upon the Vision Statement and our Middle States self-study.
- We completed the Apostolic Visitation at our Seminary.
- We successfully completed our NCAA accreditation.
- Our Federal Reserve team, coached by Professor Frank Zarnowski came in third in a national tournament. This was not only a great accomplish, but brought national acclaim to our campus.
- We increased the number of spiritual retreats and increased student participation.
- We enhanced our music ministry programs.
- We developed a new 24 hour study center for our students, and our chapel is now open 24 hours a day.
- We developed a number of new gathering spaces for our students aimed at helping them incorporate their academic learning with their spiritual and social development.
- We secured financing for our new student residence and restructured the campus debt.
- We inaugurated the new Financial Advisory Committee and improved the budget development process and approval cycle.
- We raised over \$ 6,000,000 in new gifts to the University.
- Our overall net tuition has increased by 9%
- We improved our dining services.
- We initiated the new campus recycling program.
- We made application for our first Pontifical degree program.
- We developed new academic programs in environmental sciences, reading and our 150 hour program in accounting.
- We launched a new women's swim team and a Captains' Council.

*I would like to see more international programs and perhaps an international requirement for all Mount undergraduates.*

- We developed a new University logo; a style manual and a new look for our athletic programs.
- We launched our new website.
- We developed our first graduate catalog.
- We initiated a Land Use Committee of the Board which completed a comprehensive review of our undeveloped land resources.
- We expanded student activities on campus with a tripling of student participation.
- We lit the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.
- We initiated new building projects, particularly the Waldron Family Stadium and the Straw Family Baseball Stadium.
- We hosted our first Fulbright scholar on campus.
- We improved a number of classrooms in the Academic Center and the art studio in Barrett Hall.
- We increased student retention and decreased alcohol related incidents and vandalism.
- We held Callings Conference on Christian message in communications.
- We instituted campus beautification projects—more attention to landscaping and we dedicated the new Pope John Paul II Plaza.
- We initiated our comprehensive study of compensation.
- We developed our Institutional Effectiveness Plan.
- Our athletic teams achieved one of the highest academic excellence ratings in the United States.
- Our Bicentennial Commission, worked with our alumni, faculty, staff and students to finalize the major Bicentennial events.
- Our Annual Fund set new records for giving and a new level of participation by our faculty and staff. 72%

And.....

We celebrated our 198th commencement, awarding 338 undergraduate degrees and 155 graduate degrees. And there we debuted our new alma mater!

Last year we worked hard as a team. Each of these accomplishments required a team effort and despite our regular busy work-load we accomplished much and collectively we have a right to be proud of these achievements.

#### **OUR CONVOCATION AND MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

I want to share a word about our Convocation and the Mass of the Holy Spirit. Our official start of the new academic year will be held at 3 p.m. next Wednesday in the ARCC. Offices will close at 2:15 and I ask everyone to attend as we welcome our new students and welcome home our returning students. I ask your help in encouraging everyone; most especially our upper class students to attend. We will follow the Convocation with a picnic on the main campus. Please know that your families are welcome to attend all of these events.

## OUR BICENTENNIAL

We are privileged to be at the Mount for our 200th anniversary. In 370 days we will kick off our Bicentennial celebration with the dedication of the new Founder's Plaza. Thanks to Liz Monahan and Dick Ridgway, who is chairing the Bicentennial Commission, our celebration will be national in scope. You have heard me talk about these activities and events before:

- The U.S. Postal Service will issue a special commemorative stamp in our honor.
- We have invited the Bishops from throughout the United States for a special Mass and celebration.
- We are producing a special coffee-table book, which will include a history and a contemporary pictorial review of our campus.
- We are producing a film on the Mount.
- We will have several new displays of our history around campus and for traveling exhibits.
- We have commissioned an artist to complete a new sculpture for campus.
- We have arranged special events and celebrations on campus as well as in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington.
- The celebration will also have a special academic emphasis as we invite numerous scholars and lecturers to campus to mark 200 years of distinction as a Catholic university.
- The Maryland Symphony will be on campus and our own Dr. Andy Rosenfeld will be the guest conductor.
- We will host 10 birthday parties in various cities which will bring together alumni and friends in this unique celebration

We all have a year to prepare for this celebration. As we do so, it is my hope that we will remember that it is not just a look back at our history, but more a look ahead as we consider our calling as a university, to shape our nation, our Church in the same spirit of our founder. I firmly believe that Fr. DuBois would be most proud if we used this unique opportunity to work as he did, to continue to fulfill the promise of the Mount for future generations.

Our founder was focused on posterity. We can do no less. Our Bicentennial, which we celebrate just once, must help position us for the next century of service.

Today I am asking everyone in our campus community to consider how will you and your department celebrate the Bicentennial? While we will have many official events, I hope that you will use this opportunity to develop your own celebrations and events to mark this milestone in our history. Make the most of it for you personally, for your department and our students. Be creative! And I'll do my best to find some resources to help with these special events.

## THE WORK AHEAD

I now want to address some of the work ahead of us this coming year. The work for this year will build upon the major priorities set forth in our strategic plan.

So now I want to share with you 11 major directions for the coming year.

### ***1. We will finalize our compensation plan.***

This plan will detail our strategy for the systematic improvement of compensation for all of our employees. I am committed to having a plan approved by our Trustees that will provide significant improvements in compensation. Like last year, I am planning on a significant salary increase for next year and another 1% increase in our retirement contribution.

I would also like to see a significant improvement in our minimum wage on campus with attention to providing a living wage to all who work at the Mount.

*I firmly believe that our students are shaped primarily by the virtues we model for them, and how as a Catholic community our faith informs our decisions and actions.*

*We will also continue to enhance our campus ministry programs. Our campus ministry program will be the heart of our student life program*

**2. We will continue to focus on strengthening our Catholic identity.**

This year I have asked Monsignor Parent to host a conference to bring together mission officers, faculty and presidents of Catholic universities to engage in a discussion on the role of Mission officers.

I have also asked Monsignor Parent to work with the Trustees, faculty, our administrators, staff, and alumni to continue to engage in discussions regarding our Catholic mission and how we may strengthen our commitment and obligations to the Church.

In this area we will finalize the plan for the Pilgrims' Center at our Grotto to more closely link our educational mission with this place of worship.

We will also continue to enhance our campus ministry programs, led so well by Fr. Rick Hilgartner. Our campus ministry program will be the heart of our student life program.

**3. We will continue to improve our system of participatory governance on our campus.**

I have asked Dr. Rehm to focus his leadership on enhancing the University Council.

As our most important deliberative body, the Council must realize its promise to meaningfully involve the campus in governance decisions. This Council must meet on a regular basis if we are to have productive cross-campus communications.

Also I will regularly meet with a team of faculty who chair various committees so that I can seek and receive the advice of faculty representatives.

**4. We will continue to improve all classrooms.**

This will be the second year in a three-year plan to improve all learning spaces on campus. I expect that this year we will focus improvement efforts on at least six classrooms. I ask that the academic department chairs work with Dr. Rehm to make known the areas that need priority attention.

**5. We will enhance resources for professional development and innovation.**

In the upcoming budget process for FY 2008 I have asked Dan Soller, Chair of the Financial Advisory Committee to determine a way to increase faculty and staff development resources and provide all academic department chairs with discretionary funds in their budgets.

**6. We will continue to update our residence halls.**

We will continue to systematically replace furniture in our residence halls and deal with deferred maintenance to ensure that these spaces meet the needs of contemporary students.

**7. We will increase our marketing efforts.**

We have an obligation to improve our reputation and recognition. Therefore, this year you will see a more concerted, more systematic effort to market the Mount, not only to students, but to businesses, alumni, and friends. You will see more advertising, especially in Catholic publications. You will also see an increased use of radio, Internet and print advertising to share the message of the Mount with the larger population.

**8. We will continue to examine our academic structure this year.**

Last year we began an effort to review our academic structure. As we have grown and become a more complex as a university, we have experienced some natural growing pains as we have expanded our programs and off-campus efforts.

***I believe that we have reached a point where we need to reconsider the structure of our academic departments and ask some tough questions:***

- Are our current academic departments organized in the most effective manner for decision making, planning, resource allocation and future development?
- Would we be better served in a different structure?
- Can we realize any significant savings if we organize differently?

After much consideration on campus and by our Trustees, it is clear that we need to continue our review of the academic structure.

