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A few years ago, I went on a church mission trip with my daughter. A teenager was playing some older Christian rock at one of our job sites. The song was Audio Adrenaline’s “Big House,” and the lyrics stuck with me: “Come and go with me to my Father’s house; it’s a big, big house with lots and lots of room; a big, big table with lots and lots of food.” There is no question that for many who seek justice, assuring that all have the option of “lots and lots of food” is crucial. As an administrator at a Jesuit university, the image of a “big, big table” brings to mind something different: a place, or space, where people gain sustenance for themselves and for the institution as a whole through sharing ideas and insights. It is a challenge for me to ensure that a variety of voices are at the table and that each voice is heard and considered. Voices come from various demographic groups, various disciplines, and various constituency groups including graduate and undergraduate students, parents, trustees, tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, affiliate faculty, staff, and administrators. Asking for and listening carefully to feedback from a variety of sources is time consuming and can, at times, be draining. Passions run high when questions of curriculum, interpretations of policies governing student and faculty life, evaluation of student and faculty work, and assessment
of student learning are at stake. For me, a “faith that does justice” means that I need to work every day to make sure that all voices are heard and considered.