

Characteristics OF Marianist Universities



ASSOCIATION OF
MARIANIST UNIVERSITIES
Chaminade University • St. Mary's University • University of Dayton

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This resource book, first published in 1999 and republished in 2006, 2014 and 2019, was produced by Chaminade University, St. Mary's University and the University of Dayton, in coordination with the Association of Marianist Universities.



ON THE COVER:

Sculpture of Christ the Teacher by Joseph Aspell
*See the back inside cover for Mr. Aspell's
 reflections on Christ as teacher.*

Preface to the 2019 Edition

The historical and educational context for the *Characteristics of Marianist Universities* is both local and global.

The Society of Mary (Marianists) was founded in France in 1817 by Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. The first Marianists arrived in the United States in 1849. The reputation of the Marianists as educators in Europe led the first brothers in the United States to establish schools.

Today, the Marianist brothers and priests of the Province of the United States serve in communities and ministries from Honolulu to Puerto Rico and in Eastern Africa, India, Ireland and Mexico. In the United States, along with the three universities, the Marianists sponsor 17 high schools, several middle school operations and four retreat centers, and they minister in several parishes.

Globally, Marianist education takes place in more than 24 countries, in nearly 100 elementary, secondary/middle and tertiary level schools, including the three U.S. universities, and in countless nontraditional education programs and educational activities. Approximately 8,000 lay persons and 200 Marianist religious work in these institutions serving more than 112,000 children, youth and adults.

The first edition of the *Characteristics of Marianist Universities* was published in 1999 and then republished in 2006 and 2014 with the same basic text. Twenty years after its appearing, the normal evolution of time and culture called for a refreshing. In 2003, the universities themselves formed the Association of Marianist Universities (AMU) in which the Province is a member. Dr. Steve Neiheisel, the previous Executive Director of the AMU, initiated the update effort and gathered representatives from all three Marianist universities to prepare the present edition.

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This edition includes the updated texts of the Characteristics, parts of the original Introduction [the full Introduction and a Glossary of Terms can be found on the AMU web site, www.marianistuniversities.org], a section on the AMU, a brief description of each university, and a short piece on the Origins of the Marianist Family.

The eminent Marianist educator, Paul J. Hoffer, SM, wrote: "On beginning his work, Father Chaminade was thinking: "For new needs, new solutions are required." These pages rustle with new needs and proposed new solutions, all in the service of the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of Chaminade University, St. Mary's University and

the University of Dayton. These universities exist to serve the Church and world in the tradition of Chaminade whose statue is found on each campus that summons us to follow in his path.

—*Brother Thomas F. Giardino, SM*
Executive Director, Association of Marianist
Universities
August 2019



Introduction

THE ORIGINS OF THIS DOCUMENT

(1.) In the summer of 1996, international delegates of the Society of Mary gathered in Rome for a General Chapter and accepted a document titled *Characteristics of Marianist Education*. Based on three years of consultation with those leading Marianist educational works throughout the world, an international team of four Marianists drafted the document. The purpose of the document is to articulate the common elements of Marianist educational philosophy and spirit. This document, published as *Characteristics of Marianist Education*, identifies and interprets these five elements that characterize the Marianist approach to education:

- educate for formation in faith
- provide an integral, quality education
- educate in family spirit
- educate for service, justice, peace and integrity of creation
- educate for adaptation and change

(2.) As the document was written primarily for and by Marianist educators at the primary and secondary levels, the particular situation of the U.S. Marianist universities was not sufficiently addressed. Chaminade University of Honolulu, St. Mary's University of San Antonio, and the University of Dayton subsequently collaborated to produce this document to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Marianist education in ways appropriate to their American setting, their pluralism in faculty, staff and student bodies, the notable diversity of their academic curricula, and their more decentralized governance structures. In order to elaborate more fully on the characteristics of Marianist educational philosophy and practice, we begin with the founding and early mission of the Society of Mary, followed by some reflections on processes by which a religious vision informs the intellectual life of the university.

THE SOCIETY OF MARY (SM, MARIANISTS)

(3.) Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, priest of the diocese of Bordeaux, believed that the rebuilding of the Church in France in the aftermath of the French Revolution would best be accomplished by

small communities of faith, dedicated to prayer, education and acts of service to the larger community. After two decades of work with those communities, or sodalities, and the founding of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (Marianist Sisters) in 1816, the third part of his vision of the Marianist Family materialized when he founded the Society of Mary. In 1817, five young men with whom he had worked as sodalists were ready to form a religious community — a group of men who would take the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in the service of others. Chaminade, approaching the age of 60, enthusiastically supported them. All of them, priests and brothers, ordained and un-ordained, well-educated and manual laborers, were moved to embrace an ideal embodied in Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who, as a woman of great faith, allowed Jesus to be conceived and nourished in her own body and then brought forth and offered to the world as both a light and a blessing.

