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A Survey of Programs and Activities Related to Identity and Mission

*Fordham University
New York, New York*

For many administrators, faculty, and students at Fordham University, the Fordham experience does not end on the university's New York City campuses. Instead, these men and women for others take Fordham out to the city and to other parts of the world, exemplifying the Jesuit tradition that informs the university itself.

"It is unfortunate that discussions about the meaning of a Catholic university are so often preoccupied by the question of limits and boundaries," Fordham University President Joseph A. O'Hare, S.J., said in his homily for the 1995 Mass of the Holy Spirit. "Far more important, it seems to me, is the question of the positive initiatives inspired by a Catholic tradition and mission." Published by e-Publications@Marquette, 1996. This program description reflects precisely that inspiration.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

One example, community service, was targeted as a priority by Father O'Hare in his inaugural address more than ten years ago. Today, nearly one thousand Fordham undergraduate and graduate students each year participate in volunteerism or service to disadvantaged people. Many are introduced to service at Fordham through the Community Service Program, established in 1985 under the Office of Government Relations and Urban Affairs, which serves as catalyst and clearinghouse for service opportunities. A newer facet is Urban Plunge, which invites freshmen to campus before the semester begins for two days of service and meetings with community leaders.

Patrick Logan, a 1990 Fordham graduate, is coordinating the Community Service Program. "We offer our students

a diverse menu of service options, and our students respond," he says. The nearly two dozen programs the office works with include delivery of meals to homebound people with AIDS, tutoring and mentoring, and working at residences for older adults, shelters, and soup kitchens. Since the spring of 1995, students have been teaching chess to youngsters at a local youth center in a project Fordham volunteers adopted.

"Education journals talk about the great things that come out of kids playing chess," says Susan Fields of Fordham-Bedford Children's Services, which sponsors the chess club. "They learn analytical thinking and non-aggressive conflict resolution within competitive situations." Grade-school students come for chess even on days when school is closed, she says. Fordham-Bedford tutors grades 3-6 and offers an early literacy program for kindergarten

through second grade in which Fordham students participate as well. Overall, the agency serves nearly one hundred families in northwest Bronx, and about fifty Fordham students volunteer there each year.

Through a program Fordham instituted last year, Raquel Granda, a Fordham junior, has been able to take her work-study job at Fordham-Bedford. She works with existing programs and is helping to coordinate a workshop on asthma and a college night to help students negotiate the application process.

"The work of the community service office is so valuable," Granda says. "Students keep Fordham a part of the Bronx community and help neighborhood students see Fordham as something they can attain." The service part of her education, she says, "makes it much truer to the Jesuit mission: I am not here just to acquire knowledge, but to use it for good."

Francesca Turturro, a Fordham junior, is one of forty-three Fordham tutors at St. Rita's Center for Immigrant and Refugee Services, which offers educational, social, and language skills to students from fifteen countries as varied as Vietnam, Bangladesh, Bosnia, and Ghana. "It's more than tutoring," Turturro says. "The program helps students assimilate. If they speak English well, they can fit in better with the general student body."

Fordham students have served St. Rita's since the program's inception, says Sister Mary Burke, O.P., coordinator of tutoring and drop-out prevention. Education budget cuts, particularly in the past two years, have made volunteers' contributions even more critical to the program's success. "We have been very fortunate to have the Fordham tutors," Sister Burke says. "The experience of tutoring our students has also encouraged tutors to pursue careers in teaching."

GLOBAL OUTREACH

Fordham Campus Ministry offers service opportunities through its Global Outreach program, which sends students around the United States and the world to work with marginalized people. During 1995-96, Global Outreach will visit sites in the Navajo and Mohawk nations, India, Ecuador, Mexico, and Jamaica, involving more than 120 students and a dozen members of the faculty and administration.

"To have members of the university staff work with students creates a presence they wouldn't have on campus," says Global Outreach Coordinator Grace Holcomb. Husband-and-wife teams go, too. A philosophy professor and his wife last year chaperoned a team to Guatemala; a student-affairs administrator and his wife will chaperone an upcoming project in Appalachia.

But Global Outreach offers more than service. "Our roots are in the Christian foundation of Catholic mission," Holcomb says. "We work not only as a team but as a spiritual community."

UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING PROGRAM

Fordham as an institution is making its presence felt in the community around its Rose Hill

HUD Section 202 senior citizen housing developments—188 units of subsidized housing.

ARCHBISHOP HUGHES INSTITUTE ON RELIGION AND CULTURE

Administrators, too, are exploring the broader implications of Fordham's Catholic and Jesuit identity. John W. Healey, a former vice president, this

things that distinguishes Fordham is that religion is the subject of true intellectual inquiry," Healey says. "This is our tradition, the Jesuit tradition, and, at its best, it is the Catholic tradition."

Among the Fordham programs the Institute will work with are the following:

❖ The *Nostra Aetate* Dialogues at Fordham University, organized by Edward J. Bristow, dean of



Fordham students, volunteering with Fordham Bedford Children's Services in the northwest Bronx, are shown here taking local youngsters to a Halloween program at a neighborhood public library. (Photo by Tony Correa)

campus. The University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP), created in 1983-84 by Fordham and The Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, continues to preserve and develop community-controlled, affordable housing by packaging and offering loans and providing technical assistance for tenants and non-profit developer/managers.

The program has assisted in the redevelopment of 1,500 housing units. This work "is in line with Fordham's sense of public service to and collaboration with the communities around its campuses," says Joseph P. Muriana, Fordham director of government relations and urban affairs and president of the UNHP Board. Fordham has also sponsored and built two

summer was named the first director of the new Archbishop Hughes Institute on Religion and Culture at Fordham. The Institute will work with existing programs and sponsor its own conferences on the relationships between religion and issues of contemporary life.

