

Nurturing Spirituality *with* Faculty and Staff

A Vision Paper for Administrators, Campus Ministers, Faculty and Staff

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SPIRITUALITY

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THEOLOGY

Janet Claussen

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Nurturing Spirituality with Faculty and Staff:

**A Vision Paper for Administrators,
Campus Ministers, Faculty, and Staff**

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Saint Mary's Press®

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Other SMP vision papers for Catholic high schools

The Catholic High School as Faith Community

A Community in Progress

All Are Gathered

On their first day back from summer vacation, the faculty and staff of Reign of God High School were to gather for a retreat. Joan, the campus minister, knew that some would come to this day excited and anxious to be nourished and motivated before diving into the myriad of tasks facing them during this preplanning week. Others would come less enthused, begrudging the time they could be using for what they perceived as more practical concerns. The individuals preparing to journey together through this year were a diverse group who, by virtue of their shared mission, were a community. The hopes and dreams for this day and the year ahead were reflected in the retreat theme, "The Spirit of Community."

When the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote their pastoral letter *To Teach As Jesus Did* over twenty-five years ago, they envisioned the future of Catholic education as one in which teachers and students would engage in academic pursuits within the context of a faith community built on trust and love. "Community is at the heart of Christian education, not simply as a concept to be taught but as a reality to be lived" (no. 23). In the spirit of Vatican Council II, the letter was a prophetic call to Catholics to educate young people to be people of God, ready to take their place in society.

More recently, Edwin J. McDermott, in *Distinctive Qualities of the Catholic School*, states:

The Catholic school is unique because it is a religious community within an academic community. As a school it is a community of learners and teachers, administrators and parents, staff and resource people. At the same time, it is a faith community of young Christians and adults who come together to make Christ present among them in a special way. (P. 11)

This is affirmed, as well, in the newly revised *General Directory for Catechesis* by the Congregation for the Clergy.

Energized by the spirit of these documents and the desire of Catholic high schools to more effectively fulfill the mission of the church, Saint Mary's Press (SMP) has for several years gathered educators from around the country for workshops on the topic "The Catholic High School As Faith Community." Through learning, discussing, praying, and *visioning* together, participants share experiences of faith community within their own school settings.