MARIANIST SPIRITUALITY AND MARIANIST EDUCATION

(4.) The lived experience of many religious congregations, including the Marianists, has resulted in time in distinctive spiritualities. Marianists trace the origins of their spirituality to Chaminade, who drew from the French School of spirituality, the intellectual traditions of the Jesuits, and a Marian missionary spirit embodied in small groups of Christians dedicated to renewing the Church and society in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Particularly important was Chaminade's three-year

exile in Saragossa, Spain. During many hours of prayer at the shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, he came to believe that his mission was to rebuild the Church in France and beyond through communities of religious and lay people working closely together.



(5.) Upon his return to Bordeaux, Chaminade's sense of urgency led him to form a variety of apostolic communities inspired by Mary, including one dedicated to education and the formation of teachers. It was guided by — and at the same time helped to shape — a deepening, distinctively Marianist spirituality. All subsequent Marianist educational work has been inspired by this spirituality with its three

characteristic dimensions: a spirit of Marian faith, the building of communities of faith, and a deep sense of mission.

(6.) Firstly, for Chaminade, Marianist spirituality emphasizes faith, which requires movement of the heart as well as an assent of the mind. It moves a person to act. Mary's faith moved her to consent to the conception of Jesus and to give him birth. In Mary's faith, Chaminade saw embodied an openness to the action of the Holy Spirit that exemplifies how every Christian should live. Inspired by the Spirit, Mary brings Jesus into the world, dramatically showing those who believe that with God all things are possible.



(7.) Secondly, Chaminade knew that transforming the social order required the action not just of individuals, but also of many people working together in a common mission. For Chaminade, only communities of faith and love would bring about social transformation. Such communities are the natural embodiment of a vibrant, committed Christianity. He frequently cited the example of the first Christians who held everything in common, prayed and broke bread together. And as Mary, first of believers, gathered in prayer with the Apostles in the upper room and was present at the birth of the Church, so she still stands at the center of all Marianist communities of faith.

(8.) Finally, Chaminade worked to infuse these communities of faith with a deep sense of mission. Faced with the devastation of the Revolution, Marianist communities of faith aimed at nothing less than revitalizing the Catholic Church in France. Religious and lay, men and women, wealthy and poor — they came together and looked to Mary for inspiration in their great task. Mary, who formed Jesus for his mission, who despite her great faith had to ponder many things she did not fully understand, who despite an uncertain future uttered her fiat (Luke 1:38) — this same Mary will form us, Chaminade believed, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to become like Jesus for the sake of others. The person and influence of Mary is a distinguishing thread woven throughout the entire fabric of Marianist spirituality.

(9.) It is impossible to understand Marianist spirituality without grasping the role that Mary played in the lives of Chaminade and the first Marianists. In the biblical story of Mary, they saw selflessness in the young pregnant teenager who walked miles to be of assistance to her elderly cousin Elizabeth, who was also pregnant with John the Baptist (Luke 1:39-45). They admired the tact of a woman who understood the embarrassment of the newly married couple who ran out of wine for their guests, and her boldness in not hesitating to tell her son, Jesus, about their need, clearly and confidently expecting that he would resolve the crisis in his own way (John 19:25-27). They witnessed her courage in remaining steadfast, though helpless, at the foot of the cross on which her only son was dying. In addition, they found strength in Mary's prayer with the disciples of her son as they all gathered in the upper room after his resurrection, a prayer that brought down the power of the Holy Spirit upon them and sent them forth to witness to the message and person of Jesus to the whole world (Acts 1:12-14 and 2:1-4). As the Marianists say of Mary in their Rule of Life: "She shows us the way of true Christian life. Following her example of faith, poverty of spirit, and attentiveness to the Lord, we hope to reflect to those around us Mary's warmth of

welcome to God and to others.

Like her, we wholly commit ourselves to the mystery of our vocation" (Article 8). Accordingly, Marianist spirituality has resulted in an approach to education that emphasizes a teacher being truly present to students, not only teaching them but also loving and respecting them.



(10.) This Marian inspiration — grounded in community, based on faith, aware of the needs of others, bringing the message and person of Jesus to others — has informed the spirituality and philosophy of education of the Marianists to this day.

FAITH AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE

(11.) As we have already noted, the Marianists realized very early on in their existence that the work of education provided an excellent means for passing on their distinctive vision of the Christian life to future

generations. Marianists included as central to their educational efforts an emphasis on liberal education, welcomed by the Church centuries earlier when it recognized the importance of the Greek and Roman classics. In this sense, Marianists understood that education was not merely an excellent means for imparting a religious vision of life, but also an intellectual formation valuable in itself. At the same time, the first Marianists, who included both those liberally and professionally educated, understood the importance of professional education as well.



(12.) This long-term Marianist commitment to development of both liberal and professional education, and both faith and the intellect, requires distinctive articulation in the U.S. university context. Within the modern American university where empirical reason is emphasized almost exclusively, the search for appropriate relations between faith and reason can seem doomed to failure. Attempts to relate the two face several dangers. First is the danger of speaking somehow only to those students, staff and faculty who share the order's denominational affiliation, in which case the mission is peripheral to the work and life of the rest of the university. Second is the contrasting danger of seeming to impose belief and to require conformity, which would produce a homogeneity of thought inimical to the very purposes of a university. That the task of relating faith and reason is difficult does not mean it is impossible, however.

