

Foundation for the Future:

Transforming Hearts and Minds

In commemoration of the first five decades of Villanova University's College of Nursing, two academic leaders offer their perspectives on the mission of nursing education at a Catholic institution, and on the College's history.





The Unique Mission of Catholic Nursing Education

The following is the keynote address given by Rosalie Ghilardi Mirenda '59 B.S.N., D.N.Sc., R.N. at the Villanova University College of Nursing's 50th Anniversary conference, held on April 25-26, 2003, at the Villanova Conference Center. The conference, titled "Advancing Nursing Scholarship, Education and Leadership: 50 Years of Achievement," attracted nursing professionals from around the country and the world.

Dr. Mirenda is president of Neumann College in Aston, Pa. The college was founded by the Sisters of St. Francis in 1965 as *Our Lady of Angels College*, and was renamed Neumann in 1980. Dr. Mirenda began her work there as a nursing instructor in the mid-1970s. By 1986, she had become chair of the nursing division, and had developed an integrated, holistic model for nursing education. In 1990, she was named Neumann's vice president of Academic Affairs and in 1996, she was appointed president.

I am honored by your trust and invitation to address you on this very special occasion, and I am grateful to all assembled here today. Thank you, Dean Louise Fitzpatrick, the faculty, staff, alumni and students of Villanova University's College of Nursing. I also give thanks to all who are with us in spirit only today. Our 50th Anniversary celebration draws its strength from those who are here today to lead, teach, learn, present or to listen, and from those who have in other times and places assisted Villanova's College of Nursing, and helped each of us present to arrive at this moment.

Rituals such as this mark moments of transition, of change, and, in our times, even some uncertainty. By carefully planning an anniversary celebration such as this one so well-orchestrated, we reassure ourselves that even though things may be different tomorrow, there are constants that have continued over the years and will into the future, thus, giving us optimism that this Catholic College of Nursing will endure and flourish. We alleviate our concerns about the uncertainties of going forward—uncertainties symbolized by current events as experienced by the Church, the world and the nation, perhaps, even by colleges and universities.

At the same time, this ritual of celebration of the 50th Anniversary affords us opportunities for recognizing all that is good, for expressing our hopes and aspirations, our desire for change and our will to improve—all of which are symbolized by your presence here, by the theme selected for the anniversary and by the quality of leadership we have in the University president [the Rev. Edmund J. Dobbin, O.S.A.,

'58] and the dean [M. Louise Fitzpatrick, Ed.D., R.N., FAAN, the Connelly Endowed Dean and professor of Nursing].

Yet, colleges and universities are made great *not* by the president or dean (I am reminded of that every day at Neumann College), but by the transformative teaching and learning in which generations of faculty and students take the lead, in which faculty and students create a place of possibility within a context set by the institution's mission. Today, I've been asked to provide some thoughts on the mission of Catholic nursing education. As I reflected on the topic, "context" became the operative word. Thus, I've chosen to share my personal perspective on Catholic nursing education by creating a context in which it might be described. The context I've selected is Catholic higher education, the example is Villanova University. I will attempt to identify some of the characteristics and what I call the non-negotiables of Catholic nursing higher education, how we might bridge the personal with institutional philosophy and finally, some thoughts on leadership that may be synergistic with Catholic nursing education and practice. I do this in a spirit of sharing only what I can share...very ordinary thoughts from an ordinary person, a Catholic, an educator, who became college president through the discipline of nursing. It is certain that I am not a theologian or an historian, but I am a graduate of Villanova University's College of Nursing, where my professional journey began, and I am an interested Catholic educator and administrator within a Catholic college.

Since 1842, at Villanova, *transforming hearts and minds* has taken place within a Catholic Augustinian framework well

"OVER THE YEARS, VILLANOVA HAS MEDIATED ST. AUGUSTINE'S VISION OF EDUCATION AS A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY OF SCHOLARS SEARCHING FOR TRUTH IN OPEN DISCUSSION, COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL VALUES, AND DEDICATION TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS."



explicated in its document, "The Mission and Heritage of Villanova University." Over the years, Villanova has mediated St. Augustine's vision of education as a community activity of scholars searching for truth in open discussion, commitment to ethical values, and dedication to social justice and human rights. This commitment provides the direction for living out the mission of the University by "reflecting the spirit of St. Augustine through the cultivation of knowledge, respect for individual differences, and by adherence to the principle that mutual love and respect should animate every aspect of university life."