I have asked Dr. Rehm to continue this review and I have provided funds to bring in a consultant if needed to help us systematically think about the right academic structure for a campus our size.

**9. We will enhance our international programs at the Mount.**

While I am impressed with our efforts to provide international experiences in Europe, South America, Latin America and Mexico, I would like to see more international programs and perhaps an international requirement for all Mount undergraduates. Last year we began to explore formal relationships with universities in Jamaica and Japan. This summer, I hosted a team from China who would like a formal relationship with the Mount. I have asked Dr. Rehm to work with the Foreign Studies Committee to develop a plan to enhance our international programs, including strategies for recruiting foreign students.

I expect that in next year's budget we will fund a full-time position to enhance our international programs.

**10. We will pursue our next comprehensive campaign, Generations, with vigor.**

The last two years we were in the early stages of our next campaign, *Generations, The Campaign for the Mount's Third Century*. This coming year, with the help of Vice President Butler, I will intensify these efforts. I expect that most of my time for the next three years will be mostly off campus as we implement the campaign.

**As I have mentioned before, the next campaign will focus on raising funds for the following:**

- The rebuilding of the Terrace
- A new Fine Arts facility
- Renovation of the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception
- Creation of a Pilgrim's center at the Grotto
- Enhancement of our endowment, especially for named professorships and student scholarships.

I describe our endowment as anemic. Currently at \$39,000,000, our endowment is one of the smallest endowments among our peers. Building the endowment is the best way that we can meet our responsibilities to future generations of students, faculty and staff.

As a part of this next campaign we will also focus on raising the level of annual giving by our alumni.

I need your help with this. Like you, I only have so much time. The challenge I experience, not unlike other presidents, is in meeting campus demands with our Trustees, campus committees, departments, and my day-to-day responsibilities while at the same time devoting significant time to alumni and donors. I want to attend to campus needs; however, I believe the campus is better served having me promote the university off-campus. I hope that you will help me focus my attention on that priority.

**11. We will continue our efforts to secure professional accreditations in business and education.**

This year we will be preparing self-studies for national accreditation of two of our largest academic programs. I expect that through the self-study process we will find areas that we need to strengthen to meet these rigorous national standards.

While these 11 major areas will be the focus of our collective attention, we will concurrently pursue a number of other important objectives. Next week we will circulate the list of key goals and objectives that have been reviewed by the Executive Officers. As always, we will use this list to regularly measure our progress to address our strategic plan.

**We will continue to systematically replace furniture in our residence halls and deal with deferred maintenance to ensure that these spaces meet the needs of contemporary students.**

*There is no better place to work than at Mount St. Mary's University. There are no better colleagues than our colleagues. There is no better time than right now.*

## CONCLUSION

Today as you leave you will receive the Campus Master Plan and a prayer card with the prayer for the Mount composed by Monsignor Bill Parent. Irene and I also hope to see all of you and your families at the President's Home this afternoon.

## THE TIME IS NOW

In closing I believe that we have reason for great optimism. There is no better place to work than at Mount St. Mary's University. There are no better colleagues than our colleagues. There is no better time than right now. I hope that you will pause daily to consider our fortune to be at Mount St. Mary's.

I firmly believe that our students are shaped primarily by the virtues we model for them, and how as a Catholic community our faith informs our decisions and actions. How our new students leave us is dependent upon how we treat them as learners, as adults, as people we love. The important lessons they receive may come in how we show them respect for what they know and what they need to know from us.

So as we begin another academic year, the last year of our second century, I wonder what the Class of 2010 will say about us 50 years from now, when another generation of faculty and staff will be listening.

***Let us hope that they remember us as a community who taught them:***

- How to live a good life, full of wisdom and moral virtue;
- To deepen their faith in God;
- To respect other people;
- To seek to resolve contemporary problems with responsible intelligence, and,
- To fight for social justice and even more importantly, for the demands of love that exceeds the demands of justice.

If we teach them these things, then, we will truly be a community worthy of the name, "Catholic university that stresses the liberal arts."

It is a privilege for me to be your president. Irene and I are proud to be a part of this prestigious academic community. Please know that I will make my decisions as your president in a manner that will allow us to continue to develop a great university worthy of our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

May the Peace and Love of Christ be with you always.

Thank you.