(13.) As Catholic universities, Marianist institutions of higher education affirm a commitment to the common search for truth, to the dignity of the human person, and to the sacramental nature of creation. These basic commitments support the most fundamental work of a university: the collaborative efforts of teachers and students to understand and improve the world, the solitary but deeply communal enterprise of the researcher dedicated to exploring the boundaries of what is and can be known. As it says in the very first paragraph of the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities (1990), *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, a Catholic university shares with every other university “a joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth in every field of knowledge.”

(14.) The educational tradition and spirituality of the Society of Mary bring to the ordinary commitments of a Catholic university its distinctive qualities: education for leadership as service and an abiding respect for the complementary nature of a liberal education on the one hand and professional and technical education on the other.



(15.) The necessary variety of a Catholic and Marianist university community includes not only those teachers, staff and administrators who are Catholic, but also those of other religious traditions and those who affirm no religious belief but who nonetheless share the fundamental commitments of

the university. Although believers ground their search for truth and their respect for created reality in religious affirmations, the search is one in which all people can participate. A university animated by Catholic and Marianist identity should therefore be marked by an unusual level of confidence and civility — confidence that those engaged in the search for truth are part of a common enterprise, and civility in working out and living with the inevitably tumultuous character of that enterprise. As one of the most multifaceted of human communities, the Catholic Church and universities that claim a Catholic identity owe to their students, who themselves embody a diversity, an acquaintance with the full range of cultural expression of the professional world in which students will move, and where they will attempt to integrate their religious, professional, civic, social and familial responsibilities and rights.

(16.) If Marianist spirituality profoundly shapes Marianist practice, then the distinctiveness of Marianist practice should be recognized by its special characteristics. Years of educational practice in the Marianist tradition reveal that distinctiveness in five characteristics. Marianist universities:

- educate for formation in faith
- provide an integral, quality education
- educate in family spirit
- educate for service, justice, peace, the integrity of creation and
- educate for adaptation and change.

Marianist Universities Educate for Formation in Faith

(17.) As higher educational institutions, Marianist universities have kept, along with education in the disciplines, a commitment to the development of the whole person, which includes the dimension of religious faith and its personal appropriation and practice.

AGAINST THE SECULAR TREND

(18.) In this century, many institutions of higher education have become primarily job-oriented in nature; not as many of them continue to show a real interest in the liberal arts. Despite this trend, most colleges and universities in the United States explicitly supported, until the 1960s, a twofold educational purpose: the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of character. Catholic universities, however, display an expansive vision of education in their commitment to formation of character as critical to preparing for and living out one's vocation. Curriculum reflects this commitment with its consistent emphasis on the liberal arts, including the disciplines of philosophy and theology. Critical engagement in the liberal arts increases graduates' capacity to respond with understanding and practical wisdom to the challenging questions of contemporary living and to the ongoing invitation to deepen one's religious faith, both in understanding and practice. The stories, histories, indeed the wisdom of the past embodied in the great works of literature, including especially the Scriptures as they have been interpreted and enacted over the centuries, find an important place throughout university life. Thus, Catholic universities send distinctive graduates into civic society prepared to enact their vocations as their response to a call to use their gifts and talents ethically and in service to family and neighbors whether in the work place, the local community, the nation, or the world.

BOTH FAITH AND REASON

(19.) Catholic universities affirm an intricate, mutually enriching relationship between faith and reason, evident in retaining studies in philosophy and theology along with science as integral to liberal education. Christians over the centuries have engaged with and

found value in the intellectual currents of their day to deepen their understanding not only of the created order but also of the Creator. Faithful men and women from every age serve as inspiration and example for contemporary engagement in and development of Catholic intellectual tradition that touches on every field of knowledge. Faith expands horizons in the quest for truth that grounds justice and challenges reason to test its limits in pursuit of the common good. Reason informs faith with an intellectual rigor that summons humility and respect for all perspectives that contribute to our understanding of and commitment to the common good. Indeed, many graduates embody in their daily lives the creativity unleashed when faith and reason are joined in service to the common good.



THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN FAITH AND CULTURE

(20.) Catholic universities have a particular obligation to foster dialogue between faith and culture and to embrace the task in its complexity, given the multiplicity of faith perspectives and cultures that comprise our world. Dialogue serves the Marianist mission of educating the whole person when it enables participants to integrate the heart and the intellect as they express an informed understanding of their own faith and culture and engage in active listening to persons of other faiths and cultures, as well as those with no religious faith. To become an actual community of learners requires a dialogue marked by humility and trust among all participants who strive to move beyond simple tolerance toward respectful collaboration in our common educational mission. To the extent that this dialogue is accomplished, Marianist universities

will be among those few places in the modern world where both an intellectual and a faith community remain in conversation.

FAITH IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS

(21.) Formation in faith remains incomplete without understanding its social dimension. The Marianist founders exhibited a lively faith that attracted others to join them in small communities formed through prayer, study, and service within their own troubled society. Marianist universities continue this work drawing on the wisdom not only of the founders but also the social teachings of the entire Church. These teachings articulate a vision in the light of faith and offer guidance for the transformation of culture in service to the common good and make abundantly clear that faith is more than personal belief. A strong sense of community, a commonly noticed quality of a Marianist university, helps all its members grasp more quickly the importance of solidarity in the faith-inspired work of cultural transformation.

