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## Spiritan Charism and Ethos in Education

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*Evangelization of the poor is our purpose.*

## SPIRITAN CHARISM AND ETHOS IN EDUCATION

In Fall 1983, I was asked to meet Fr Timmermans, Spiritan Superior General, at Trinity Hall. After a cordial greeting he queried “why should Spiritans be working at a university?” I responded that it was important for the Spiritan missionary experience to be present at Duquesne since the Church is mission. I added that the University was making graduate education and degrees available to African priests and Sisters with full tuition scholarships as a way to participate in the Spiritan charism. Father Timmermans thanked me and commented that I had supplied a very important dimension to Duquesne of which he and many non-American Spiritans were not sufficiently informed. Some years later, several Spiritans told me that at the time the international Spiritan community was debating whether or not their engagement in academic education was in conformity with their charism, identity, and ongoing mission. Every community is continually in a process of trying to re-appropriate its identity, to understand who it is, where it has come from, and where it is going.

This essay will take up the question of what it means to be a Catholic and Spiritan University with a focus on the American context and Duquesne University. The question is how might Duquesne University engage the Spiritan charism and ethos in facing the challenges that arise within this American context.

### **Spiritan Character and Being People of God**

The 2012 Spiritan General Chapter in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, clearly articulated the foundation of its identity by appealing to the *Spiritan Rule of Life*: “Evangelization of the poor is our purpose.” (SRL #4). The Bagamoyo document goes on to elaborate four aspects of evangelization: proclamation, service, fellowship and worship.

Spiritan identity is rooted in the identity of the entire Church AS Mission. All the baptized share a common mission identity. All the baptized are to be missionaries who proclaim the gospel, engage in acts of service to the neighbor, engage in the community sharing and fellowship, and gather to worship God in prayer.

The biblical theme of People of God underpins ecclesial mission identity. In Exodus and Deuteronomy, God chooses

the Hebrew slaves in Egypt as “his people.” God chooses slaves precisely because they are totally dependent on the activity of God who liberates them from their captivity. Israel was chosen because they were powerless outcasts and God heard their outcry (*za’aq*), just as he heard the *za’aq* of Abel’s blood from the earth.

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Israel incurs a threefold responsibility in being chosen as God’s people. They are to be a sign to the nations, offer true worship, and care for the poor. All nations encountering Israel should recognize that Yahweh is the one true God. Israel is to worship Yahweh, not merely with ritual sacrifice but also by obedience to God’s will. Israel is to care for the poor around them precisely because they were once poor.

Israel’s prophets explain that ignoring or abusing the poor is disobedience to the covenant. Failure to care for the poor and to offer true worship results in Israel being an anti-sign, a people whose lifestyle turns the nations away from the true God, Yahweh.

Interestingly Matthew’s Gospel uses the threefold responsibilities of being people of God as a foil to portray Jesus as the true Israel.<sup>1</sup> Where Israel failed in their responsibility as God’s people, Jesus perfectly fulfills them. Jesus is the sign of the true God raised among the nations. In Jesus’ perfect obedience to the Father’s will, Jesus as both victim/offering and priest worships the Father. In the Parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matthew 25), no one is asked about their religious affiliation or piety but about their generosity to the poor, the outcast and the marginalized.

St. Paul takes up the theme of the People of God in the Epistle to the Romans (Romans 9—11). He explains that the Church is now part of the People of God (*laos tou theou*), albeit by God’s choice a grafted branch. Israel remains the natural branch. As People of God, Christians bear the same responsibilities imparted to Israel. So the ecclesial identity of the People of God is mission: being a sign, being obedient, and being engaged with the outcasts, marginalized and oppressed.

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It should be stressed that God saves by forming a people. Individuals are saved precisely in being incorporated into the community. Christians should say “We are, therefore I am,” a very African consciousness. Community can never be peripheral to mission. The community is in solidarity in sharing its responsibilities of proclamation, service, fellowship and worship.

The poor and marginalized who the People of God serve are both a responsibility and gift/blessing. Surely traces of the Holy

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can be discovered in many places. For Christians, the poor are a special locus for the encounter with the Holy. By serving the poor, the People of God stay close to God. God's love is found in what the "world" frequently judges to be absence, abandonment and rejection. *Diakonia* makes the loving God incarnate and really present in and through the servants. In this encounter, the servants themselves encounter the loving God.