The subject is a natural one for Fordham, Healey says. "We are here in New York, which I think of as the intersection of all major questions," he says. "Other institutions legitimately expect us to give leadership in these areas—they see us as a Catholic partner in these discussions."

Healey is recruiting an advisory board, in part from Fordham faculty, to keep the Institute grounded firmly in the university. "One of the

Fordham College at Lincoln Center, which each year draws to Fordham a capacity crowd to hear leading Catholic and Jewish scholars broaden discussions of such issues as the death of Christ and the Jewishness of Jesus.

❖ The Fordham University Catholic Identity Project, organized by Monsignor Charles Fahey, senior associate at Fordham's Third Age Center. The project brings together leaders of Catholic institutions of higher education, health care, and social services, to address the issues their work will face in the new millennium. A 1991 conference, "The Future of Catholic Institutional Ministries," drew to Fordham nearly one hundred participants, including bishops and representatives of the three fields. A symposium planned for April of 1996

will invite leaders in those areas to discuss the status of Catholic-identity activities in their institutions. "These knowledgeable and skilled people will sit down together with the goal of further identifying the principal items on the agenda and strategies to deal with these issues," Msgr. Fahey says. Fordham plays an active role: The project planning committee includes Msgr. Fahey, Father O'Hare, and Joseph M. McShane, S.J., dean of Fordham College at Rose Hill, among others.

FORDHAM/ULSTER
CONFLICT
RESOLUTION
PROGRAM

Fordham will extend its influence across the Atlantic through the new Fordham/Ulster Conflict Resolution Project, which will provide conflict-resolution training for citizen groups of Northern Ireland. The project arose from discussions among faculty and administrators at Fordham's School of Law and Magee College, University of Ulster, and is financed through a U.S. Information Agency grant.

Working with the Centre for the Study of Conflict at the University of Ulster, Fordham Law will design and offer a workshop in non-adversarial methods of conflict resolution. Participants, including police, personnel managers, trade union members, teachers and housing officials, will travel from Northern Ireland to Fordham for a two-week program in 1996.

"To the extent we can, working with local citizen groups, we will help establish resources for crime prevention, court diversion, and public education in conflict resolution as the peace process continues," says John D. Feerick, dean of Fordham Law and an expert in conflict resolution.

These initiatives, and others like them, illustrate the qualities Father O'Hare identified in his inaugural address: "At a time when religion is too easily identified with fundamentalism and critical inquiry with moral skepticism, it is important that the Catholic idea of relating faith and reason not disappear," he said. "It hasn't at Fordham."

Le Moyne College
Syracuse, New York

THE GOLDEN
JUBILEE, 1946-1996

Le Moyne College celebrates its golden jubilee in 1996. Named for the French Jesuit who came as a missionary and peace envoy to the area in 1654, it is the second-youngest of the twenty-eight American Jesuit colleges and universities—twenty-two of which were founded prior to 1900.

In January, 1946, the bishop of Syracuse, in a letter to all parishes, welcomed the Jesuits and noted:

Gigantic problems press in on us from all sides. Their solution rests fundamentally upon the knowledge of God's law and its application to these problems. To this effort Le Moyne is dedicated and consecrated.

The Jesuits in the 1946-47 *Catalog* promised:

While ever conservative to retain the best tradition of the past, Jesuit educators are in no way averse to incorporate into their system the proven elements of a new age.

The early catalogs showed that the college, professedly Jesuit and Catholic, insisted on a core curriculum for all students. The majors were depicted as vocationally related—to prepare for law schools, medical schools or for certification as accountants, teachers and engineers. Le Moyne noted that the core curriculum and majors sought to impart knowledge, competency and "appreciation of the principles of justice and charity, especially Christian Social Justice."

The same documents show that the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin was the most significant student activity. Its purpose was "to help students to become real apostles." The text also states:

In our day there has been a new stress on the part the laity must play in helping the growth of the church . . . the present Pope . . . said . . . the Sodality is a wonderful means of preparing and training lay apostles.

First Fridays, a one-day retreat at the beginning of the school year, and May devotions were mentioned as important parts of Jesuit education.

The Le Moyne of 1996 is not the same as it was in 1946. The free-standing chapel promised in 1946 was finally constructed and consecrated in October, 1994. Its glass, stone, and steel proclaim what Le Moyne is as it prepares students to live in the third Christian millennium.

The 1995-96 *Catalog* includes a major in psychology and courses in computer science and management information systems; none of which appeared in the 1945-46 *Catalog*. In 1946, there was a theology department that gave all students a structured treat-

ment of the Catholic faith—study of fundamental theology and then of Christ as priest, prophet and king. In 1995-96, there is a religious studies department that offers courses in Catholic belief but also in other world religions and in atheism. Students elect what courses they take to fulfill their religious studies obligation in the core.

In the mid-1980s, Le Moyne conducted a "values audit." It was a survey administered to hundreds of faculty, administrators, students, and staff. Its purpose was to discover whether the college's actions and attitudes were consistent with its stated values and identity. The responses revealed serious discrepancies between Le Moyne's mission and its fulfillment. Students wanted a diploma in order to get a job. They showed little or no concern for others and saw their classroom learning as disconnected from the world around them.

THE VALUES
PROGRAM

Eight faculty members from psychology, religious studies, political science, business administration and history under the direction of Rev. Donald Kirby, S.J. (religious studies) "began to dream an ambitious dream: to make a major impact on values education and development at Le Moyne." They wanted to change the culture of the college. As a religiously diverse group, they aired their own views on values and education. They devised a strategy to involve faculty in discussions to aid them to bring the values dimension into their courses and to allow every student at Le Moyne to experience and learn that dimension.

The Values Group spelled out their mission as follows: