The Church's Mission of Evangelization

**Essays in Honor of His Excellency,
The Most Reverend Agostino Cacciavillan,
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Edited by:
William E. May
Michael J. McGivney Professor of Moral Theology
John Paul II Institute
for Studies on Marriage and Family
Member, International Theological Commission

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12

Evangelization and the Nature of a Catholic University

Mark Lowery

In the Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde ecclesiae,* John Paul II noted the importance of the Catholic university in the task of evangelization:

> By its very nature, each Catholic university makes an important contribution to the Church's work of evangelization. It is a living institutional witness to Christ and his message, so vitally important in cultures marked by secularism, or where Christ and his message are still virtually unknown. (N. 49).

Many might think that the link between the Catholic university and evangelization is found primarily in those aspects of the university directly connected to the message of Christ, such as theology classes, liturgical rites found on the Catholic campus, and the various activities of the chaplaincy or campus ministry, including service projects.

However, the Pope has a more comprehensive view in mind: "Moreover, all the basic academic activities of a Catholic university are connected with *and in harmony with* the evangelizing mission of the Church" (n. 49,

emphasis added). How can the entirety of the academic endeavor be connected with evangelization? The key idea in the above text is that the whole university must be *in harmony with* the mission of the Church. But how is this harmony to be understood? What exactly does it mean?

A careful analysis of the nature of a Catholic university, informed by *On Catholic Universities* (*Ex corde ecclesiae*, hereinafter: EC) and key concepts from the *Pastoral Constitution on The Church in the Modern World* (*Gaudium et spes*, hereinafter: GS), will unravel this meaning, with the relationship between *nature and grace* as a critical hermeneutic tool. This analysis is an opportunity to reflect on what Pope Paul VI meant in *Evangelii nuntiandi* when he spoke of "bringing the good news into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new. . ." (n. 20).

The Autonomy of the Temporal Order

The concept "the autonomy of the temporal order" initially seems almost inimical to the task of evangelization. For to evangelize implies the suffusion of grace into the cultural realm, and autonomy suggests that culture exists in its own right apart from grace. According to *Gaudium et spes*, "If by the autonomy of earthly affairs we mean that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values . . . then it is entirely right to demand that autonomy" (n. 36). *Ex corde ecclesiae* likewise notes the importance of the autonomy of the various activities of the university.[1] This is not some concession to modernity; rather, such autonomy

is part and parcel of the very doctrine of creation whereby "all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws and order" (GS, n. 36). As is well known, the proper name for this realization is secularization, not to be confused with a secularism that reduces reality to the historical and worldly spheres.

If the created order has its own proper autonomy, then the apogee of creation, mankind, has its own proper autonomy: "For though the same God is Savior and Creator, Lord of human history as well as salvation history, in the divine arrangement itself, the rightful autonomy of the creature, and in particular of man is not withdrawn, but is rather re-established in its own dignity and strengthened in it" (GS n. 41).

Note the reference in this text to the orders of creation/redemption and to human history/salvation history. Ultimately there exists a fundamental unity between the natural and the supernatural, the realms of nature and grace. Man is incomplete unless he is drawn into a participatory relationship with God. Still, amidst this ultimate unity there is an important distinction to be made between man as creature and man as taken up into the divine life, between nature and grace. As creature, man possesses his own rightful autonomy, giving human history its own proper autonomy. This means that man and history can be examined in their own right—with all proper scientific modes of analysis—without necessary reference to the salvific dimension. As Saint Thomas says, "it is not therefore for sacred doctrine to prove the principles of other sciences" (*Summa theologiae,* I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 2).

To give some examples: a physical science like biology, or a social science like psychology, operates according to its own specific laws; there is no uniquely Christian element within these disciplines such that only a Christian could gain expertise in them, and they do not stand in need of being "Christianized" in some way. There is not some inherent element in the Christian biology or psychology class that would distinguish it from a so-called secular class. Likewise in the practical arts: if you have a plumbing problem you call a competent plumber *qua* plumber; there is no added advantage in the plumbing job *per se* that could be accomplished by a Christian plumber. This is not to say anything disparaging about Christian biologists, psychologists, or plumbers; it is only to say that the distinctive feature they bring to their task as Christians is not intrinsic to that task.