Spiritans as Christians must be a sign, must strive for true worship and must care for the *anawim*, oppressed and poor. The Bagamoyo document expresses a desire of the Spiritans to embrace this challenge. It notes, "We restate forcefully our mission to bear witness to the gospel of justice, of peace and of reconciliation in what we say and what we do" (1.4). Interestingly, Bagamoyo immediately references education. "We renew our focus on education as a way to the integral liberation of individuals and peoples to whom we are sent" (1.4). Bagamoyo's perspective is clearly different from the early 1980's when Spiritan engagement in education was being questioned. Now education is boldly embraced as a powerful means of human liberation and empowerment.

### **Spiritans Charism and Being People of God**

As religious, Spiritans live out the common call to mission, animated by a special charism which has sustained them in their service from the time of their founders, Poullart Des Places and Francis Libermann. The Bagamoyo document 2.1 thru 2.7 describes the core of Spiritan identity.

As the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, our religious family puts special emphasis on our consecration to the Holy Spirit (SRL 6). Called by the Father and made disciples of Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are "set apart" to proclaim the Good News (SRL 1). We are a community in constant discernment, attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We take Mary as our model in creating our identity, she who "meditated these things in her heart (Luke 2:19, 51; SRL 5-6, TA 1.1)." We are members of one religious and missionary family, according to the spirit of our founders and ancestors, Claude Poullart Des Places and François Libermann. We have received a spiritual heritage rooted in the "apostolic life" (SRL 3). Fidelity to prayer sustains and supports our "practical union." We are becoming more aware of the call to a deeper interior life and a greater integration of our work and prayer. Religious life and mission are core dimensions of our identity. We feel a call to renew our radical commitment to the values and the option for the poor. Education as a means for liberation, JPIC and inter-religious dialogue concern all

dimensions of our identity. We are a community of brothers with a diversity of charisms, functions and works. We aspire to live a simple, transparent and prophetic lifestyle. Community life is identity-building; it is also the strongest symbol of who we are. Community is our way to live mission. We live, pray, work and evaluate together and we share everything with one another (cf. Acts 4:32). Our Congregation emphasizes local responsibilities and commitments. However, Pentecost is our model where “everyone listened to God being praised in his own language” (Acts 2:8). The same Spirit of Pentecost inspires in us the desire to be “one heart and one mind” (the Spiritan motto, Acts 4:32) and is the source of our unity.

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### **Life and Mission Are Contextual**

Spiritans religious life and mission are profoundly contextual. As such, they demand an assessment of the signs of the times. Evangelization, service, fellowship and worship are never simply universal abstractions. They are always localized by place and time, history and culture.

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Bagamoyo (1.2) correctly grasped globalization as a dominant force in multiple arenas: finance/economics, information/data, cultural interaction/migration, religious pluralism/interaction, political systems, gender issues, and social mobility. For some, globalization has exponentially multiplied wealth, but it has also created new forms and expressions of poverty. The world has witnessed a dramatic rise in poverty among migrants, youth, and minorities. For some, globalization has created increased connectivity and community. For others, it has deepened their marginalization and isolation. Bagamoyo (1.7) declares:

Our globalized, multi-cultural and, at times, secularized world creates fresh challenges for mission. It calls us to renew our methods of evangelization. For the coming eight years, we want to give special attention to first evangelization and to the new evangelization, as well as working with and promoting reconciliation among groups of people who are marginalized with a view to their integral human development.

Contemporary Spiritans are remaining very faithful to their origins and charism. Spiritans go to those who may not have heard the Gospel or fallen away from it, witness in non-Christian cultures, and care for the marginalized and displaced. However, Spiritans are not simply parroting their past. They are moving into new ministries which live out their charism of evangelizing the poor. Inculturation and acculturation demand nothing less.

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Evangelization requires inculturation if the gospel is to be heard and understood and take root in a culture. Until recently, the bridge building image was utilized to explain inculturation. The missionary would transport the gospel across the bridge and express it in the language, thought patterns, and social structures/institutions of a people. However, the bridge was almost always viewed as a “one way street.” There was little consciousness that the people who received the message might themselves cross the bridge and bring a fresh understanding and living of the gospel to other communities in the Church from their own non-Christian religious experiences which might further illumine our Christian faith and understanding.

There is a growing consciousness that the bridge is not one way or even two ways. A globalized world of easy and rapid communication witnesses multiple bridges with a plethora of interchanges and crossovers. Already in 1965, *Nostra Aetate* (the Vatican II Declaration on Non-Christian Religions, no. 2) opened the portal for interreligious interaction when it noted:

The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men.

