

Loyola College in Maryland

## **A Personal Call: Making Meaning in Work**

### **Case Study for 2002 AJCU Justice Conference**

Loyola's Justice Committee was formed in direct response to the Reverend Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Superior General, S.J.'s October 2000 call for furthering faith and justice at the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities. The Loyola delegation to that conference, along with the other delegations, signed a pledge to bring back to our campus the commitment to social justice that Father Kolvenbach fostered. Our committee aims to fulfil that pledge by helping members of the college community build on Loyola's strong faith and justice traditions.

One of our major initiatives for the Spring 2002 semester was a faith and justice colloquium. We offered the colloquium as a way to celebrate our sesquicentennial anniversary and affirm our commitment to the faith and justice work that is a hallmark of Loyola College. The colloquium was one of several other significant initiatives, including inaugural Faith and Justice Summer Grants, justice training, a faith-justice retreat, and an upcoming fall faith and justice colloquium on community. We invited all staff, faculty, administrations, and students to participate in or apply to all of these programs.

The colloquium consisted of four talks, one for every month of the spring semester. That format encouraged an on-going faith-justice dialogue among speakers and audiences. We invited members of the Loyola community to speak, to highlight several of the community's fine exemplars of faith and justice work. The focus we chose was that of the personal call, inviting people campus-wide to consider how their everyday work relates to Loyola's faith and justice traditions.

**John Palmucci**, Vice President for Finance, launched the series in January, with a talk about "Social Justice in Jesuit Higher Education." He spoke to an audience of forty faculty, staff, and administrators. **Jennie Ashley, '02; Brian Marañña, '04; Danielle Miller, '04; and Katelyn Salvato, '02**, spoke in February about ways that work in all fields can further faith and justice. They spoke to an audience of forty students, faculty, staff, and administrators. **Leonard Brown**, Director of Student Life; **Susan Donovan**, Vice President for Student Development; and **Father Eugene Geinzer, S.J.**, Rector, spoke in March about the ways their specific work incorporates faith and justice. They spoke to an audience of forty students, faculty, staff, and administrators. **Robert Miola**, Gerard Manley Hopkins Professor of English; and **Father Joseph Rossi, S.J.**, Henry Knott Chair in Theology spoke about teaching and scholarship as vocation. They spoke to an audience of twenty students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

We found that the faith and justice colloquium, and the other initiatives, galvanized the community's commitment to faith and justice. The college gave the colloquium enthusiastic support. One measure of that support was that speakers agreed immediately and wholeheartedly to share their insights. Another measure was that offices and programs across the campus signed on with equal enthusiasm as co-sponsors; and President Harold Ridley, S.J., and the college funded the colloquium, allowing us to

publicize the colloquium, issue individual invitations to the community, and provide a light meal for everyone who attended.

Equally inspiring were the audience members' responses to the talks. We included a significant discussion period with each talk, and people spoke passionately about the ways differing constituencies work for faith and justice, and can join efforts even more effectively in the future. Anecdotally, audience members described the talks as some of the most significant they had heard recently, and as personally and professionally motivating. The justice assessment tools that the October 2002 conference will generate will prove useful in gathering data about the concrete ways in which such initiatives shape the community's faith and justice work.