Marianist Universities Provide an Integral, Quality Education

(22.) The foundations of excellence in education in the Marianist universities flow from our emphasis on the dialogue between faith and reason in the service of the common good. It is quality education because faculty, staff, administration and students collaborate together in attaining knowledge of the human condition within the larger community of all creation, applying both faith and reason in their quest for human meaning. It is integral or comprehensive because we seek to “humanize” this path of knowledge in such a way that it affirms the full dignity of each member of our learning community in curricular and extra-curricular experiences in the arts and professions. An integral, quality education in the Marianist University calls each member of the community to attentive presence, to participation in genuine community, and to competent and loving service.

INTEGRATED LIBERAL ARTS AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

(23.) Marianist education is grounded in the liberal arts, linking theory and practice, liberal and professional education. It seeks to uncover and probe the deep questions of human meaning. It places this search for truth within a value-centered worldview that begins with the dignity of each person, living their life within an interconnected whole that we call “creation.” Believers and non-believers alike celebrate the mutual communion we share with all creatures and God who loves us all into being. Liberal education and the values we affirm inform our models of professional education through which our students are called to service for the common good of all in our local, national, and global societies.



AN INCLUSIVE AND UNIFIED DIVERSITY

(24.) Among the values informing our educational excellence are inclusivity, equity, community, collaboration, solidarity with the suffering and poor and a spirit of service.

Through reflection, discussion and application, these values form the context of education of the whole person. This environment nurtures networks of relationships characterized by attention to the needs of others and service to meet those needs both in and outside the university.

(25.) Faculty, staff and students work together to form a community of learning in service to the common good of all attending to both the formal and informal dimensions of education. Our Catholic and Marianist identity models inclusivity as an expression of God's enduring presence in all of creation, weaving all human beings and every creature together in one community of creation. Inclusivity is also expressed in our welcoming hospitality to all who are attracted to our universities as students, staff or faculty.



(26.) Community calls us to equity in access to our institutions and the opportunities we provide, helping us to form mutual relationships of service and love with one another in the pursuit of our mission. These relationships nurture in us collaboration in all dimensions of our work, play and prayer in university, and open our hearts to the suffering and needs of others. This conversion of heart, letting go of the desires for only self-satisfaction and selfish success, leads each of us to service that uplifts the common good of the university community and reaches out to heal the communities we serve.

PROVIDE OUTSTANDING CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING HABITS OF REFLECTION, STUDY AND SERVICE

(27.) Marianist universities foster this conversion of heart through an education of the whole person, developing their physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, spiritual and social qualities. Faculty, staff and students attend to fundamental moral attitudes and ethical decision-making, serious research and study, develop their personal talents and acquire skills that will help them engage with society and work for its betterment. Beneath all these efforts at integration lies the deeper level of the spiritual lives of the students, staff, administration and faculty, lives

that are strengthened through habits of service, reflection and silence. These habits foster liberating if sometimes sobering self-knowledge, sharpen critical thinking and support prudent judgment. At this deeper level of integration, faculty and students interpret the meaning and consequences of data, facts and events at the local and global levels. Challenging as it is, the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of the university ought to be also experienced in appropriate ways in the classroom. They learn too, that the academic disciplines are valuable resources for contemplating not just themselves and their relationships, but also the larger world of commerce, government and culture in the presence of God and the light of the Gospel. The deeper a person's interior life, the stronger is their desire to learn and to act for ethical and wise ends.

A MISSION-FOCUSED COMMUNITY

(28.) The Marianist emphasis on attentive presence, genuine community, and a call to competent and loving service creates an environment for community building, teaching and learning that is inviting and invigorating to people from any and all faith traditions. The Catholic intellectual tradition is the common source for our intellectual and spiritual journey in the university. It reminds us that every authentic human activity seeking the truth, whether secular or sacred in its intent and methodology, expresses human dignity. Human dignity itself is tied to the common good, which is inclusive of all of God's creation, seen in the countless interdependent systems that sustain life and allow life to flourish. The tradition presents the myriad faces of the mystery of God become Jesus, Son of Mary. The university, formed in this mystery, nurtures the many paths of knowledge that help us understand humanity. In coming to know our authentic humanity within creation, we come to know Jesus, Son of Mary, God-with-us.

(29.) The educational tradition and spirituality of the Society of Mary bring to the ordinary commitments of a Catholic university its distinctive qualities: education for leadership as service and an abiding respect for the complementary nature of a liberal education on the one hand and professional and technical education on the other. These mission-critical qualities are resourced and monitored by the members of the boards of trustees or regents in a continuous and collaborative conversation with administrators, faculty, staff and students.