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Fifty years after *Nostra Aetate*, the Church can approach differing religious communities as fellow pilgrims who desire peace and justice and share our earthly home. Peace, Justice and the integrity of creation require the collaborative efforts of everyone. Perhaps in its deepest levels, inculturation understands that all religions and cultures can be sacraments for the Church. They can reveal and make present for the Christian community a real presence of God which may have gone unnoticed or overlooked.

Inculturation is not merely the transmission and transformation of ideas. People are inculturated and transformed. There is an Igbo proverb that the well-traveled younger person is wiser than the elder in the village. The traveler, the missionary, is transformed by the communities they encounter and in turn transform their communities of origin by bringing “wisdom.”

### **Inter Religious Dialogue as a Context for Mission**

Bagamoyo (1.11) addressed the importance of inter-religious dialogue for the Spiritan Congregation.

Inter-religious dialogue is among today's greatest challenges. It deserves to be a priority of our congregation. The four levels of dialogue that complement each other need to be taken into consideration: the dialogue of everyday life, the dialogue of collaborating in common projects, spiritual dialogue and theological dialogue. These different levels help to establish genuine peace between believers in true mutual trust and in the refusal to become prisoners of our own fears.

Dialogue requires mutual understanding and respect rooted in an open mind and heart. Dialogue and inculturation, therefore, go hand in hand. True evangelization rejects all forms of proselytizing and embraces true dialogue. Mission is sharing in the life of the community and collaborating in the work of building peace and justice in the social order. The living out of the gospel which asks us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner, et cetera, is a powerful proclamation. It does not necessarily aim at religious conversion but will keep alive hope for a more just, peaceful and sustainable society and world. There is the religious and missionary family that is a community of prayer and shared apostolic work. There is also the community formed and shaped within the concrete cultural contexts in which they live and work. The *Spiritan Rule of Life* # 88 notes:

In imitation of the life and teachings of Libermann, we too endeavor to put into practice this dynamic of prayer and activity that is at the heart of all Christian living, a "practical union"—an habitual disposition of fidelity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. "Practical Union" is like an instinct of the heart for a person who, having made the sacrifice of self has become "free ever after to devote himself completely to others and to bring them along to God (N.D. XIII, 708). Thus we endeavor to live every experience in the Spirit of God—our joys, our hardships and our pain, the works we undertake in our zeal and even our failures.

*...we endeavor to live every experience in the Spirit of God...*

### **The Post-modern Context in the West**

Bagamoyo 2012 was well aware of the dramatic changes and movements within world cultures and how these changes can have salutary as well as deleterious effects. One "paradigm shift" already entrenched in the West but rapidly making inroads around the globe is often called "postmodernity" or "post-modernism." Understanding this current illumines many of the changed behaviors, attitudes, visions, and goals of the youth and young adults living in the west, the "subjects of evangelization

and the new evangelization,” people who are our students at Duquesne.

### **Pew Studies**

In the 2009 Pew Report “Beliefs and Practices,”<sup>2</sup> three major claims were made about religious practices in America. First, faith is not primarily understood as dogmatic. Second, religion is taken seriously by adults and is considered relevant but very fluid and very relative. More people are calling themselves spiritual rather than religious. Third, social and political attitudes are related to religious affiliation, beliefs and practices. Let us take a closer look at these changes.

Presently, the majority of religious congregations in America embrace as a guiding principle that there are many paths to salvation rather than only one true religious path. The 2007 Pew “Religious Landscape Survey”<sup>3</sup> indicated that religious practitioners were less rigid about their own religious tradition. For example, 92% of those surveyed believed that there was a God, but only 60% thought this God was personal and 25% perceived of God is impersonal. Only 63% believe the Bible was the word of God, 33% understood it to be literally true and 27% did not believe it was literally true. 74% believe in afterlife and 59% believe there was a hell. 79% believe in miracles.

What was most striking was the ease with which individuals felt free to move within and among different religious traditions. What mattered most in their engagement with a particular religious tradition was not its doctrine or beliefs but the type of interpersonal relationship or their experience of the concrete religious community as open, welcoming, and friendly. The Pew Report found that 44% of Americans had changed their childhood faith for another tradition or have completely abandoned their faith. 16% claimed not to have an official religious identification. They indicated that they were uncomfortable with the institutional aspects of religion and they expressed a general disenchantment with all organizations.