Catholic Augustinian higher education at its best blends the active and contemplative styles of life. The Augustinian synthesis between mind and heart and the reciprocity between love and knowledge are distinctive features of Catholic Augustinian educational institutions, and, indeed, most challenging for all responsible for achieving the mission. As administrators, faculty, graduates and learners in this environment, we are all responsible for achieving the mission. All involved must work consciously, deliberately, consistently at formulating a vision, developing a model for a Catholic Augustinian education and living out of that model in every facet of the experience. By accepting the responsibility to teach, administer, learn in such an institution, we accept the responsibility of carrying out its mission and we are privileged to participate in shaping, clarifying and actively supporting it.... regardless of our discipline or our personal faith tradition.

Tracy Schier at Boston College, in her work on Catholic identity and mission, offers a typology for assessment of a university or college or program's affiliation with the sponsoring church (the typology was originally outlined by a Presbyterian scholar, Beau Weston).

The typology offered is summarized in three descriptive words on a continuum: *pervasive*, *dimensional*, *historical*. You can think about this typology for any aspect of the educational enterprise, at the macro and micro levels. One can think about it for the whole of the University, the whole of the College of Nursing (or Liberal Arts and

Sciences, etc.) or for a specific program. For our purpose at this moment, let's think about the typology in terms of the University and then move to thinking about it for nursing education.

A university in which the Catholic Augustinian identity is *pervasive* would have obviously Catholic elements in all aspects and in all areas of the campus and in campus life. Consider with me: As you walk across the campus and go into the buildings, are there obvious indicators that this is a Catholic Augustinian campus? What is on the walls? What is the dialogue you hear? As you examine the curriculum and talk to faculty about their approach to coursework, are there obvious indicators of Catholic Augustinian identity in the curriculum? As you attend college activities, can you tell these are sponsored by a Catholic Augustinian college? There are many questions one can ask, but if the Catholicity and the Augustinian charism is visible, audible, palpable, then you probably have an institution where Catholic identity is pervasive.

A college or university in which Catholic identity is *dimensional* is somewhat less obviously Catholic. In this dimensional type, there may be crucifixes on the wall but religious elements are not uniform or widespread when it comes to curriculum and hiring. The Catholicity is hit or miss.

A university or college in which Catholic identity is *historical* is at the other end of the continuum from the institution in which Catholic identity is pervasive. The catalog may say that the institution was founded by the Augustinians, let us say; there may even be observations of founder's day or a liturgy to open the academic year. But by and large, there are not many other tangible aspects of Catholicism and the sponsoring charism that mark the institution.

Where Villanova University might be on this continuum is for all who lead, teach and study here to judge.

Some questions to consider that may help to think of ways to make the Catholic Augustinian identity a verb as well as a noun and in so doing set the stage for the

character of Catholic Augustinian nursing education follow:

- If you were to think of Villanova University and the College of Nursing in business terms, what is value-added about the Catholic Augustinian higher education experience offered to Nursing students?
- How is the Catholic Augustinian identity something positive, a driver that assists with decisions about the Nursing curriculum and the nursing models of practice taught?
- How is Villanova's Nursing program Catholic *and* catholic at the same time? The "and" is crucial because so many members of the University community are not Catholic and because to be Catholic is to be inclusive.
- Can we talk about the mission of Villanova University and its Nursing program to persons who may be non-believers or to persons who might harbor bias concerning Catholicism?
- How do we see Villanova and its Nursing program *vis à vis* the larger American culture? What can be brought to the ongoing conversations about higher education, about nursing education, that other institutions might not bring?
- What outcomes do our graduates exhibit that might not be the outcomes for students graduating from universities and nursing programs that are not Catholic?
- And finally, consider a "what if." What if there were no Catholic university nursing education programs...would it matter? If we think it matters, then we have work to do as we move into the future, and one of our tasks is to understand and continually clarify what it means to be Catholic.

