

President's ANNUAL ADDRESS

August 19, 2010

I want to welcome all of you to this, our 203rd academic year. We are privileged to serve at this wonderful University, dedicated to Mary, our Patroness. She serves as our example by giving herself to God and doing God's work with fidelity, courage and great humility. Mary is not just the name of our University; it is not just the golden beacon of her image that overlooks our campus, but rather an inspiration for us all to be more like Mary as we do our work on campus. Like Mary, we need to carefully listen to God's call in our lives and willingly accept the challenges God puts before us. May we all be more like Mary, and humbly say YES when God calls us to serve, no matter how hard, no matter how inconvenient with our own desires.

As we begin our academic year, I want to especially recognize our Admissions team, led by **Dean Mike Post**. We thank you for your diligence and efforts to advance the Mount and to attract very able students.



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OVERVIEW

I thought it would be helpful to give you an overview of what I will talk about today.

- First, I will review with you some of the memorable accomplishments of last year and how we will build upon them.
- Second, I will talk about our new Leadership Institute and our responsibilities to teach leadership skills.
- Third, I will give you an update on the events of this past summer.
- I will then talk about two critical aspects of our University and conclude with some of the critical work we will address on campus this year.

As always, my address will be posted on our website if you need to make reference to any of the content.

OUR LAST ACADEMIC YEAR

Our last academic year is worthy of some brief reflection. Last year we began the historic shift to schools and a college to strengthen our academic programs and services. We had a great start on this new academic alignment. Today, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Sociology will now be an official part of the School of Education and Human Services. The Department of Psychology will be a part of the School of Natural Science and Mathematics.

Now as we begin our second year, we need to have a measurable return on this significant investment in our academic programs.

Well, what should that return look like? Here are a few examples:

- Establishing new academic majors and graduate programs;
- Improved faculty development at the School level (I want to highlight the work that **Dean Hochschild** did last year on Catholic identity for faculty);
- Improved retention of our students;
- Better services for students and school-based resolution of student issues and problems;
- Greater fund raising and grant development at the school level;
- Streamlined administrative structures and revised roles for department chairs;
- Enhancing our presence in the greater Frederick community; and
- Developing international programs. (I want to highlight the wonderful work of **Professors Sjoberg and Barry** and our partnership with South Ural University in Russia. We need more of these types of exchanges.)

We are blessed with a wonderful team of deans and now, in our second year, we need to view them as CEOs leading their schools to new levels of excellence. I ask that all of you work with the Deans, follow their lead as they take us out into new, deep waters of academic innovation.

VISION STATEMENT

Last year, we articulated a new vision for the Mount to guide our work and the allocation of our resources over the next five years. The new *Vision Statement*, adopted by our Trustees in March, will be used as it was intended - a straightforward, transparent guide to help us improve the Mount. It is a clear statement for what we hope to accomplish and how we will shape our University. I hope you have read it carefully. If you haven't read it, make it your first priority. If you have, re-read it. If you want to know where we are headed, it is stated in the *Vision Statement*.

NEW MISSION STATEMENT

This past year, we articulated, and the Trustees adopted, a new mission statement for the Mount. The new mission is an overarching statement linking our major functions including our undergraduate programs, graduate programs, the Seminary, the Grotto and our Frederick campus. It is simple and straightforward:

Mount St. Mary's is a Catholic university committed to education in the service of truth; we seek to cultivate a community of learners formed by faith, engaged in discovery, and empowered for leadership in the Church, the professions, and the world.

The new mission strengthens the statements of purpose for all areas of campus. I have made sure that the new mission will be liberally displayed on campus.

So, as we start another year, I ask you to ask yourself a simple question everyday as you come to campus:

What will I do today to meet the mission of the Mount? In particular,

- How will I strengthen my commitment to my faith and help others with theirs?
- How will I help others to learn and discover the beauty of the world and the glory of God?
- How will I lead and help others to be better leaders?
- How will I make the Mount a better community- a place where we prize our relationships, where we celebrate each other's success, where we speak and listen carefully and respectfully to each other and where truth, integrity, and love are our hallmarks?

At the end of the day, when you depart campus, hold yourself accountable by asking:

What did I do today to fulfill the mission?

