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For Openers

Editorial Board

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With this issue *Conversations* re-visits a topic first addressed in *Conversations* #6, an issue titled "Catholic Identity." Since fall, 1994 when that issue appeared, many things have changed on our campuses, not the least of which has been the level of conversation about mission and identity.

Since that time, administrations at many of our schools have adopted (or revised) mission statements and begun to use them to guide strategic planning and even day-to-day decision-making. What differences has this made?

Just as was the case when David O'Brien (in issue # 6) wrote "Jesuit Si, Catholic . . . Not So Sure," there remains some feeling that "Jesuit" continues to be the more inclusive term than "Catholic" when referring to "Jesuit Catholic higher education."

The conference on Justice held at Santa Clara University in October, 2000 has also had an impact. Representatives to that conference returned to their campuses charged with initiating dialogue, as well as plans and action related to one of the central values of Jesuit higher education, its commitment to "the faith that does justice."

And of course there is *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the apostolic constitution related to Catholic colleges and universities. This document has been around since 1990, but now approved with "juridical norms for its implementation," it promises to be a part of the landscape of discussions involving not only religious studies and theology

departments but larger segments of our campuses as well.

This issue presents a variety of positions and viewpoints on the Catholic university. While most of the articles were commissioned for this issue, Cardinal Avery Dulles's piece was first presented as a talk to the Cardinal Newman Society. *Conversations* is grateful for permission to reprint it here. Publication of Cardinal Dulles's address, however, does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the Cardinal Newman Society.

For those many faculty, administrators and staff who have asked whether *Conversations* is available on-line. Not yet, but soon. With the help of the university's Religious Commitment Fund, administrators and staff of Marquette University's Memorial Library are undertaking to scan the entire run of *Conversations* as the first step to making it available on the net.

For those new to *Conversations*, the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education regularly solicits suggestions for possible future themes as well as responses to past issues and/or essays. See the inside back cover of each issue for a list of themes currently under discussion.

For news of events on particular Jesuit campuses, see the AJCU (Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities) website: www.ajcu.net.