However, Americans still take religion seriously, e.g., 40% participates in weekly services. Those reporting here were the more mature—60 or older or very young—2/3 of children attend religious programs. Americans indicate that they pray: 58% daily and 75% weekly. 40% claim they meditate. 40% pray in groups and 40% share their faith with others.

Americans are divided on the relationship of religion and social life. 40% see a conflict between the contemporary values and social behaviors in America and 54% see no apparent

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conflict. There has been a sea change in the sources of morality or ethics. Only 30% see their source of morality as their religious tradition's teaching. 52% see morality arising from common sense and human experience. 9% see morality rooted in philosophy or reason.

Religion in America is mobile, dynamic and open. Their faith is not a doctrinal or dogmatic faith but an ecumenical and pluralistic faith. Experiencing and relating supersede pondering and knowing.

### **Modernity Post-Modernity**

Modernity is grounded in reason and empiricism. Post-modernity is rooted in pluralism and contextualism. Pre-modernity comprehended human knowing as a participation in God's knowledge and required revelation or divine communication. Revelation is understood to be accessible in two forms: natural revelation (knowing the divine through our human experiences) and special revelation (accessible through Scripture, tradition, et cetera). Special revelation ultimately supersedes natural revelation, and so pre-modernity assigns a privilege or special power to the priest, prophet, holy person or religious leader. God, the beginning and end of all things, is the measure of all knowledge.

Modernity rejects God as the beginning and end of all things and as the vital universal force. The autonomous human subject replaces God and serves as the foundation of modernity's horizon and worldview. Autonomous reason in modernity entails self-sufficiency and self-finality. Self-sufficiency underscores the ability to attain knowledge and truth by the use of one's own powers alone. Self-finality emphasizes that the goal or final end of the autonomous subject lies within itself rather than in another world or heaven.

Absolute certainty is not merely a noble desire but a realizable goal attainable by autonomous human reason. Modernity focuses more and more on the search for foundations and the structures upon which all the dimensions of knowing are hinged. Reason and empiricism combine to uncover universal axioms and principles, assumptions and conclusions—in short modern science. A proper critical method applied to experience will yield knowledge and lead to the discovery of truth. This attained truth is both objective and absolute, true everywhere and at all times.

The challenges facing the Churches today emerge from the collapse of the paradigm and worldview in which their doctrine and world vision were expressed. The deconstruction of modernity

commenced in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In its place, at least in the West, is the cultural perspective called post-modernity. Post-modernity maintains modernity's focus on the human subject, considers the human subject always limited and particular, contextualized and situated in a community. When, where, and how matter in post-modernity. There is no objective reality existing apart from the knowing contextualized subjects.

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Post-modernity judges modernity's call for objective certitude and universal truth to be an illusion, which also thwarts knowing and discovery by imposing a narrow univocal schema into which all inquiries must be located. Post-modernity rejects the existence of a single all-encompassing meta-narrative; it identifies and exults in the many voices and narratives operative within and across cultures. Diversity and pluralism rather than commonality and unicity mark human cultural existence. Truth is always historical, contextual, partial, and limited; what is called truth is really our human finite construction.

Post-modernity is convinced that it offers an expansive and dynamic perspective. Open and finite narratives are dynamic and in flux and may better resist imperialistic and colonial tendencies since these must engage and interact with a variety of alternative narratives and perspectives. Meta-narratives can easily be tools for control, manipulation and uniformity. Their subversion may lead to fresh insights and understandings which help us know in a better way.

Post-modernity is becoming more and more the culture of the west and through the globalization process potentially a multicultural paradigm. It is the cultural context for Spiritan mission at Duquesne University. If there is to be any success in these endeavors, the Church must find ways to express its faith in the language and thought patterns of people who are increasingly unconsciously and consciously post-modern.

### **Spiritan Identity/charism and Duquesne University**

Duquesne University presents itself as a Catholic University in the Spiritan tradition. Duquesne is deeply committed to educational excellence, moral and spiritual values, an ecumenical atmosphere, diversity, and service to the Church, the community, the nation and the world.

To some the engagement of a missionary community expressly dedicated to the service of the poor, estranged, and marginalized in a relatively affluent academic institution is contradictory. The question from Fr. Timmermans mentioned earlier in the essay could be addressed about Duquesne today. But a more

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expansive answer than offered thirty years ago can be offered. Yes, Duquesne is still very active in the education of African clergy and now has formal affiliations in Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana with Spiritan institutions. But the response would now focus more on ministry to Duquesne students who are increasingly in need of first evangelization and “new evangelization.”