We are here because of our mission and each of us, no matter what our role or responsibility on campus is called to fulfill that mission. We are not here simply because we are employed. We have a solemn mission to fulfill.

CORE CURRICULUM

Last year we began a great conversation on campus among our Trustees, administrators, faculty and student life professionals about the nature and scope of our core curriculum. Led by **Professor David McCarthy**, this conversation asked us to confront some difficult realities and how we can best meet the needs of our students and society via a shared intellectual experience. The next few weeks are critical in articulating the fruits of that conversation. We need to present to our Trustees a new core curriculum that is characterized by:

- a unifying theme;
- a comprehensive foundation of integrated courses and experiences needed by thoughtful citizens in our democracy;
- limited to 48 credits; and,
- taught by our full-time faculty and staff.

Nothing we do as a University this coming year will be as important as the development of our new core curriculum.

This is our time to be bold with our curriculum. It should be the catalyst to help us look at all our own degree programs. The new core should signal an academic renaissance at the Mount.

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Last year we began to lay the foundation for our new Leadership Institute. I am pleased to announce that we hired **Dr. Paul Manuel** to be our first Director. Starting in the Fall of 2011, all students will be required to complete a 4-credit experience in the Institute to help them master a number of leadership skills. Through our new Institute, we will provide our students with a solid foundation upon which they can develop and refine their leadership skills.

While there are many such institutes on campuses throughout the United States, ours will be unique as it will join the academic and student life communities to provide a rich array of leadership experiences for our students.

LEADERSHIP

This leadership dimension will be a distinctive element of our degree programs. We have an implicit promise to give our students the initial preparation to be effective citizens in our democracy and to prepare them as leaders of the next generation. Our responsibility in this area is clear.

We are all called to lead in some way. Much of the leadership at the Mount is not dependent on the president, vice presidents or deans. The important leadership comes from the many dedicated individuals throughout all areas of campus.

So how do we teach leadership? The first way, the most obvious, is to serve as an example. We practice and teach leadership by the example we set in how we do our jobs and how we live our professional and personal lives. We teach leadership by how we listen to others, how we respect divergent views, and how we articulate our thoughts and beliefs in a cogent, thoughtful and passionate manner. We teach leadership when we sacrifice ourselves for the well-being of others. We teach leadership when we help bring out the best in our colleagues and our students. We teach leadership when we live balanced lives; one informed by our faith and reason and focused on God, our families and our neighbors.

Leadership is everyone's calling at the Mount. And we can all do with some reflection on our leadership skills as we strive to become more effective leaders.

I believe that the famous management consultant, **Tom Peters**, was correct when he stated, "Leaders do not create followers, they create more leaders." But I also believe that part of modeling good leadership is to be a good follower. This insight is not new. Aristotle stated, "He who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader." We are all challenged at times to implement policies we do not fully agree with, to run a program in a way that does not completely embody the vision we have, to teach a course load not totally of our choosing. Make no mistake, the way we choose to follow not only sets a certain tone to the spirit of our campus, but also sets an important example for our students and potential students who visit us. Professional and real leaders know how to follow.

As we begin this new venture of leadership, please use this opportunity to get involved. Let's make the Leadership Institute one of the signature programs for which Mount St. Mary's is recognized.

CENTER FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL EXCELLENCE

Two years ago we started the Center for Catholic School Excellence as a part of the School of Education and Human Services. Led by Professor **Liz Monahan**, the Center focuses its work on improving Catholic schools in the mid-Atlantic region. I was very pleased that we have developed a new graduate degree on Catholic school leadership which will prepare principals for our Catholic schools. Our commitment keeps faith with the work and passion of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton who began Catholic education on our campus.

THE SUMMER MONTHS

As always, this past summer has been busy.



Reunion

This June, we welcomed back to campus nearly 1000 alumni for reunion weekend. During the reunion we also dedicated our Veterans' Walkway. It is always refreshing to see our alumni and talk with them about how they are coming to know and respect the new Mount, which is so different than the place they graduated from 20 or 30 years ago. I want to especially thank **Maureen Plant** and **Kathleen Hollenbaugh** for their leadership to make this weekend a success.