Marianist Universities Educate in Family Spirit

(30.) Marianist educational experience fosters the development of a community characterized by a sense of family spirit that accepts each person and invites everyone in the university into the challenge of building community within and beyond our campus. Communal support for scholarship; friendship among faculty, staff, administration and students; active participation; and genuine presence (in the community) embodies the uniqueness of a Marianist educational experience.



CULTURE OF ACCEPTANCE

(31.) Marianists have a strong sense of community, traditionally called a community with “family spirit.” The Marianist family spirit is a way of life with traits that are discernible in the communities it permeates. The members of the Society of Mary do not choose with whom they live, but in their openness, they choose to live in an intentional faith community where they are committed to learn, love and respect those in whose company they find themselves. This sense of family extends to all members of the educational community.

(32.) Every type of Marianist community accepts members in the same way that a family accepts theirs; committed to support their members for continued growth and development. The sense of family enables Marianist universities to challenge faculty, staff, and students to authenticity, excellence, and maturity; because the acceptance and love of a community gives its members the courage to risk failure and the joy of sharing success while remaining appropriately professional and impartial.

FOSTER FRIENDSHIPS

(33.) The culture of acceptance that Marianists call family spirit focuses on the quality of relationships among the members in the community.

It is essential that all members embrace the diversity of cultures that surrounds them by communicating with respect and treating one another as equals. Over the long term, these habits acknowledge the value of inclusivity and the dignity of every member cultivating the ground in which genuine relationships can take root and flourish.

(34.) In particular, Marianist universities tend to the relationships among its community members (faculty, staff and students), supporting, challenging and recognizing excellence in teaching, research and advising. Further, Marianist universities emphasize the communal dimensions of research, professional development and experiential learning, challenging and supporting the need for interdisciplinary endeavors that allow for open dialogue between educators and students alike. This culture of continuous learning allows for relationships to develop and extend beyond graduation into alumni networks.

(35.) Such a vision of community and friendship runs the risk of misinterpretation. It must therefore be recalled that friendliness and hospitality are genuine expressions of a process that necessarily includes healthy discourse, disagreement and dialogue. Yet, those grounded in the Marianist vision of education recognize that only with precisely this mix of hardships and triumphs can authentic communities be formed. Growth in Christian faith is now what it has always been — inevitably an experience of entering an ancient and ever new community of unique individuals, all of whom sought and seek what it means to believe in the midst of the complexities and ambiguities that are inescapably part of living in a faith community that respects the achievements of reason.

FORM COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES AND STRUCTURES

(36.) The Marianist educational tradition has long been characterized by shared responsibility for decision-making at all appropriate levels. Effective collaboration requires good communication, clear lines of authority, just policies and respect for the principle of subsidiarity. Furthermore, the Marianist university cooperates with other educational works, diocesan structures, ecumenical and interfaith initiatives, national and international organizations and the civic communities in which the university lives. All these forms of collaboration require, above all, lay faculty and staff educated in and committed to the vision and mission of the founding religious community.

Marianist Universities Educate for Service, Justice and Peace, and Integrity of Creation

(37.) The Marianist approach to higher education is deeply committed to the common good. The intellectual life itself is undertaken as a form of service in the interest of justice and peace, and the university curriculum is designed to engage the classroom with the wider world. Marianist universities extend a special concern for those who are poor and marginalized, and promote the dignity, rights and responsibilities of all peoples.

PROMOTE A SENSE OF WORK AS MISSION

(38.) At Marianist universities, in a unique way, we are called to a striking “both/and” approach to our work, our growth and development, and our understanding of what it means to be an active community of faith. We know from Blessed Father Chaminade’s teachings that “the essential is the interior.” We are called to look within ourselves, and constantly strive for growth in our own prayer life and self-understanding. Blessed Father Chaminade also said: “We are all missionaries, and we consider ourselves on a permanent mission.” It is the mission of witnessing to the good news of Jesus. Marianist universities, like all Marianist communities, exist not only for themselves but also for the sake of those beyond the community. We recognize through this duality of interior focus and an outward call to serve others that, being in a state of permanent mission, we are gathered and sent. We come together as a community — faculty, students, staff, administrators — to learn, be nourished, develop in formation of faith and justice and expand the previous confines of our heart and mind; we then are sent forth into the world to be agents of change. Marianist education requires that we constantly look to and work with others in a search for justice: that is, a search for right relationship with God, self, others and creation.



ATTEND TO THOSE WHO ARE POOR AND MARGINALIZED

(39.) In line with our Catholic social tradition, we remain committed to particular awareness and preferential treatment of those who are poor and vulnerable. We are mindful of those who are often marginalized by society and use our resources to create a more equal playing field — at home and in our communities, locally, nationally and globally. We choose to confront social ills with a perspective that is both compassionate and controversial — to challenge the status quo in the search for the common good. This requires us to be creative and innovative as we consider our response to the problems of the world. It also demands that we be courageous; that we be modern-day prophets, bringing to light the hard and often uncomfortable issues of our day. A Marianist education teaches one to think critically, to advocate and act for justice, always supporting the dignity of each person, to engage in deep social analysis, and to undertake research and initiatives that address actual social and moral problems. We do so in the spirit of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*'s observation that “If need be, a Catholic university must have the courage to speak uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society.”



PROMOTE THE DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN AND MEN

(40.) It is part of our responsibility as institutions built on the teachings of Christ to promote the dignity of all human persons. To do so authentically, we must acknowledge, analyze and deeply comprehend global disparities and the intersectionality of power systems and injustice at work in our communities. Our critique must be inclusive of reflection on the roles we play, as both individuals and institutions, in creating and perpetuating systems of injustice.

(41.) Marianist universities recognize the critical importance of leading by example, and therefore start at the nucleus — that is, our own institutions and policies — to establish just structures and fair procedures. We strive to offer educational opportunities to individuals from diverse socioeconomic

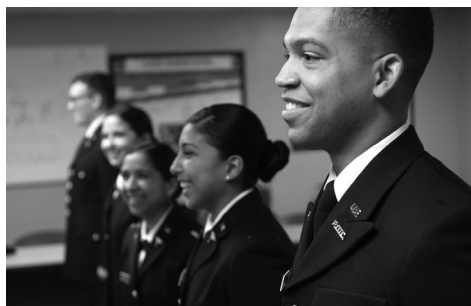
backgrounds. We commit to paying just wages to employees, eliminating gender inequity and providing a healthy professional environment for all faculty and staff. We encourage space for open conversation and dialogue on ways in which, as institutions, we can improve upon our care of and respect for the needs of all members of our community. We then have the courage to explore that conversation in light of the needs of the world. Marianist universities recognize that those training and forming students, both inside and outside the classroom, bear a special responsibility to help them become aware of the history and contemporary reality of inequity in our nation and world, and to eliminate it where it still exists.

WORK TO INTEGRATE THEIR COMMITMENT TO SERVICE, JUSTICE AND PEACE INTO THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

(42.) A primary goal of a Marianist University education is to create space and opportunity where all members have the chance to discern and live into their vocations. This means that students, through their academic scholarship, service work, experiential learning, engagement in the community and relationships built with peers, faculty and staff, are asked to enter into deep

exploration of self, faith and the world around them. We want our students to ask themselves: what are my gifts, talents, skill sets and passions? How do they meet the needs of the world? As faculty and staff at Marianist universities, we challenge and support our students in exploring these questions during their university education and beyond;

we recognize and embrace the responsibility and privilege of creating space where this profound transformation and growth can occur. In his encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis clearly draws the connection between the common good, the poor and care for the earth our common home. Marianist education embraces this connection, instilling in our students a respect for the integrity of creation and a commitment to environmental justice.

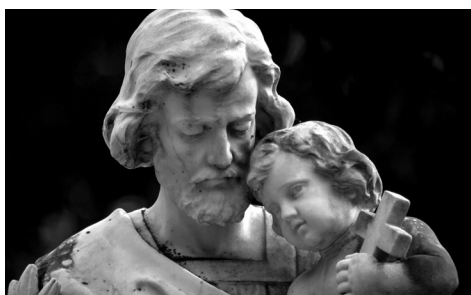


Marianist Universities Educate for Adaptation and Change

(43.) In the midst of rapid social and technological transformation, Marianist universities adapt and change their methods and structures so that the wisdom of their educational philosophy and spirituality may be transmitted more fully.

EDUCATE TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

(44.) “New times call for new methods,” Blessed Father Chaminade often repeated. Blessed Father Chaminade’s pragmatic and visionary approach allows for reading the “signs of the times” and responding with attention to history and tradition, while considering innovative



and practical solutions for current and future contexts. The Marianist university balances acceptance and adaptation with a faithful commitment to shaping a hopeful future. This commitment involves ongoing discernment, guided by the Marianist educational philosophy and Christian wisdom, and with careful attention to the many

influences on students’ education including technology, globalization, and financial cost. Fulfilling the Marianist university mission in changing times involves openness, prayerful reflection and strategic planning.

EDUCATE PERSONS TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO LIVE AUTHENTICALLY IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

(45.) If the world of the future is to be more peaceful than the 20th century was, all must learn how to appreciate cultural differences and how to work with people very unlike ourselves. To this end, Marianist universities cultivate the skills required for dialogue, consensus, and teamwork that depend on the virtues of loving acceptance of others, and faithful dedication to a collaborative, honest, and hopeful search for

truth. Marianist universities foster these virtues through intentionally uniting people from diverse backgrounds in community.

DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

(46.) Students need a substantive knowledge of the past, analytical tools for understanding the world around them and critical thinking skills to mindfully respond and shape the unknowable future. Marianist universities encourage research and collaboration across academic and co-curricular departments, highlighting the complementary roles the classroom, faith and student life play in deepening learning and understanding of truth. Members of Marianist learning communities seek truth with both the confidence that our learning has a goal, and the humility to recognize our dependence on others.



ADAPTATION TO LOCAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS THROUGH INCULTURATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION

(47.) Marianist education benefits local communities through adapting to distinctive local culture and complementing this adaptation with global awareness. Marianist educators encourage connections, both real and virtual, to other cultures, with emphasis on those within the Marianist international educational network. Academically, Marianist universities offer integrated curricula to shape students' understanding of interconnectedness of human knowledge as a foundation for effective action in an increasingly interdependent world. Marianist schools provide opportunities for students, faculty, staff and administrators to put this education into action through cross-cultural immersion experiences locally, domestically and abroad.

Conclusion

(48.) In light of the contemporary situation, the Marianist vision of education may seem impractical. Modern communication daily confronts educators with vistas of grinding poverty and starvation, with the details of bloody wars, heartless political oppression along with serious issues confronting higher education. In the midst of the tumult, educators may wonder whether their efforts will ever effectively address the pressing needs of the world. Here it should be recalled that Marianist educational philosophy and practice, as it has been explicated in this text, focuses not only on the short-term events, but also on the long-term transformation of cultures into a world where people live in peace, work for justice and dwell in love.

(49.) The characteristics of Marianist universities embody this commitment, one expression of which is the dialogue between faith and culture. In the midst of Marianist universities is the community of faith that continues the vision and mission of the Word of God,

certainly through the activities of Campus Ministry, but just as importantly through the research, teaching and service that constitute the core activities of the university. All scholars of Marianist universities who explore creation, its life systems and human communities also contribute to the dialogue of faith and culture. Though God can be found in all of creation,



the human face of God, Jesus, can be seen most clearly in the face of the poor and suffering. All the members of the university community contribute to the dialogue between faith and culture whenever they expand knowledge and serve others.

(50.) In the last analysis, all those who embrace the Marianist vision of education seek wisdom, a form of understanding that transcends knowledge. And educators who ultimately seek wisdom, who impart knowledge for the sake of love and who teach students to love freedom

for the sake of service, sow seeds that will bear fruit for generations, and prepare the ground in which a culture of life, peace and love can flourish. A daunting task, but the lives and communities that embody the Marianist spirit strive to witness to the possibility of its realization, at least to some encouragingly visible degree. Education in the Marianist tradition meets the needs of our times with a deep Marian faith and hope forged in communities with a mission that effectively manifests the Good News of God's mercy and justice.

The Association of Marianist Universities

In 2003, after many years of fruitful and mutually beneficial collaboration, the three Marianist universities and the Marianist Province of the United States established the Association of Marianist Universities (AMU).

The AMU seeks to unite the diverse gifts of each of the campuses into a dynamic network that enables the Marianist universities to be leaders in American higher education.

The *Characteristics of Marianist Universities* is a vital resource for the mission of the AMU.

The mission of the Association of Marianist Universities is to support, promote and advance Marianist higher education. AMU does this by facilitating an environment to sustain cooperation and the exchange of experience and information among the members. AMU represents Marianist higher education at the national and international levels and contributes to the formation of leaders in the Catholic and Marianist educational traditions in their service to the Church and world.

The AMU lives out its mission by sponsoring inter-university gatherings that have ranged from meetings of the Provosts, Chief Information Officers, and of the Campus Ministry staffs to undergraduate service immersions. It encourages the faculties of the three universities to undertake research in areas that flow from their shared Catholic, Marianist identity for the benefit of the Church and the world. The AMU also seeks to share news, identify best practices and explore possible new areas of collaboration for higher education issues and topics.

Recognizing the importance of the university governing boards, staff, faculty and administration, the AMU sponsors programs of formation and development grounded in the characteristics of Marianist universities for these groups.

The Marianist Educational Associates, sponsored by the AMU, are individuals from all sectors of Marianist universities who enter into a professional community intentionally committed to strengthening, developing and advancing the Catholic and Marianist mission and identity of Marianist universities on their campuses. They offer a living witness of the *Characteristics of Marianist Universities*.

More information about the AMU and the three Marianist universities is online at WWW.MARIANISTUNIVERSITIES.ORG.



CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU



MISSION

Chaminade University offers its students an education in a collaborative learning environment that prepares them for life, service and successful careers. Guided by its Catholic, Marianist and liberal arts educational traditions, Chaminade encourages the development of moral character, personal competencies, and a commitment to build a just and peaceful society.

As the only Catholic university in Hawai'i, Chaminade University of Honolulu embraces its Marianist tradition and offers a strong service-oriented mission which challenges students to seek out ways to build a better world. The university boasts world-class educational programs, a faculty of well-recognized scholars and a student body of innovators.

In all, Chaminade offers 23 undergraduate programs and 6 graduate programs. A Chaminade education is characterized by small, intimate classes that emphasize hands-on learning outside of the classroom and offer unique cultural perspectives.

The Chaminade 'ohana, or family, is evident the minute you step onto the scenic campus, just minutes from downtown Honolulu and the world-famous beaches of Waikiki. With an 11:1 faculty-to-student ratio, Chaminade is a place where professors know you by your first name and become mentors and friends.

WWW.CHAMINADE.EDU

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



Marianist heritage, personal attention to students and powerful academic programs have made St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, a nationally recognized Catholic and Marianist liberal arts institution.

In 1852, the Marianists founded St. Mary's, which later became the first institution of higher learning in San Antonio and the first Catholic university in the Southwest. Offering 75 programs, including doctoral and law programs, St. Mary's serves a diverse population of about 3,650 students of all faiths and backgrounds.