In a word, the valid and time-tested distinction (not bifurcation) between nature and grace is what ultimately allows the concept of proper autonomy. Of course, even on this natural plane there exists dependence on the Creator—proper autonomy does not imply some kind of separation from God. And so in the texts under consideration we find the autonomy of creation and of man immediately qualified: "But if the expression, the independence of temporal affairs, is taken to mean that created things do not depend on God, and that man can use them without any reference to their creator, anyone who acknowledges God will see how false such a meaning is. . . . When God is forgotten. . . the creature itself grows unintelligible" (GS, n. 36).[2] And again: "For we are tempted to think that our personal rights are fully ensured only when we are exempt from every requirement of divine law. But in this way lies not the maintenance of the dignity of the human person, but its annihilation" (ibid., n. 41).

Autonomy within the Parameters of Truth

The principle of the autonomy of the temporal order allows a Catholic university to hire in the various disciplines competent professors who are not Catholic.[3] Likewise, the principle is the basis upon which students of any creed are welcome to study at a Catholic university. What then makes a university Catholic, and how can the university be an essential agent of evangelization?

Too often, accidental and extrinsic factors are given in answer to that question.[4] For instance, it is argued that at a Catholic university a special care is shown to each student. Surely this is not distinctively Catholic! Others speak of the presence of a Catholic campus ministry that allows students various types of extracurricular involvement in things Catholic, ranging from worship to social service. But such offices exist on the campuses of secular universities as well, and besides, they affect the student in an extracurricular way. Still others speak of a pervading Catholic atmosphere, including chapels, crucifixes in classrooms, Christian art, and the like. When it comes to the curriculum itself, some speak of required philosophy and theology classes. All of these are important features of a Catholic university and aid in its evangelical task. But there is a fundamental bedrock that, I wish to argue, is prior to such features, that affects every aspect of the Catholic university, making

it truly distinctive. This bedrock represents a stratum, a lower limit, beneath which a university fails to be Catholic; yet above this stratum the Catholic university does not have in its dynamism any upper limit. Just as a person has never "finished" becoming Catholic, so too no university is ever finished in its Catholicity.[5] The present article is primarily concerned with the lower limit because it is so badly ignored, replaced by upper limit items cast with a vagueness that lets virtually anything pass for a Catholic university. Just about all discussants on this issue today are willing to say that Catholic identity is important, but then the nature of that identity is presented on their own terms.

To discover this bedrock or lower-limit substratum it is necessary first to understand the relationship between the temporal order, or secular history, and salvation history. Consider two important texts from *Gaudium et spes:* "This council exhorts Christians, as citizens of two cities, to strive to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously and in response to the Gospel spirit" (n. 43). And, ". . . the Church has a saving and eschatological purpose which can be fully attained only in the future world. But she is already present in this world, and is composed of men, that is, members of the earthly city who have a call to form the family of God's children during the present history of the human race, and to keep increasing it until the Lord returns" (n. 40).

The two orders ought not be confused, nor reduced one into the other—both mistakes are inimical to true evangelization. Pantheism, for instance, reduces the transcendent order to various forces in the immanent realm. The same is true of various forms of atheism, such as

Marxist materialism, leading Ratzinger—in a document issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1984—to characterize liberation theology as prone to "historicist immanentism."

> According to this conception, the class struggle is the driving force of history. History thus becomes a central notion. It will be affirmed that God himself makes history. It will be added that there is only one history, one in which the distinction between the history of salvation and profane history is no longer necessary. To maintain the distinction would be to fall into "dualism." Affirmations such as these reflect historicist immanentism. Thus there is a tendency to identify the kingdom of God and its growth with the human liberation movement, and to make history itself the subject of its own development, as a process of the self-redemption of man by means of the class struggle. (*Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* section IX, par. 3.)

One could explore numerous other versions of such reductionism, all of which deny in part or whole the sacramental view of existence whereby the transcendent and immanent realms interpenetrate while retaining their uniqueness—precisely what the notion of the "autonomy of the temporal order" is all about.

How does the interpenetration of the two realms occur? This is the theoretical way of asking the practical question we are pursuing about the Catholic university. Again we turn to *Gaudium et spes:*

> Christ . . . gave his Church no proper mission in the political, economic or social order. The purpose which he set before her is a religious one [here the text footnotes Pius XII: "Christ . . . has not given it any mandate or fixed any end of the cultural order. . . . The Church can never lose sight of the strictly religious, supernatural goal. The meaning of all its activities . . . can only cooperate directly or indirectly in this goal." But out of this religious mission itself comes a function, a light and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to divine law. (N. 42.)

In other words, each element of the human community existing in the temporal sphere must be compatible with the divine law. So long as it is compatible, a kind of "first stage" of evangelization is already accomplished, as that element is not violating the natural law and is compatible with the divine law. But the moment that some temporal area manifests an element incompatible with the natural and divine law, a preliminary type of evangelization is necessary to bring it into accord with that law.

At a Catholic university, a special vigilance must be exercised whereby each discipline makes certain that it is operating in a way that is compatible with the divine law. One need not be a Catholic to place oneself under this scrutiny (often the incompatibility is also visible in the light of the natural law which one need not be Catholic to understand). But all those hired at a Catholic university must be willing to be held under such scrutiny. Then the criterion of *Ex corde ecclesiae* is met, that all

non-Catholic faculty promote or at least respect the Catholic identity of the university (part II, art. 4, section 3). Above we quoted Saint Thomas as saying that it is not the place of sacred doctrine to prove the principles of other sciences. But he then goes on to say that the proper role is one of judgment. That is, the various disciplines must be judged as to whether or not they are being practiced in a way compatible with the divine law. Such judgment is inimical to many in the academy today. Consider the comment of George H. Tavard:

> Only those who share the principles, and who practice the methods, of an academic or intellectual discipline are qualified to delimit the scope of their academic freedom. As this implies, each area of scholarship is self-regulating and therefore, in regard to the limits of academic freedom, a scholar can be judged only by his peers. This, I would argue, rules out bishops as proper judges in matters of academic freedom.[6]

The above mentioned scrutiny, however, in no way denies the proper autonomy of each temporal sphere, and thereby in no way violates a proper understanding of academic freedom, to be distinguished from academic license.[7] As established above, freedom cannot exist at all in disjunction with truth, a central theme of John Paul II's encyclical *Veritatis splendor:* "Freedom of conscience is never freedom 'from' the truth but always and only freedom 'in' the truth" (n. 64).[8]

Too often academicians claim that to be under any type of constraint whatsoever is an extrinsic imposition on their freedom. In *Veritatis splendor* John Paul II makes

it clear that authentic Christianity has nothing to do with "heteronomy" (n. 41), a law imposed extrinsically that unfairly binds man. Rather, the truth is something friendly to man, something that man by his very nature would want to participate in so as not to fall prey to the slavery of pure autonomy and license. John Paul II terms this type of freedom "participated theonomy" (n. 41). When the so-called "secular" university tries to escape the authentic freedom that comes from participation in the truth, it does not end up on purely "neutral" turf as it were.[9] As Richard John Neuhaus has put it:

> A secular university is not a university pure and simple; it is a secular university. Secular is not a synonym for neutral. Not to say Jesus is Lord is not to say nothing. Not to say Jesus is Lord is to say that saying Jesus is Lord is unnecessary to, or a hindrance to, being the kind of university you want to be. A Christian university does not have a dual identity but a clear identity—a clear identity based upon a definite understanding of the kind of university it intends to be. There is no such thing as a university pure and simple.[10]

Hence, academic freedom must always be a freedom within the parameters of some truth claim. To the extent that some truth claim is incompatible with the truth of Christianity, the "freedom" within the parameters of that claim will necessarily be a kind of slavery.

The Evaluative Role of the Catholic Faith at the University

The most accurate work done on the nature of a Catholic university emphasizes the point that at such a university all work is done in the context of the whole person and that the most whole view of the person is found within the Catholic tradition.[11] According to *Ex corde ecclesiae,* a university is enabled "to include the moral, spiritual and religious dimension in its research and to evaluate the attainments of science and technology in the perspective of the totality of the human person" (n. 7).[12] The key work is "evaluate," and this word is best understood, I contend, in light of the notion of compatibility just noted, which allows the proper autonomy of the temporal order to remain in sharp focus. Several other key words appear in article 14 which pithily condenses the characteristics of a Catholic university sketched in article 13: "In a Catholic university, therefore, Catholic ideals, attitudes and principles *penetrate* and *inform* university activities in accordance with the proper nature and autonomy of these activities" (emphasis added).[13]

Still, this text presents a difficulty: it is one thing for Catholic truth to "inform" activities which retain their autonomy on the plane of nature—this is the evaluative task in relation to compatibility of which we just spoke. Is it another thing for Catholic truth—for grace itself—to "penetrate" these activities? This question, put to the side momentarily, is taken up in the next section.

Several other texts from *Ex corde ecclesiae* further clarify this evaluative role. "[The Catholic university] possesses that institutional autonomy necessary to perform its functions effectively and guarantees its members academic freedom, so long as the rights of the individual person and of the community are preserved within

the confines of truth and the common good" (n. 12).[14] A footnote to the text clarifies the meaning of academic freedom, noting that the search for truth must be free but within the confines of the cited criteria, namely, the truth and the common good. This note serves as a clarification of the fascinating opening remark of the constitution:

> A Catholic university's privileged task is "to unite existentially by intellectual effort two orders of reality that too frequently tend to be placed in opposition as though they were antithetical: the search for truth and the certainty of already knowing the truth."[15]

In our search for the truth, we already possess a certain (though never exhaustive) truth against which backdrop we proceed. Whatever we find in our quest must be compatible with that backdrop, which acts as a judge of our conclusions.[16]

Likewise we have a hermeneutic for understanding the statement made under the "General Norms" section of ECE, article 2.4: "Catholic teaching and discipline are to influence all university activities, while the freedom of conscience of each person is to be fully respected. Conscience does not exist in a vacuum; it must be formed."[17] At a Catholic university the formation occurs along the lines of the evaluative criteria against which each member must allow his work to be judged.

Also in the section on general norms, the university is asked to provide structural and regulatory means that will guarantee the expression and preservation of the Catholic identity. The precise means are left unspecified, but we can contemplate the types of issues such means must address. If an economics professor teaches that man is best understood from a purely material economic viewpoint, then his conclusions are incompatible with the anthropology found in Catholic doctrine. His views ought not be taught at a Catholic university, although he should teach about such views. Likewise, if a biologist reduces man to a highly complex biochemical mechanism, that view likewise is incompatible with a Catholic understanding of man.

Or consider an example from a non-academic realm. The Catholic student newspaper has something distinctively Catholic about it while still following all the rules of journalism as a secular discipline. Every feature of the paper should be compatible with the Catholic truth about the human person. Hence, it would be inappropriate to allow a club to advertise whose activities were in opposition to Catholic truth. It would be inappropriate to have a forum to learn about some hot issue that portended neutrality, rather than subordering opposing views to Catholic doctrine. Some mistakenly call this censorship of ideas. In fact, this is genuine freedom of the press at work—the freedom to create a paper with a particular standard, a lens through which it views reality. Censorship would occur if the government (the administration) refused to allow a paper with that particular standard.

Evangelization and Grace

Everything suggested thus far is within what I have termed a preliminary bedrock of evangelization: insuring that all academic activities are carried out in a way compatible with Catholic truth. It would appear that this

preliminary stage does not include the infusion of grace into such activities, an infusion that is part and parcel of evangelization.

However, a proper understanding of the nature/grace relationship shows that in one sense grace is already operative even in the so-called preliminary stage. For in the last analysis there are not two orders, one of nature and one of grace. Rather, the category "nature" is a useful construct that permits us to recognize that portion of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic truth that can be known and understood by reason and is thereby accessible to all men of good will. This portion or slice of truth ultimately is inseparable from its broader context within the divine law and finally the eternal law. Part of the virtue of the Catholic understanding of reality is its recognition of a natural order that, even after the Fall, given the effects of the redemption in healing and elevating our natures, can be grasped by natural reason. Still, only the redemption heals nature in such a way that this is possible, and hence it is due to Christ's grace that the construct "nature" can be grasped and lived.[18]

Remarkably, then, only a Catholic understanding of reality, which yields the possibility of a Catholic university, yields the possibility of even a "natural" university, that is, a university that is dedicated to the pursuit of truth but which does not include the category of revealed truth as part of its mission.

Grace, then, is operative in the preliminary stage of evangelization—hence the term "stage *of* evangelization," not "*to* evangelization." Beyond this stage, what else is required? The actual recognition of the presence

of grace in all things, and the full Catholic flowering of the life of the university in every respect. Just as Saint Augustine, upon recognizing the grace that had always been present in his life, went on to allow that grace to provide the impetus toward sainthood, so too the university. One ought not be under the illusion that this flowering can be accomplished in its entirety: the city of man remains in conflict with the city of God. But this ideal must remain a final cause of the university's existence. It should certainly be seen in some form in the academic areas of theology and philosophy, but it is a goal for all areas to fully recognize and become what they already possess inchoately.

The Role of the Laity

Often it is claimed that the older model of the Catholic university is outdated because, among other key factors most faculty and administrative posts are now held by laity. But this fact should actually impress upon us even more the importance of genuine Catholicity because the role of the laity is rendered intelligible in virtually the same way as the notion of a Catholic university. It is the role of the clergy to safeguard the truth about the human person, and to instantiate this truth in the Catholic sacramental mode. It remains the proper task, indeed vocation, of the laity to bring this truth to bear on temporal realities.

The vocation of the laity involves first the universal call to sanctity and second the call to some specific state in life such as marriage. But the third part of this vocation is to perform one's task in the temporal order and to shine the light of the gospel on that order not by some-

how Christianizing it but by a constant vigilance whereby temporal realities remain compatible with the truth about the person.[19]

Consider this text from *Gaudium et spes:*

> Secular duties and activities belong properly although not exclusively to Laymen. . . . [T]hey will keep the laws proper to each discipline, and labor to equip themselves with a genuine expertise in their various fields. . . . [They] should know that it is generally the function of their well-formed Christian conscience to see that the divine law is inscribed in the life of the earthly city. (N. 43.)

This inscribing must be done vis-a-vis a vigilance that strives to guarantee the compatibility of temporal affairs with the gospel, respecting the autonomy of the temporal order. From the Church, termed by John Paul II an "expert in humanity,"[20] the laity are to learn the truth about the human person and learn the basic social principles used in bringing that truth to bear on particular temporal matters.

> From priests they may look for spiritual light and nourishment. Let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission. Rather, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, let the layman take on his own distinctive role. (GS, n. 43.)

Note how this perspective on the role of the laity allays certain fears about the intrusion of the Church into university affairs. While the Church is an expert in humanity, she is no expert in biology and psychology. Rather, lay experts (a priest can also be such an expert but he is not then functioning *qua* priest) have the right and obligation to make judgments about temporal matters. In a word, a great dignity and responsibility is given to university faculty, contrary to the inquisitorial view often propounded.

Furthermore, the kinds of judgments that the laity are asked to make are not always clear cut, and there will be numerous instances when a number of valid viewpoints exist on some disputatious matter.

> Yet it happens rather frequently, and legitimately so, that with equal sincerity some of the faithful will disagree with others on a given matter. Even against the intentions of the proponents, however, solutions proposed on one side or another may be easily confused by many people with the Gospel message. Hence it is necessary for people to remember that no one is allowed in the aforementioned situations to appropriate the Church's authority for his opinion. They should always try to enlighten one another through honest discussion preserving mutual charity and caring above all for the common good. (Ibid., n. 43.)

In sum, a view of the laity as articulated at the Council enhances our understanding of what a Catholic university is, and serves to establish ever more firmly a proper understanding of the autonomy of the temporal

order. Appropriately, *Ex corde ecclesiae* includes a section on the laity. It emphasizes the irreplaceability of the lay vocation, confident that lay people will "illumine and organize these [temporal] affairs in such a way that they always start out, develop, and continue according to Christ's mind, to the praise of the Creator and the Redeemer" (n. 25, quoting *Lumen Gentium,* n. 31).

Conclusion

A proper understanding of such autonomy shows that the sacred and secular orders, while distinct, nonetheless can be properly integrated. As *Gaudium et spes* warned, "Therefore let there be no opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other. . . . The Christian who neglects his temporal duties . . . jeopardizes his eternal salvation" (n. 43). It could well be said, the Catholic university that fails to be properly Catholic jeopardizes its very nature as a university. The question is not, how can a university be Catholic, a question that of its nature bifurcates the religious and temporal in the exact way just warned against. The correct question is, how can there be a real university that is not Catholic?[21]

ENDNOTES

[1]Such autonomy is noted in part I in articles 12, 14, 29. The same concept is found in 17 and 20 (without using the exact word). In part II, article 2, it is found in section 5.

[2]See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* 1–2, q. 109, a. 2: "Dicendum quod natura hominis potest dupliciter considerari: uno modo in sui integritate, sicut fuit in primo parente ante peccatum;

alio modo, secundum quod est corrupta in nobis post peccatum primi parentis. Secundum autem utrumque statum natura humana indiget auxilio divino ad faciendum vel volendum quodcumque bonum, sicutprimo movente, ut dictum est." ("Man's nature may be considered in two ways, either in its purity, as it was in our first parent before sin, or as corrupt, as it is in ourselves after the sin of our first parent. In either state, human nature needs divine help in order to do or will any good, since it needs a first mover, as we said in the preceding article.")

[3]ECE, however, notes the importance of having a *majority* of Catholic professors to guarantee the Catholic identity of the university. All teachers are to be informed about the Catholic identity of the university and its implications, according to part II, article 4, section 3. All must promote or at least respect that identity.

[4]See, for instance, many of the essays in Theodore Hesbourgh, ed., *The Challenge and Promise of a Catholic University* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994). Striking examples are Richard P. McBrien, "What is a Catholic University," pp. 153–63, esp. p. 154, and Richard A. McCormick, S.J., "What is a Great Catholic University?" pp. 165–74. McCormick lists eight qualities he would hope to find in a graduate of a Catholic university: a Catholic vision; sensitivity to justice and injustice; appreciation of; and search for; knowledge; facility in spoken and written word; open-mindedness; critical capacity; ability to listen; willingness to serve. The first of these, the only item with any Catholic specificity, is described in terms not uniquely Catholic.

[5] I have deliberately borrowed language from the English translation of *Veritatis splendor* in one of its marvelous descriptions of the moral life that can be used analogously for the life of the Catholic university: ". . . the commandment of love of God and neighbor does not have in its dynamic any higher limit, but it does have a lower limit, beneath which the commandment is broken" (n. 52).

[6] "Comment" on paper by Joseph A. Komanchak, in John P. Langan, S.J., ed., *Catholic Universities in Church and Society* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1993), p. 67.

7 A distinction conveniently overlooked in the infamous "Land O'Lakes Document" declaring that "the Catholic university must have true autonomy and academic freedom in the face of authority of whatever kind, lay or clerical, external to the academic community itself." See the fine analysis in Msgr. George A. Kelly, "Let's Stop Kidding Ourselves About Catholic Higher Education," *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter* (September 1993), pp.15–24. On the nature of authority, see Joyce Little, *The Church and the Culture War* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), pp. 23–43.

8 See Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Nature and Mission of Theology,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), esp. pp. 34–40. Also consider Glenn Olsen's fine explication of this theme: ". . . every man possesses free will *(liberum arbitrium)* just as he possesses such other human abilities as thinking or tasting. Free will is the ability to choose between alternatives. But in a sense it is merely a capacity, like eyesight, the moral valuation of which is to be determined by use. Freedom is given, not so that a man can do whatever he please . . . but so that he can choose the good *(libertas).* Thus the man with free will, while retaining his free will, passes into the free or liberated man, by consistently (and this by the grace of God) choosing the good. . . . Christian freedom is therefore at almost every point opposed to the modern notion of the autonomous man" (Glenn Olsen, "'You Can't Legislate Morality': Reflections on a Bromide," *Communio* 2 [Summer, 1975], pp. 161–162).

9 See Alvin Plantinga, "On Christian Scholarship," in Hesbourgh, ed., *Challenge and Promise of a Catholic University,* pp. 267–295, at p. 290: "Scholarship and science are not neutral but are deeply involved in the struggle between Christian theism, perennial naturalism, and creative antirealism."

10 "The Christian University: Eleven Theses," *First Things* (Jan. 1996), 20.

11 See, for example, Robert F. Sasseen, "Authority and the Academy:: Reflections on *Ex Corde Ecclesiae,*" *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter* (June 1993), pp. 21–24.

12 Also, article 22 speaks of teachers proceeding "within the framework of a coherent world vision" which includes an "integration between faith and life."

13 The four characteristics from article 13 are: 1. A Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such. 2. A continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research. 3. Fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church. 4. An institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life.

14 The basic point is repeated in article 29 and in article 2.5 under part II dealing with general norms.

15 John Paul II cites his "Discourse to the University of Coimbra, May 15, 1982," *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI,* Vol. 3 (1965), p. 508.

16 Unfortunately many commentators refuse the truth of Tradition and Scripture as interpreted by the Magisterium, allowing this backdrop to vanish. See Richard P. McBrien, "What is a Catholic University," p. 156: "The interpretation of the Catholic tradition is not left totally in the hands of the official teachers, or magisterium, of the Church. The appropriation of the Catholic tradition is the work of the whole Catholic community, including its scholars, in dialogue with others, especially in a university context."

17 ". . . in the practical judgement of conscience . . . the link between freedom and truth is made manifest. Precisely for this reason conscience expresses itself in acts of 'judgement' which reflect the truth about the good, and not in arbitrary 'decisions.' The maturity and responsibility of these judgements . . . are not measured by the liberation of the conscience from objective truth, in favor of an alleged autonomy in personal decisions, but, on the contrary, by an insistent search for truth and by allowing oneself to be guided by that truth in one's actions" (*Veritatis splendor,* n. 61).

18 This delicate point is based on a close reading of Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* 2–2, q. 109. It is not possible to give a full explication here, except to note that when Thomas speaks of "pure

nature" he is using a hypothetical construct of which the post-lapsarian equivalent is a "nature" affected by redemptive grace. See especially articles 2, 3, and 8 (which speaks of reason being restored through grace).

19 See Russell Shaw, *To Hunt, to Shoot, to Entertain: Clericalism and the Catholic Laity* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1994) for a fine analysis of the role of the laity.

20 See *Sollicitudo rei socialis,* n.7.

21 The question about the distinctiveness of the Catholic university parallels that about the distinctiveness of Christian ethics. Discussion of the latter often is misplaced because the questions "Is there a distinctively Christian ethics?" and "What is distinctive about Christian ethics?" presuppose a false picture of reality whereby Christianity adds something to a natural ethics. The better question is "Is there any real ethics apart from some participation or incorporation into Christianity?"

13

Evangelization: The Apostolate and the Personal Vocation of Laymen and Laywomen

William E. May

Jesus came to save us from sin and death and to give us life, life everlasting. Before raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus said to his sister Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, though he should die, will come to life; and whoever is alive and believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:25–26). This is the "good news," the Gospel, of Jesus.

To make this good news known, loved, and efficacious is precisely what is meant by *evangelization:* "evangelizing means bringing the Good News into every strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new" (Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi,* n. 18).

How are the lives of ordinary Catholic men and women—laypersons—linked to evangelization? I propose to address this question by considering (1) the existential, religious significance of our everyday life; (2) the baptismal commitment as *the* fundamental commitment of the Christian; (3) the baptismal commitment, apostolate, and evangelization; and (4) the personal vocation of laymen and laywomen.