The annual priest reunion retreat attracted almost 65 priests from over 20 dioceses for the weeklong event. Archabbot Lambert Reilly O.S.B. from St. Meinrad Arch Abbey gave the Retreat. Thank you, **Msgr. Steven Rohlfs** and **Phil McGlade** for your efforts.

Orientation

In June we also hosted our new students and their parents for two weekends to help prepare them for the Mount. I want to thank our many faculty and staff who volunteered their time to make sure that our students get off to a good start. I especially want to recognize our Registrar, **Margot Rhoades**, Dean **Michael Taberski** and **Dr. Leona Sevick** for their leadership in planning and overseeing these events.



Summer School

I was pleased that our new summer program was launched under the able leadership of **Chris Weber**. This summer, 370 students enrolled in 44 courses. I was also pleased that we were also able to enhance faculty compensation this summer.

Thanks to **Melissa Crabbs** and many of our coaches, we also hosted 9,400 people in our camps and conferences this summer.

Seminary

The Dioceses of Harrisburg and Arlington held their annual vocation discernment retreats for high school boys in June and July. Almost 180 young men attended the two-week long retreats. The Diocese of Harrisburg offered a retreat for girls interested in the religious life as well.

The Seminary hosted a Philosophy Symposium for those involved in teaching philosophy to seminarians. Almost 45 professors and vocation directors were in attendance for this first ever event at the Mount.

And finally, 150 priests from 21 dioceses attended a 2-day workshop on the new translation of the Mass which will go into effect in November, 2011. The workshop was sponsored by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy and was one of 22 workshops given throughout the United States this year.

While summer has been successful, I want to see a greater emphasis on summer school next year. With competition for students growing daily, we need to offer our students a comprehensive summer program, rich in academic diversity and student activities. As society shifts its higher education delivery system to more flexible options, we, too, must make major shifts in our thinking about the delivery of our academic program. We cannot be limited to a fall/spring semester delivery. At the Mount, students should be engaged in learning all year long.

Planning for summer 2011 begins now. If you have an idea or special program, please work with Chris Weber so we can begin to advertise a comprehensive summer school.



*Terrace Hallway,
old "underground"*

CONSTRUCTION ON CAMPUS

The joyful sound of construction was heard on all corners of our campus.

- The Terrace renovation is now completed. This concludes a three-year construction project. (The largest our campus has ever witnessed.) If you have not visited the new residence hall I invite you to see the final outcome of this \$24 million project.
- Our faculty have moved into the Delaplaine Fine Arts Center.
- Our new student fitness center in the ARCC nears completion. This two story facility will greatly improve our student fitness programs.
- We also began construction on the trails that will be named after our student, **Elizabeth DiNunzio**. The first part of the trail is approximately 2 miles on the east campus.
- We also renovated Purcell Hall to provide a better venue for student activities.
- The renovation of the fourth floor of Bradley has begun. Soon the Department of Theology will be located in this wonderful new space.
- This summer we also completed the painting of the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception. The new paint brings out the beauty and historic character of our main chapel. Next summer we will conclude the renovations with new flooring, changes to the pews and enhancements to the side altars, lighting, and sound systems.
- Thanks to a donation from **Erv and Ella Straw**, we are completing a renovation of the women's softball field, now called Our Lady of the Meadows Field.
- This summer has seen several improvements at the Grotto as well. If you haven't already visited lately, I encourage you to do so.

ENROLLMENT

We begin this year with an enrollment of 431 new freshmen, 44 transfer students and 64 new seminarians.

As a tuition dependent university it is critical that we retain these students and see that they graduate. To assist us in this goal we have hired **Kristin Burkhart** to serve as our retention specialist.

SOME THOUGHTS AS WE BEGIN THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR.

The summer months are always a good time to reflect on the Mount, our collective work, and the world around us. I was fortunate to have some time in northern Canada and Montana for this year's reflection.

Several issues that came across my desk last year preoccupied my thoughts. A few of our national colleagues are lamenting the end of the residential college as we know it. They point to the ever-increasing rise of on-line learning, on-demand courses, for-profit universities and more reliance on community colleges. Big changes no doubt. And we need to keep pace with these changes. But the end of a residential college? I think not. People who write these predictions do not have 18 year olds at home! Most 18 years olds are looking for an opportunity to get away from home to try new experiences. (And their parents want them to go!) The residential college is the ideal place to mature under the watchful eye of faculty and staff as these not-yet-adults begin to mature. Steven Porch, the Chancellor of the Georgia Higher Education System, noted that the residential college is probably the best "half-way house" system in the world. Here we nurture students as they make their transition from youth to adulthood.

