

CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Few persons have a lasting effect on the times in which they live. Philip Scharper is one who has influenced his times through the many memorable books he has published. He will be remembered as a significant religious editor/publisher of unusual vision, consistent competence, and good judgment.

One of Philip Scharper's constant concerns has been Catholic higher education. The reality of this has undergone significant change in his lifetime. I would like to illustrate this in the institution that I know best since I arrived at the University of Notre Dame as a freshman in September of 1934, over fifty years ago.

One could illustrate the developments of which I write in the life of a dozen other similar institutions, such as Georgetown, Fordham, Boston College, Villanova, or the Loyolas, but again one speaks best of what one knows best.

Notre Dame was a good university in its genre when I first knew it. It is a far better and quite different institution today after a half century of development following almost a century of earlier history, beginning with a log cabin in Northern Indiana where the founder, Father Edward Sorin, with total assets of about \$300.00, declared it the University of Notre Dame du Lac. A century later it was still in essence a college, but on the verge of becoming, at long last, a university.

The post World War II years were exciting and productive for all of higher education, including Catholic. Notre Dame's

student body rose from about 3,000 pre-war to just under 10,000 today, most of whom live on campus. Students of ever-increasing academic qualifications came from every state in the Union and sixty-six foreign countries. One of them, Napoleon Duarte, is President of El Salvador today. Another, Gu Yijian, is Secretary General of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. At home, four have been State Governors, a dozen are or have been U. S. Congressmen, over thirty are college presidents today, more than three thousand alumni and alumnae are engaged in higher education. Over eight hundred are presidents or vice presidents of corporations. There is an alumni admiral, general, and astronaut. Thousands are medical doctors, lawyers, judges. Dozens are bishops and hundreds are priests. There are poets, artists, actors, authors, and journalists of national repute. One would hope there have been some saints, too, certainly a few martyrs.

The institution itself has undergone a formidable development in the last half century. The annual budget has risen from a million dollars to over one hundred and fifty million annually. Faculty salaries and benefits have risen from the bottom to the highest category in the nation. Externally sponsored research has come from almost none to about fifteen million dollars annually. Student scholarship aid rose from a few thousand to thirty-four million dollars this year, affecting sixty-four per cent of the student body. Our ninth Rhodes Scholar leaves for Oxford this year. About 250 doctorates were awarded last year in over twenty disciplines

and hundreds of Master's degrees in over forty subjects. Library holdings went from two hundred thousand to more than a million and a half.

During this time, the physical facilities of the University were doubled to more than a hundred buildings at a cost of more than two hundred million dollars. The University is practically debt-free. The endowment has grown from three million to two hundred and seventy-five million, the eighteenth largest endowment among all the private universities in the land. From none, there are now over forty distinguished professorships endowed at more than a million dollars apiece. Twenty-five more are partially endowed, with another thirty or more expected in the near future.

Computing facilities now cost as much as the library, a development unknown thirty years ago. There are two national research facilities on the campus, one in Radiation Chemistry and another in Germ-free Life. Microfilm collections in Medieval Studies include the whole Ambrosian Collection from Milan, comprising over ten thousand priceless manuscripts and art works, parts of which are now touring American. The Snite Museum has the fifth best art collection of American universities. The University Press -- of special interest to Philip Scharper -- has published hundreds of outstanding books, especially in philosophy and theology.

Notre Dame has student branches in London, England; in Angers, France; in Innsbruck, Austria; in Rome, Italy; in Mexico

City; in Tokyo, Japan, and Tienjin, China. There will shortly be another in Jerusalem.

To this tour d'horizon of quantifiable progress must be added some organizational changes that have had profound effects on the life and spirit of the University. These would be of very special interest to Philip Scharper.

Following Vatican Council II, in which it was proclaimed that laymen and laywomen in the Church should be given responsibilities commensurate with their competence and dedication, the University which, like so many others, was owned and operated by the founding religious order, the Congregation of Holy Cross, was completely handed over to a largely lay Board of Trustees (42 laymen and laywomen, 8 C.S.C. priests) under a lay Chairman.

This was the largest religious organization in the world to be passed over to lay control, and one of the first. At the time, 1967, many said, "There goes the Catholic character of the University, just as happened to most of the Protestant founded universities in America." In fact, such doubters were wrong.

The first act of the lay trustees was to specify for the first time in a new set of University Statutes and By-Laws (we operate under a charter granted by the legislature of the State of Indiana, 1844, in which religion is not mentioned) that Notre Dame is and will remain in perpetuity, a Catholic university, with the founding religious congregation serving as administrators and faculty members as qualified and, especially, serving the pastoral needs of the University.

The religious are now for the first time paid the same salaries as laymen. From these funds, the expenses of the religious are paid, and all the rest of this income is rebated to the University, making Holy Cross one of the largest benefactors of the University, as of now contributing during recent years more than ten million dollars.

One of the first questions posed by the new lay Board was: "What in fact is a Catholic university and what are you doing to assure that you are such?" Two or three years later, the administration and faculty published the COUP Report (Committee on University Priorities). In essence, the first priority is the Catholic character of the University, and all the others bearing on what makes for academic excellence in such a Catholic university as Notre Dame.