The Roman Catholic Church is a mosaic with many individual pieces: some large, some small, some highly visible, some nearly concealed. All (joined together by Baptism and nourished through the Eucharist) contribute to God's glory and help to reveal Christ to the world. Central

"IT IS THE COMMITMENT TO THE ULTIMATE INTEGRATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF MIND AND HEART, LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE, THE ACTIVE AND THE CONTEMPLATIVE, AND ON THE INSISTENCE OF THE APPLICATION OF MORAL JUDGMENTS, THAT SET CATHOLIC NURSING EDUCATION APART."



to the identity of the Catholic Church and her institutions and programs is respect for the dignity of the human person. Human life is sacred from conception to natural death and should be valued as a gift from God. To be Catholic is to acknowledge this fundamental respect for human dignity through attentiveness to five essential realities of the human person:

- **Spiritual:** Catholics believe that every aspect of a person's life—work, family, community—may be a source of spiritual growth and fulfillment. Louis Dupre from Yale University defined the most fundamental task of the Catholic university or program as preserving, nurturing and developing the spirit and keeping at the conscious level the awareness of a transcendent presence at the heart of all human activity.
- **Communal:** Catholics minister within the deep and sometimes troubled web of human relationships and problems. Catholic social and moral teachings are made visible to improve the economic, social and political climate.
- **Educational:** Catholics are fully immersed in the search for truth through faith and reason. Truth is sought and authentic human values are respected, and the responsibility to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ is assumed. Learning is translated into action.
- **Institutional:** The human person joins together with others to serve humankind. The Catholic organization works in a spirit of solidarity with the universal Catholic Church.
- **Service:** Catholics exist to serve others, modeling the compassion of Christ to every person. In response to the Gospel message and in fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church, Catholics actively pursue peace and justice. Concern for those who are most vulnerable in society also demands that Catholic organizations strive to bring about changes in society and work to establish justice for all.

Quickly, I will admit, that Catholics are not alone in attentiveness to many of these

realities, but a truly Catholic organization needs to respect all of them in the same manner. This is the essence of Catholic identity. Mission statements—laboriously prepared by universities—and nursing education programs to express ideals would remain mere ideals if they were not brought to the operative level through concrete practices by faculty, administrators, staff and students in the curriculum, in research, and in the whole range of related experiences and co-curricular activities.

Well, then, what are the implications to nursing education of having a mission that flows from being Catholic, being Catholic Augustinian? What might it look like? Here are my thoughts.

Catholic nursing education should speak of nursing as *a calling, a vocation, a ministry or the work of the spirit*. Sister Rosemary Donley, S.C., Ph.D., C-ANP, R.N., FAAN, noted nurse educator, author and higher education administrator, recently wrote: "People preparing to engage in a ministry approach their studies differently than those preparing for careers. Faculty members who invite their students to express a calling, the vocation or ministry of nursing will look to the Catholic tradition as well as to the body of nursing science for inspiration, values and seminal ideas. Nurses with a vocation bring a different level of meaning to the work of nursing. For them, nursing is always more than a job."

No matter how much emphasis is needed to be placed upon conveying technical expertise, Catholic nursing education programs have their central root in a value affirmation concerning the human's place in the natural order. Such value affirmation is completely incapable of objective confirmation and yet has one of the most profound influences on the curriculum...not to the exclusion of the advancement of nursing science, technical knowledge and skill, but rather toward the full awareness and meaningful integration of value affirmation and nursing science. The value affirmations, it seems, must be clustered around a conviction that the ultimate mission of Catholic nursing education is the enhancement of the value and dignity of human

life seen and understood as the image and likeness of the Creator.

Assisting people to stay well, caring for the sick and comforting the dying are works of mercy, rooted in the healing ministry of Christ, as described in the Scriptures. The Catholic tradition leads us to teach nurses to see God in their clients, in their patients. Sister Rosemary Donley states that "Healing in this tradition is holistic, seeking to alleviate suffering in its physical, psychological, cultural and spiritual dimensions." It is important that those responsible for Catholic nursing education be committed to making the student who is becoming the nurse professional a more integrated artist and scientist, indeed a wholly integrated person who is a nurse professional. Curriculum must be designed to demonstrate to the student that integration is attainable, that in the study of the person, the student will be brought closer to the mysteries of life in a philosophical and spiritual sense. The curriculum and related activities must be transformational, as they reveal to the students that their patients respond in an integrated fashion, and that the clinical experiences they have are gifts/opportunities to see God in their patients and their colleagues. The processes and interventions learned and applied work to provide information on the nature of illnesses and what is best to overcome the causes of illness, many of which are rooted in social and economic structures.