We know however, that the rapid changes in how students learn require us to adjust. At the Mount, we still need to embrace on-line learning in a more robust manner. Make no mistake, the role of on-line learning at the Mount will be limited, but it will be a part of our array of academic offerings.

A PROUD, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Much of the literature that crosses my desk and that of our Trustees, concerns the growing competition in higher education. Long term viability of a small university like the Mount will depend largely on how we define ourselves and the unique programs we offer.

I, like many of you, spend a good deal of my time extolling the value of a Mount education and encouraging young people to enroll. I urge parents and alumni to send their children here. So what's so special about the Mount? Many small universities have small class sizes, an engaged, friendly, well-qualified faculty and staff and provide stimulating academics and student life. Many small universities have great campuses in beautiful rural settings. Many offer students research opportunities and have great placement statistics for employment and graduate school. And that is all true. So why come to the Mount?

The distinguishing feature of Mount St. Mary's University is that we are a proudly Catholic university, where Christ is the center of our campus. At the Mount, we have everything that other small, prestigious universities provide plus the truth of the Catholic Church and her teachings. We boast that our students are formed by both faith and reason.

We are part of a 2000 year heritage of Catholic higher education. We follow in the footsteps of great Catholic educators, like St. Augustine, St. Benedict, St. Scholastica, St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Dominic, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Thomas More, St. Ignatius and the Venerable, soon to be Blessed, John Henry Newman. We work as they did, sharing a commitment to our Catholic faith and the on-going manifestation of the beauty of God in our world. We are joined with them in a commitment that knowing more about our world brings us closer to knowing God. We share with them a Christ-centered life especially when doing so is hard and uncomfortable. Given the problems our world faces, as a contemporary and robust Catholic University, we are a beacon of hope. Our commitment to Catholicism must always be the signature program at the Mount. A Catholic academic community in action—that is why students should come to the Mount.

Last year I noted that the true test of a Catholic university was not a guide book ranking, but rather seeing evidence of the Holy Spirit within us and on our campus. In St. Paul's letter to the Galatians, he urged them to live by the Holy Spirit in their lives, especially in their places of work (Galatians 5:22-23). St. Paul enumerated nine fruits for discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our work place. It was true for them and true for us today.

We know the Holy Spirit is on our campus when we witness:

- Love
 - Joy
 - Peace
 - Patience
 - Kindness
 - Generosity
 - Faithfulness
 - Gentleness and
 - Self-control

If we are to live lives worthy of our calling to serve at a Catholic university, we must work in a manner that will allow the Holy Spirit to not only fill our personal lives, but to fill our campus with these fruits.

For me, it takes daily commitment and diligence to make these fruits manifest in my actions that demonstrate a true commitment to a Catholic university.

THE LIBERAL ARTS

As a university we have always stressed the importance of the liberal arts. Today, in our fast paced, instant information, argumentative, sound-bite world, the liberal arts must be reasserted as the touchstone for citizens of a global world. Giving our students a firm grounding in the liberal arts is not only in concert with our Catholic mission, it is a basic requirement for every educated person.

Through the liberal arts we teach our students the basic lessons about living a good and purposeful life one that is

- Informed by faith and reason
- Touched by beauty
- Awakened by discovery
- Tempered by justice, and
- Girded by simplicity

Through the liberal arts, we prepare our students to know the truth, to work for justice, to act prudently and temperately, to exhibit courage and ultimately, to come to wisdom. Only then will our students live lives of true freedom.

Let it always be said, that at the Mount all students are apprenticed to the liberal arts.

THE WORK AHEAD

Now let me talk about the some of the tasks that we will tackle this year.

This year we will develop a new strategic plan based upon the Vision Statement adopted last year. I will appoint a small committee to engage the campus in discussions and development of the plan. I have asked **Dean Bushman** to lead this process. I urge all of you to get involved, as the strategic plan will be used to allocate resources.