Spirituality and faith formation are at the heart of what happens at St. Mary's. The campus is a close-knit community of faculty and staff dedicated to ensuring every student graduates knowing more about themselves, their disciplines and the world.

The newly established Center for Catholic Studies carries the University's mission of academic excellence forward by enabling faculty and students to explore social policy issues and examine the Catholic Church in society and culture, particularly in the Southwest.

MISSION

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON



MISSION

The University of Dayton is a top-tier Catholic research university with academic offerings from the undergraduate to the doctoral levels. We are a diverse community committed, in the Marianist tradition, to educating the whole person and linking learning and scholarship with leadership and service.

Founded in 1850 by the Society of Mary, the University of Dayton is recognized as a top-tier national research university rooted in the Catholic tradition.

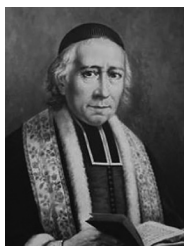
The University provides a distinctive, challenging education that embraces diversity and provides a welcoming, inclusive environment for more than 8,200 undergraduates and 2,600 graduate students from around the world.

The University offers more than 80 undergraduate programs in the humanities, visual and performing arts, social sciences and sciences, business administration, education, health sciences, engineering and law, as well as more than 50 graduate and doctoral programs. A research powerhouse, it ranks as the No. 1 Catholic university for engineering research and development.

Grounded in a deep sense of mission and identity from the Marianists, the University of Dayton builds community, inviting people with diverse talents, interests and backgrounds to learn, lead and serve together to advance the common good.

WWW.UDAYTON.EDU

Origins of the Marianist Family



The Marianist story begins with its founders: Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, Venerable Marie Thérèse Charlotte de Lamourous and Blessed Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon. Chaminade's life changed dramatically with the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789. The political tension and religious persecution during that period all but destroyed Christianity in France and left the Church in structural ruin. He was exiled to Spain in 1797 for

three years, where he was inspired for his future ministry by Mary at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar in Saragossa.

Blessed Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon came from an aristocratic background; her father was a baron and member of the French king's Royal Guard. She and her family were exiled during the Revolution. During her years of exile in Spain, she deepened her religious upbringing, realized her responsibility to the poor and began to understand the importance of community — both in the pursuit of individual holiness and in the regeneration of France. After her return to France, she began forming small groups among her friends and acquaintances. Out of the small groups of Christian communities, some of the members expressed the desire to follow Christ as vowed religious.



Venerable Marie Thérèse Charlotte de Lamourous was side-by-side with Chaminade living the vision he had for the Church. When the pastor of her local parish was exiled, she took charge, becoming the heart and soul of the parish community for six years. With her experience in empowering the laity and building religious communities, Lamourous became an important ally of Chaminade in developing the small faith communities, which they

called Sodalities. Marie Thérèse's major work after 1800 in Bordeaux was in providing a place to live and an opportunity to change for prostitutes who wished to redirect their lives. She purchased a former convent and named it *Maison de la Miséricorde* — the House of Mercy.

Together Trenquelléon and Chaminade founded the Marianist sisters — the Daughters of Mary Immaculate in 1816. Just a year later, Chaminade founded the Marianist brothers and priests — the Society of Mary.

On Sept. 3, 2000, Father Chaminade was beatified. Pope John Paul II, in his remarks at St. Peter's Square, commented on how Blessed Chaminade gave the Church "a new way to bear witness to the faith." Mother Adèle was beatified on June 10, 2018. At the Vatican on that day, Pope Francis referred to Blessed Adèle as a "gift to the whole church" during his mid-day Angelus. The process of Marie Thérèse's canonization was begun in 1911. She was named "Venerable" in 1989.

To learn more about the founders visit WWW.MARIANIST.COM/FOUNDERS.



A REFLECTION ON THE COVER IMAGE OF CHRIST THE TEACHER BY THE SCULPTOR, JOE ASPELL

What I discovered as a meaningful image of Christ the Teacher was based on a Scripture quote:

*How beautiful upon the mountain are the footsteps of Him
who brings Good News.*
—Isaiah 52:7

It seemed to embody Jesus/Christ — approaching — and it's good news, not bad news he is bringing.

He is like the runner coming back to the city, being spotted by the lookouts on the city walls; and his coming tells them already that the enemy is defeated, or the crop is saved....

It seemed to me that Jesus often taught by meeting people on the way and encountering their lives and their questions — the woman at the well; the man in the tree — “come down from that tree and I will eat with you tonight”; even the Last Supper, the teaching leads to washing feet.

I think students also experience a Marianist university in this respectful, explorative, collaborative way toward mutual discovery and enlightenment.

There was more than one Marianist teacher in my high school that we actually looked forward to entering their classroom each day because they always had good news.

This became my image of Christ the Teacher: coming to meet us, arms open, face looking at us (not staring off at some distant goal).



CHARACTERISTICS OF
MARIANIST EDUCATION



Chaminade University of Honolulu
St. Mary's University
University of Dayton

www.marianistuniversities.org