The values, flowing from the mission of Catholic nursing education that is grounded in a belief in the dignity of the human person, are relevant for nursing practice, albeit not always embraced by our society at large. The ethic of Catholic nursing is an ethic of respect for life from conception to natural death. Becoming educated for one's vocation, ministry, for the work of the spirit, transcends the study of nursing, physiology, psychology and so forth. In Catholic nursing education, both faculty and students, Sister Rosemary Donley says, "learn how Christian anthropology, philosophy, theology, sociology and ethics, economics, and the social encyclicals contribute to the understanding of people's needs, one of which is health or health care. Imbedded in this

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understanding, too, is special recognition of the poor. Seeking justice for all, choosing the fundamental option for the poor, are at the core of Catholic nursing practice. In this world of competition, managed care, mergers, acquisitions and resultant poverty of spirit, health care professionals prepared for practice through Catholic programs must defend a *balance between margin and mission*."

Applications of themes from the Catholic tradition can help nurses and patients they care for find or rediscover meaning in their work, their lives. Dignity for persons, the humanistic applications of knowledge and technology, care for the poor and their access to health care, concern for the common good, justice and stewardship of resources are elements of the Catholic tradition that must lace or characterize Catholic nursing education. These elements contribute to, as Sister Rosemary Donley states, a "culture of life and a healing environment" ...energizing and life giving.

Within the Catholic nursing education programs, we cannot just "teach the facts and be value-free." When programs and faculty are unable to stand for something, they stand for nothing, which is itself a statement of values. I would contend that the teaching of Catholic nursing must include the liberal arts, that is, paying special attention to that process that liberates a person to be truly human, a unique child of God. The mission of Catholic nursing education is to encourage the development of value judgments, which are grounded in the knowledge of one's relationship to God, to one's self, to one's neighbor and to the world. It is an education toward freedom of the mind, but a freedom that recognizes the clear responsibility to use one's gifts and talents, one's education, in the service of one's God and the community. To be truly human, then, is to have the human rights inherent in our personhood as images of our Creator, the ultimate Source of who we are and the Source of our ability to be socially responsible citizens in this world. I suspect that few will argue with the statement that a central function of any faculty member or professional nurse is to

disseminate knowledge and to discover new knowledge. But the learning of facts and the sharing of these facts are not enough. Moral judgment must be fostered. It is the commitment to the ultimate integration and transformation of mind and heart, love and knowledge, the active and the contemplative, and on the insistence of the application of moral judgments, that set Catholic nursing education apart. It is the insistence on the consideration of ultimate questions and values that is the special contribution to nursing practice. These value affirmations must be clustered around the conviction that the ultimate mission of Catholic nursing education is the enhancement of the value and dignity of human life. Curriculum and related processes must preserve, nurture and develop the spirit, and must raise consciousness that there is a transcendent presence at the heart of all nursing activity, actually of all human activity. (See Mark Sargent's article, "We Hold These Truths: The mission of a Catholic law school," in *Commonweal*, April 25, 2003. Sargent is dean of Villanova's School of Law).

Such a defined mission for Catholic nursing education requires qualified faculty members (Catholic and other) who can combine the virtues of his/her person, and those of academic freedom, with the responsibility to promote Catholicism's mission to society and culture. This requires truly special individuals who are somewhat like disciples, caring more than others think necessary, trusting more than others think wise, serving more than others think practical, expecting more than others think possible. The world of Catholic nursing education will always have the need for those who put discipleship, care, trust, service and high expectations at the forefront of their thinking and their work. It requires individuals who take their gifts to that world in service to God, the Church and all humanity.

With any quest for mission effectiveness, one must consider leadership...*leadership that is necessary, leadership that is modeled, leadership characteristics that might be learned*. In considering Catholic nursing education within the context of the

Catholic university or college, what would you expect is the leadership necessary, what might be taught about leadership, what is the leadership role-modeled?

My own thoughts on leadership in Catholic nursing education have little to do with hierarchy, credentials, degrees and position, albeit that all of these things are relevant to the greater picture. Whether or not we consciously recognize and admit that as human beings and as educators and nurse professionals, we affect one another's lives, and, in particular, the lives of our students and our patients, the fact is we do influence and shape our world positively, negatively or perhaps, neutrally by our very existence and by our actions. Given that we have this privilege of influence, compounded by our commitment (either as faculty or as learner) to the mission of Catholic nursing education, how do we role-model? How do we allow others to influence? How do we exert the influence we have? I contend that we must do it *not only* through our expert teaching, administration and practice, but through how we live moment to moment; how we share those moments with colleagues, our students, our patients; how we make each moment with someone else a sacred moment.

For the next second or two, place yourself within the context of what is your "workplace," be it the office, the classroom, the laboratory, the clinical setting, your home, your room...wherever you spend your precious time. *Place yourself in that context*. Consider the question: Why do I want to spend this one life I have doing what I am doing? *Picture yourself*. In this picture, is there sound but no rhythm? Color but no pattern or vibrancy? Are you looking, perhaps, not seeing? Hearing but not listening? Feeling but not experiencing? Thinking but not understanding? Kenneth Bakken, D.O., D.P.H., in his book *The Call to Wholeness: Health as a Spiritual Journey*, referred to such as living and working in neutral. Within the mission of Catholic education, be it the university or the nursing program, we need to strive to live in wholeness, integrated in awareness of our God, ourselves, each other and the world in which we are a part.

"THROUGH OUR ACTIVE PRESENCE, THROUGH ORDINARY HUMAN MOMENTS IN THE HOSPITAL, IN THE CLASSROOM, IN THE OFFICE, ON THE CAMPUS, WE CAN LIVE OUT OUR VOCATION, OUR MINISTRY, AS LEADERS WITHIN THE WORLD TO WHICH WE HAVE BEEN CALLED."



We must be more than bystanders; we have a part in structuring our lives and in influencing the lives of others. As educators, administrators, students, practitioners (Catholic or not) within a Catholic context, we are required to have a perspective, that, in our earthly lives, we are not just marking time, we are making a difference. Through our active presence, through ordinary human moments in the hospital, in the classroom, in the office, on the campus, we can live out our vocation, our ministry, as leaders within the world to which we have been called.

Just as our body needs care, food and vitamins to be strengthened, so does our role as leaders within or from Catholic nursing education need nourishment. I suggest five critical ingredients to strengthen us for the type of leadership that flows from and to the Catholic tradition. These are:

1. openness and an understanding of our selves...recognizing our spirituality no matter what religious tradition, or, even in the absence of one;
2. reflection...quiet moments (in the car, in the shower, on the beach, on the porch—wherever) to examine and confront our own strengths, our own frailties, and to consciously prepare ourselves to make every human moment a sacred one;
3. role-modeling for others a life in harmony through effective relationships, respect for every individual, fairness and competence;
4. reaching out to others—our colleagues, students, patients, clients, the troubled young, the gifted ones in their space, their world and through their venues—which may mean asking *them* how to reach them;
5. striving for authenticity, that is reaching into the very core of our being and relating to God, self and others from that truth that is in us.

In addition to deepening our understanding of self and nourishing ourselves as leaders, we need to consciously grow in awareness of our "work," our "practice," and to see it as a venue, a privilege, a gift

through which we can share human moments turned sacred by our active, conscious participation. In understanding the work environment, leaders within and from a Catholic context can make sense of the dynamics and reframe activity to influence and guide themselves and others to living out and/or achieving their goals. Such values-based human moments require energy and conscious commitment, thus making it often too easy to avoid or deny. This is hard work. However, I suggest, that as educators and practitioners in Catholic environments, we must transform human moments into sacred moments every chance we are given. We need to be shining examples of such energy by setting aside what we are doing, putting down the book we are reading, or the note we are writing; disengaging from our laptop or Palm Pilot; abandoning our daydream and focusing on the person with us...the patient with us...the student with us. This is leadership within a Catholic context at its best!

From major decisions to day-to-day activity...from risk-taking through activism and advocacy to stewardship through regard for assets and resources...to effective relationships through respect for the dignity of each person as a mirror of God...leaders are called to develop community among us all. The personal attention that is given to one another through human moments turned sacred is the hallmark of leaders who have been formed or are forming within the context of the Catholic tradition.