We will also develop new academic programs in the areas of Health Administration, Human Services and a graduate program in Science.

This year we will also develop a plan for the long-term location of our Center for Continuing and Professional Studies. We will remain in Frederick and strengthen our presence in Frederick. We will also expand the operations there to reach more students.

Of particular note we will enhance our recruitment of community college students. Given the high cost of college education, I expect more students will begin their studies in community college. We need the program of choice for them to finish their undergraduate degrees.

This year I have also asked **Fr. Brian Nolan** to host more spiritual retreats for high school students. There is simply no better way for us to recruit students while we also assist them with their spiritual growth.

At the Mount we all know that we need to continually focus on ways to improve our racial and ethnic diversity. Through the President's Commission on Diversity and our Diversity Center, we will make progress on our goals to enhance the diversity of our faculty and staff.

Last year, thanks to the leadership of **Professor Ed Egan** our Pre-Law program experienced unusual success. This year I have asked **Dean Bushman** to put added emphasis on our pre-med and pre-dental

programs. I firmly believe that these pre-professional programs can be a hallmark of our regional reputation. It is within our mission and our reach to have the best pre-law, pre-med and pre-dental programs at any Catholic university in the United States.



THE GROTTTO

Thanks to the superb leadership of **Bill Tronolone** and **Fr. Bill Kauffman** we have raised \$1.5 million for the construction of a new Visitors' Center at our Grotto. My hope is that construction will begin next summer. Once completed it will provide a place for our many visitors and facilitate retreats and other programs at our national shrine.

LIBRARY

This year our Dean of the Phillips Library, **Stephen Rockwood**, will retire. We thank Rocky for his 30 years of extraordinary service leading our Phillips Library. We will conduct a national search for a new Dean of the Library. At the same time, we will begin plans to develop a library of the future. Candidly, no one has the answer about how libraries will change given the advances in how we access and use information. But here, at the Mount, let us be bold with our ideas and plans about the future of the library. Some of the new models I have seen on other campuses, like providing 24-hour access, group study areas, food services, and interactive technology are just some of the possibilities for our library. I have asked **Provost David Rehm** to assemble a committee of faculty, students and staff to help us develop a comprehensive plan and budget to make our dreams a reality.

SOLAR FARM

Work continues to progress on our partnership with Constellation Energy to construct a solar farm. When completed, it will occupy 110 acres and be the third largest solar farm east of the Mississippi. Initial construction will begin this year and the solar farm will be fully operational by December 2012.

COUNTY PARK

We continue to be in discussion with Frederick County about developing 124 of our acres into a regional county park. While the opening of the park is still a few years away, I am encouraged by our talks and am confident that this will be a major asset for our university.

HOUSING

Housing for faculty and staff remains a priority for us. We will be removing a few of the bungalows on the east campus, while we also add houses to our inventory. Last year we developed plans for a Mount village for east campus and that work will continue. We will pursue this project as resources are available.

A FINAL THOUGHT AS WE BEGIN THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

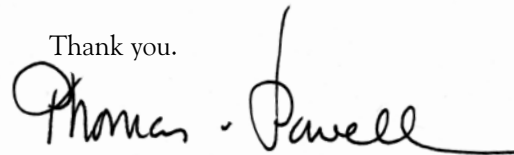
So now we come together, as Mount St. Mary's University to begin again. We await our new students. We welcome our new colleagues. We renew our relationships with our returning colleagues. Like our new students, we might approach the new year with some apprehension and anxiety as we face the new possibilities and opportunities inherent in a new beginning. Having a new beginning every fall is one of the joys of our chosen profession.

As we begin again, let us always remember that at Mount St. Mary's we transform lives, one sacred interaction at a time. We light our students' path to deepen their faith in God. We light their path to know the joys of our world; we light their path to be virtuous citizens; we light their path to be good stewards of our planet; we light their path so that they may serve others. Truly this is our noble work on our holy mountain.

Please know that I consider it a distinct privilege to be the President of Mount St. Mary's and I will continue to strive to work in a manner worthy of your trust and respect.

May the peace and love of Jesus Christ be with you and your families forever.

Thank you.



Thomas H. Powell
President