The Trustees then asked for price tags to be put on these priorities. The amount of \$130 million was the price. A Campaign for Notre Dame was mounted. Five years later, we had raised \$180 million. Then followed the PACE Report (Priorities and Commitment to Excellence). Again, the new priorities were priced, this time totaling \$300 million. Thus a new campaign is being mounted and should be completed successfully by the end of the eighties.

The lay Board also decided early in its life (one of its first official acts) that the academic administration of the University should be conducted by the administration and faculty, according to Articles of Administration drawn up by them, reviewed every ten years, and approved by the Trustees. This is somewhat unusual in University-Trustee relationships, but has served us well

and avoided many tensions that exist elsewhere.

The Trustees constantly review the process, but have never failed to approve any new legislation of the Academic Council, comprised of faculty (majority), administrators, and students. There has been a healthy balance between basic policy which the Trustees ultimately decide and the administration of policy which is left to the University personnel.

Since the Trustees appoint all of the officers of the University and review their performance each year, there is a good balance and control. The Trustees are also a firm buffer against any undue pressure on the University from outside authorities of State or Church. Legitimate autonomy and freedom in the University is guaranteed by this arrangement. So far, the Chairman and the President have closely collaborated and have respected each other's role and responsibility.

This new administrative role by a largely lay Board has made for a much stronger institution with ever more clearly stated goals, together with strong commitment to achieve them. Mutual support is the order of the day, and it does work for the common good and steady growth of the institution, even and especially as regards its Catholic character.

This is a new pattern of organization for a Catholic university and it does work, in my judgment, much better than the old. I have not had five minutes of trouble with the Trustees. Their role has been very supportive, but then, we have been very fortunate thus

far by having had highly intelligent and very competent Chairmen who really understand what a true Catholic university can and should be. We have also had as many as 18 Trustees with earned doctorates and several who are or have been university and college presidents. The new arrangement has likewise been good for the religious community whose role now is not simply to own and operate, but to serve without the temptations of ownership. There is also more satisfaction for the individual religious in knowing that they hold their positions not because they are members of the Congregation, but because they are judged competent to perform the tasks to which they are nominated and for which they compete with others.

One of the other significant policies inaugurated by the Trustees was the decision in 1972 to change from an all-male institution for the past 130 years to a coeducational university. There are now 2,600 women students and more than 100 women faculty members, and growing. This, too, reflects a new concern for the place of women in Catholic higher education and Catholic life in general, another concern of Philip Scharper.

Notre Dame is manifestly better for the new and vital presence of women faculty members and students. We were blessed for many years by the next-door presence of St. Mary's College for Women. We did try to merge with them in 1970-72, but failing that, we find that coeducation at home and the continuing presence of more than 1,700 women students across the road is, in a way, the best of both worlds for both of us. We have many forms of

educational and social collaboration. We have not sorted out all of our problems with coeducation, but I believe everyone has been surprised at how well it has worked and how much better off we all are because of this fundamental change.

A third development within Notre Dame has been a heightened sense of service. All universities should be of service to the local, national, and international communities within which they exist, but a Catholic university has a double duty beyond this. We have to serve the Church in the way that only universities can, to be a place in which the Church can do its thinking and research, and, beyond this, we must instill in our students a habit of serving the less fortunate as a very real expression of Catholic faith and life. I believe we are doing both of these special functions much better than ever before. Again, this is another reason for Philip Scharper to rejoice.

In the matter of serving the Church, we are one of three national centers for liturgical research, education, and practice. Incidentally, the liturgical life of the students is both enthusiastic and almost universally practiced. Worship and prayer are far ahead of national and, especially, international norms. The best Catholic university in Europe has only three per cent of its students regularly attending Mass and receiving the Sacraments. Our figure would be over ninety per cent, and it is matched by a practice of Christian concern and care of the less fortunate. About a third of our students are engaged weekly in various forms of service to

the needy young and old in our community. About ten per cent of our graduates volunteer a year or two of total Christian service to the unfortunate of this world, both here and abroad.

In other areas, we have made the most basic study of Catholic elementary and secondary education in the United States and are now engaged in the widest study of American parishes ever made. In both studies, costing over a half a million dollars each, we have had almost total support from the Catholic bishops. We have also collaborated in the recent Catholic Bishops' pastoral on nuclear war and the American economy. We are engaged in a continuing historical study of American Catholicism, Retreats International, the Charismatic Movement, civil rights, Third World development, especially in Latin America, immigration and refugees, religion and politics -- all lifelong concerns of Philip Scharper.

In conclusion, may I say that Catholic higher education is alive and well, growing in the excellence of its faculty and students, involved in a wide variety of basic Christian concerns, producing graduates who carry these concerns fruitfully, intelligently, and faithfully into their private, public, professional, and family lives. It is not a story of total success; no human endeavor, even with the help of divine grace, ever is. But the world and the Church would be much poorer today without the growing contribution of Catholic students, alumni and alumnae, and without the reality of Christian higher education, at Notre Dame and elsewhere. Philip Scharper may

now face retirement with more reassurance that his own dedicated life has a good and growing resonance in the lives of so many of our students and graduates. His tribe has indeed increased.

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