In the literature on leadership, there is much written on the need to balance and act on inherently paradoxical, conflicting pressures, and on the great need to balance a hard side to leadership with the soft side. However, this balance is difficult to come by and often neglected. I contend that the mission of Catholic nursing education mandates a model of leadership that does indeed balance the hard side of leadership with the soft side. The hard side of leadership is described as the need for leaders to be visionary, intensely focused, consistent and people of action. The soft side requires stewardship and sharing of resources, humility, integrated creativity, and reflection or contemplation. Recall the earlier

stated description of a Catholic Augustinian education. I suspect that what you are recalling matches this particular model of leadership.

If I have one hope for our future, it is this: I hope that Catholic nursing education will always be. I pray that the Villanova University College of Nursing will always be. I beg all of us to work as hard as we possibly can...through our governing structures, through the curriculum, through role-modeling leadership, through daily campus life and processes. I beg us to do whatever it takes to retain and grow the Catholic nursing education identity. Our present and future students and society in general deserve nothing less.

Thank you for your presence and attentiveness. I thank God for your vocation, your ministry in Catholic nursing education, be it as faculty, alumnae/i, administrators, practitioners, students. Don't give up, you are needed more than ever before. Stop thinking about early retirement, changing career or changing your major. Mentor a younger colleague, a peer; encourage her or him; don't burn her out. Dig deep today and during these days of the conference to rediscover the reason you first agreed to be involved in Catholic nursing education, administration and leadership, or why you chose not only to select a Catholic nursing educational program but to remain.

I ask you to rock the boat now and then for the sake of students, the patients and clients you serve. Provide an environment that teaches right from wrong, that makes some people uncomfortable, that demands community involvement, and that educates or cares for the whole person...mind, body and spirit...no matter the challenges. Turn the challenges into opportunities.

Thank you for the privilege of this human moment turned sacred by the opportunity to be together this morning at the opening of this special anniversary of our College of Nursing. God bless each of you and your contributions, past, present and to come, to the mission of Catholic nursing education. May the future of Catholic nursing education and your future be blessed with all that is good.

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The College of Nursing 1953-2003: History and Promise



By M. Louise Fitzpatrick, Ed.D., R.N., FAAN

Education for nurses at Villanova University began in 1932 when the University administration responded to a need expressed by local Catholic hospital administrators for a program that would give registered nurses an opportunity for additional education at the college level. The program that was developed offered a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Education and was administered through an extension arrangement under the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It had no nurse administrator nor did it provide a legitimate nursing major at the upper division. Rather, college credit was awarded for nursing courses that students had taken in hospital-based schools; courses in arts and sciences were given by Villanova, culminating in a bachelor's degree. At the time, this was considered adequate preparation for clinical instructors in hospital schools of nursing. The program was based at Hallahan High School in Philadelphia.

In the fall of 1950, the University administration reviewed the program and decided to reorganize it to make it eligible for accreditation. After identifying available clinical facilities in local hospitals that could be utilized for appropriate clinical laboratory experiences, Villanova established an academic unit called the Division of Nursing

within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In June 1951, two nurse administrators, Sister M. Alma Lawler, C.R.S.M., and Sister M. Margarella O'Neill, O.S.F., were appointed co-directors of the division and charged with reorganizing the B.S. program for registered nurses. They were also to prepare for accreditation and to align nursing education at Villanova to the needs of a changing field. The faculty appointees at this time were part-time, but the program was based on Villanova's campus.



Our College of Nursing

"continues to be distinguished by its attention to the education of the whole person and the priority it places on a liberal education."

1953: the College of Nursing is Established

During the post-World War II period, the growing national trend to educate nurses in colleges and universities influenced the academic planning at Villanova. It was believed that nurses should be educated in the liberal arts and sciences and that, in addition to providing a sound theoretical foundation for nursing courses, the psychosocial, ethical and spiritual

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“All of our programs are fully accredited, adhere to high standards of quality and have a reputation of excellence. They are congruent with trends in both health care and higher education.”



dimensions of patient care would be enhanced by such a curriculum. It was also believed that all students who studied for a baccalaureate should have exposure to core content in the humanities.

Cognizant of the trends in nursing education, the Catholic hospitals in the Greater Philadelphia area, the Sisters of St. Francis, the Sisters of Mercy and His Eminence Dennis Cardinal Dougherty encouraged the Rev. Francis X.N. McGuire, O.S.A., '32 A&S, D.D. (at the time Villanova's president) and the Rev. Edward J. McCarthy, O.S.A. (then academic dean) to establish a basic baccalaureate program in nursing at Villanova for high school graduates. This plan was further encouraged with the arrival in November 1951 of Bishop John Francis O'Hara, C.S.C. (later elevated to Cardinal). Bishop O'Hara was a member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross and had previously served as a faculty member, vice president and president of the University of Notre Dame. Bishop O'Hara's interest in higher education further stimulated the Augustinians to initiate the undergraduate program in nursing at Villanova. The first students were admitted to the program in September 1953; they became the first full-time women undergraduate students at Villanova.

Villanova soon sought and received accreditation from the National League for Nursing for a single baccalaureate program to which both high school graduates and registered nurses were admitted. Simultaneously, Nursing became an autonomous academic unit within the University, and the College of Nursing was officially established in 1953.

By September 1959, the Nursing faculty had grown to include 14 full-time members. When one of the co-directors, Sister Margarella, resigned to pursue doctoral study, the program continued to be administered by Sister Alma until June 1960, when she was recalled by her religious community. Marion M. Schrum, Ed.D., R.N. was then appointed as the first dean of the College of Nursing. She served in that position until August 1, 1968. Dorothy R. Marlow, Ed.D., R.N. succeeded her as dean, and served until April 1976. The deanship was unfilled until January 1978, when this current dean was appointed.

Growth in Response to the Needs

Over the years, the College of Nursing has continued to respond to the educational needs of nurses for advanced study. To this end, the Continuing Education Program for registered nurses was established in 1979 and the Master's Degree Program was opened in 1981 and has significantly expanded. Throughout the decades, the emphasis on undergraduate education has remained strong. Curricula in all programs have been evaluated continually, and revisions have been implemented in the academic programs to reflect changes in societal demands, technology and nursing practice. All of our programs are fully accredited, adhere to high standards of quality and have a reputation of excellence. They are congruent with trends in both health care and higher education.

In May, a new accelerated undergraduate opportunity for individuals who hold at least one degree in another discipline commenced. And the College looks forward to its anticipated Ph.D. program, which will specifically address the preparation of nursing faculty.

A College Notable in Many Ways

Since its founding five decades ago, the College of Nursing has grown and developed in many ways. It holds the distinction of being the first collegiate nursing program under Catholic auspices in Pennsylvania, the largest nursing program in the state within a private institution and the only Catholic nursing school in a university under the sponsorship of the Order of St. Augustine.

- To date, nearly 6,000 individuals have graduated from the College of Nursing's B.S.N. and M.S.N. programs.
- The College is recognized for its leadership and has received numerous federal grants that have assisted program development.
- Our 40 full-time faculty members (the majority of whom hold doctoral degrees) reflect a high level of education and involvement in scholarly and professional affairs.

- In addition to its academic quality, the College is well-known for the service and professional leadership provided by its faculty and alumni, nationally and internationally.
- The College continues to be distinguished by its attention to the education of the whole person and the priority it places on a liberal education. Spirituality, human values and ethical concerns, especially as they relate to health and clinical decision-making, are its hallmarks.
- The College utilizes cutting-edge technology for teaching and learning and has developed a number of Web-based courses.
- The College attracts a significant number of international students who return to become leaders in their countries and concerns itself with diverse multicultural groups at home and abroad.

The College of Nursing is an example of an academic unit that clearly reflects centrality to Villanova's Catholic Augustinian mission. It views nursing as a ministry as well as a profession and an intellectual pursuit. It defines nursing as an art and a science.

This 50th Anniversary year is a time for celebrating the achievements of our College and its graduates. Much has been accomplished in only 50 years. During the 50th Anniversary season, the College of Nursing was the recipient of a major gift from the Connelly Foundation. The \$4 million endowment will assist the College in advancing major initiatives. The College of Nursing at Villanova University takes pride in its past as it confidently and enthusiastically embraces its vision for the future. The College is ever mindful of Villanova's motto, *Veritas, Unitas, Caritas*, and is committed to the transformation of hearts and minds.