Duquesne students reflect some new forms of poverty which cry out for mission as evangelization of the poor and education for liberation and integral human development. The research of Christian Smith in, *Soul-Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*<sup>4</sup> and *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood*<sup>5</sup> helps us better understand Duquesne students. It also corroborates the profile seen in postmodernism and in the Pew Surveys above.

Smith labels the dominant religion among contemporary teenagers in the United States as Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. He codified the creed of this religiosity under five beliefs.

First, there is a God-Creator who has ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.

Second, God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other. This is the teaching of the Judeo-Christian tradition in most world religions.

Third, life’s goal is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.

Fourth, God is not particularly involved in anyone’s life except when God is needed to solve a problem. God is God of the gaps.

Fifth, when good people die they go to heaven.

Smith’s American teenagers were convinced that living a good and happy life entailed being a moral person. Morality was understood as being nice, kind, pleasant, respectful, and responsible; working on self-improvement, taking care of oneself, and doing one’s best to be successful, fulfilling one’s personal potentials, and not being socially disruptive or interpersonally obnoxious.

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These teenagers understood their moralistic religiosity as being therapeutic. Some more traditional aspects of religion such as repentance and seeking needed forgiveness, obeying worship laws, maintaining a proper relationship to the deity, embracing redemptive suffering as character building, actively working for the cause of social justice et cetera were noticeably absent. In

their place was attentiveness to feeling good, happy, secure, and at peace. Subjective well-being, problem-solving abilities, and being friendly to others were the therapeutic effects of being religious.

American teenagers envisioned God as one who created the world and a general moral order but simply watches life from above, a distant benevolent overseer. God sometimes becomes involved in people's lives, usually when they invoke God to address some trouble or problem. Smith portrayed this God as a combination of divine Butler and cosmic Therapist, always "on call," taking care of any problems that arise and helping his people to feel better about themselves.

In *Lost in Transition*, a study of the same teenage subjects as they approached young adulthood or college age, Smith found that five major challenges faced the group.

First, they suffered from confused moral reasoning.

Second, they engaged in random routine intoxication behavior.

Third, their life goals had a materialistic focus.

Fourth, they exhibited differing degrees of remorse or regret of previous sexual experiences, especially if with strangers.

Fifth, they were significantly disengaged from civic and political life.

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When asked questions about morality, they didn't seem to grasp exactly what the question was about. They would judge murder, rape, bank robbery to be wrong, but seemed puzzled when asked questions about cheating on exams, driving drunk, cheating lovers, et cetera. Their responses focused on whether or not they would be caught, how their friends would react if they were discovered, or how they themselves might feel about their decision. They showed great reluctance to judging anyone else's possible questionable behavior, preferring to allow every individual to simply decide for themselves. For these young adults the good life consists in having a good job, a good standard of living, a nice family, et cetera. The good life does not consist in social action for rights, justice, peace and the integrity of creation are not on their radar.

These young adults indicated that their drinking and sexual behavior is fueled by peer pressure, advertising and the media. Boredom also seems to play a decisive role. These young adults

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feel disempowered and exhibit strong resignation about cultural affairs and life in general. Smith, searching for causes, pointed to the strong current of consumer capitalism marking American society, failures in the educational system, especially the failure of moral decision-making and the hyper-individualism that characterizes much of American life.

### **Spiritan Mission at Duquesne**

Understanding of the post-modern context and the profile of young American adults from Smith's studies invites critical reflections on how a Spiritan mission can be active at Duquesne.

First, the Duquesne community would benefit from a deeper exposure to the Bagamoyo document which expresses the goals and priorities of the international Spiritan community. The Bagamoyo Chapter prioritized evangelization of the poor, education as liberation, evangelization as interreligious dialogue, and justice, peace and integrity of creation.

Spiritan charism and ethos at Duquesne University should have as a focus the evangelization of the poor. There can be many staff, faculty and students who are embedded in "poverty," whether, financial, emotional, spiritual or social. The University joins the Spiritan community in striving to proclaim the gospel, to engage in acts of service, to form bonds of solidarity, and to worship with these individuals in any and all possible ways.

The evangelization undertaken within Duquesne will announce the gospel in word and deed as a call to justice, a call to peace, a call to reconciliation, and a call to true stewardship of creation. The University should continually labor to create a just community that not only defends but enhances the human dignity and integral development of all its members. Justice should pervade its structures and its different human relations. The University should advance peace within and without, a peace that is only possible if reconciliation and a just resolution of conflicts is realized. Moreover, the University should be a good steward of its resources and environment.

Second, the Duquesne community should attend to the challenges of inculturation and globalization. The faculty, staff, administrators and students bring diverse gifts and charisms to the University. There are many different voices and stories. Duquesne expresses the Spiritan charism and ethos when it listens, understands and learns from these narratives and the people who live them. In a special way, the University must reach out to those on the periphery, those who are marginalized, and those who face discrimination. These individuals experience their

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own form of “poverty” which is deep and powerful and cries out for care, concern and love. By listening, the university can better understand the experiences, questions, challenges, aspirations and dreams and better grasp the challenge of finding ways to proclaim and serve within the concrete context. Duquesne can bring to bear the insights, resources and tools from all academic disciplines in a search for ways of telling the Jesus story which can impact post-modern hearers.

Third, Duquesne can share more deeply in the Spiritan charisma and ethos of mission as interreligious dialogue. Duquesne’s community already has multiple religious traditions represented in its staff, faculty and student body. The University can follow the lead of the Bagamoyo document and make dialogue “a priority.” It can deeply express its Spiritan ethos by supporting a dialogue of daily life, fostering common service projects among the diverse religious traditions, encouraging common spiritual sharing, and continuing to support theological reflection on and between religious traditions. The diversity and interreligious character of the University may be enhanced by hiring faculty from the southern hemisphere especially, Africa, South and Central America, and Asia. In a special way, the University can seek out Spiritans from these diverse regions to join its faculty, administration and staff. These Spiritan missionaries would bring with them the diversity of experience and knowledge which can greatly enhance the University’s ability to share more and more deeply in the Spiritan global mission.

Fourth, Duquesne can be a trailblazer in realizing the Bagamoyo appropriation of education as a way for integral liberation of individuals and people. In its concrete context, the University is on the front lines of being present to the young adults negatively affected by consumerism, individualism, and moral confusion. Many students, while bright, are aloof from the great challenges in our social order both worldwide and local. Many students suffer the effects of indiscriminate intimate relationships, frequent inebriation and drug use, and a sense of anxiety about their future and its possibilities. Many students come from complex family systems that offer new challenges. Might these students be the “new poor” to whom the “new evangelization” must be addressed?

*Might these students be the “new poor” to whom the “new evangelization” must be addressed?*

Duquesne claims that it offers education for the mind, the heart and the soul. Its total educational programs from course work to service learning experiences, to study abroad, to living learning center exchanges and experiences, etc. should be liberation of the mind, heart, and soul. It needs to open students up to a realization that they stand within a human community

and each member of this human community should be passionately concerned for the situation of the others, especially the poor. It needs to open students up to the duty of respecting and caring for creation as good and just stewards. It needs to sustain each and every student and in a special way those who are marginalized in the process of true human integration and development. Duquesne achieves these goals in many different ways. It needs to be vigilant in continually searching for more and better ways to embrace and realize them. Beyond openness is witness. As a Catholic Spiritan University, Duquesne has a faith community with a long tradition of traditions and teachings. In true dialogue, the values and stories of this tradition can be shared with all by word and deed.

The Preface of the Bagamoyo document ends by noting that Spiritan renewal and animation will depend on engaging leadership and members at a local level. The same is true of the Spiritan charism and ethos at Duquesne. The university will succeed by recognizing the signs of the times, forming a listening-caring community, acting justly, working for peace and caring for the poor. That same Spirit that led the Bagamoyo Chapter stirs up the Spiritan charism and ethos at Duquesne. In the end, living the gospel in deed, forming a true community and profoundly caring for the poor will result in “practical union,” that communion with God and one another for which all Spiritans and their collaborators strive.

*Dr. George Worgul Jr.*  
*Duquesne University*

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Wolfgang Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel. Studien zur Theologie des Matthaus-Evangeliums*. (St. Benno-Verlag, 1959).

<sup>2</sup>At <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports> accessed July 9, 2014.

<sup>3</sup>At <http://religions.pewforum.org/> accessed July 9, 2014.

<sup>4</sup>(Oxford University Press, reprint 2009).

<sup>5</sup>(Oxford University Press, 2011).