promotion of justice is an absolute requirement. . . .” And
the second: “Jesuit education encourages the building of
solidarity with others that transcends race, culture, and
religion since every program can be a means to discover
God, to worship God present and at work in creation.”

Our first-year law classes comprise students from 90
different schools, each of them choosing to come to
Marquette for what he or she expects of an excellent legal
education. Some arrive not fully aware of how our Catholic,
Jesuit tradition will be reflected. When they leave us three
years later, they have learned first and foremost how to be
excellent practitioners of the law (for the constant search
for excellence which is at the core of Jesuit education has
been inculcated), but also to be able and committed in the
search for justice and to ask the deeper questions that best
lead to that goal; to model a certain reflectiveness in the
practice of the law, mindful that every interaction with a
client or a colleague has an impact on other individuals; and
to pay special attention to the poor and the marginalized
in order that their needs, too, be dealt with justly and
equitably. To be sure, some go well beyond this in terms
of beginning to integrate their faith—in many instances,
their Catholic faith—into their professional lives.

Perhaps our most important contribution in this
regard is to provide models for these students. And we
do, not only in the form of particular faculty but also
in the alumni and other lawyers who come through our
building and interact with our students. We are doing
more than educating lawyers at Marquette, and we are
even doing more than building, in Eckstein Hall, the
finest law school building in the nation. In the end, we
are attending to the call of God, who invites servants into
his vineyard—servants whose rigorously honed legal skills
will be expended and poured out on behalf of others.

Heartland Delta Gathering
Jesuit Educational Values

Christine Wiseman, L’73—formerly professor of law at Marquette and vice president for academic affairs
at Creighton University, most recently provost of Loyola University Chicago, and, now, president at Saint
Xavier University in Chicago—spoke at the 2009 Heartland Delta gathering at Marquette University of
individuals from Jesuit colleges and universities. This is an excerpt from her remarks.

Jesuit education has been both a personal and professional
journey that has occupied most of my life. I stand before
you a woman educator and administrator in the Jesuit
system for over 30 years—and a mother who has sent three
children to be educated at three different Jesuit institutions. I
tell people that I am the woman the Jesuits educated me to be.

So what is it that distinguishes our learning as “Jesuit
Catholic”—and why is the integration of “faith” and “justice”
so distinctive in this intellectual paradigm by which we define a
Jesuit education? Perhaps a bit of historical context is in order.
The Jesuits are, of course, members of a religious order
of the Roman Catholic Church. The order was founded in
1540 by St. Ignatius of Loyola, who termed it Compañía de Jes
(the “Company of Jesus”) in Spanish and Societas Jesu (the
“Society of Jesus”) in Latin. In his article on the Jesuits and
their impact in Europe from 1450 to 1789, author Michael
W. Maher recounts that the Jesuits moved into education
because Ignatius realized
the educational mission as an
opportunity “to aid our fellowmen to the knowledge
and love of God and to the
salvation of their souls.” But as he organized the first schools, Ignatius relied upon the organizational principles reflected in the “method of Paris” which had framed much of his own education. Those organizational principles in turn became reflected in the Ratio Studiorum—a Jesuit course of studies. This method of studies served as a template for Jesuit schools throughout the world.

Maher also recounts that the Ratio Studiorum was first definitively recognized and published in 1599 under Claudio Aquaviva, who was then superior general of the Society of Jesus. By 1773, the Jesuits “employed this course of studies throughout their 669 colleges, 179 seminaries, and 61 houses of study.”

The Ratio Studiorum placed great emphasis upon the classical disciplines—disciplines such as theology, philosophy, ancient history, literature, Greek, Latin, and mathematics. In fact, in some of the early Jesuit institutions, students were not identified as seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen, but as students of philosophy, rhetoric, poetry, or the humanities.

But it wasn’t simply what was taught that marked the Jesuit intellectual tradition. It was and is how students are taught—a pedagogy designed to foster close interaction between students, and a faculty who seek to mentor their education, not just to transmit knowledge.

In all this, there is also a certain practicality to Jesuit higher education. Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, immediate past superior general of the Society, said so himself in his May 2001 address in Rome to the International Meeting of Jesuit Higher Education. After all, according to Heroic Leadership author Chris Lowney, “The Jesuits embraced the world and immersed themselves in its everyday life, living in its cities and cultural centers and traveling and working with its people”—and learning in the process that the lilies of the valley may grow without labor or toil, but we human beings do not.

But beyond all this—the humanism and the practicality—Fr. Kolvenbach recounted that Jesuit education “concerns itself . . . with questions of values, with educating men and women to be good citizens and good leaders, concerned with the common good, and able to use their education for the service of faith and promotion of justice.” Women and men, for and with others.

Back in 1998, the Marquette University Board of Trustees complained to its academic administration that we could not identify for ourselves or our students the uniqueness of a Jesuit education. In short, we had lost our ability to articulate the value of that intellectual paradigm. The board’s complaint launched a review of the undergraduate core curriculum across seven undergraduate units, including Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, Journalism, Health Sciences, Nursing, and Professional Studies.

When I became associate vice president for academic affairs at Marquette in 1998, I joined an initial steering committee, chaired by Dr. John Pustejovsky, to lead that effort until I left Marquette for Creighton University in 2002.

Reports were written in 2000 by a Core Curriculum Steering Committee and in 2002 by a Core Curriculum Review Committee. And what we concluded is this: Jesuit education, even as it has evolved, continues to be founded on knowledge of the humanities (literature, rhetoric, poetry, history, and classical languages), but it is founded as well on the natural sciences, the social sciences, and philosophy. Equally important, it is an ordered study.

The courses that students are required to take challenge them to move beyond descriptive knowledge to normative and spiritual reflection, asking themselves the same question captured by Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach and repeated by others: “How does one act humanely in the world as it exists today?”

And so, the rationale for today’s Jesuit education remains constant in its simplicity: students are empowered first to examine the world, then to engage the world, and—finally—to evaluate and change the world.

And how do we do at fulfilling these collective expectations derived from our Jesuit traditions? Some data are right here—in the latest National Survey of Student Engagement. Of our seniors who responded “quite a bit” or “very much,” 72 percent tell us that at our institutions they have devoted efforts to helping others in need; 64 percent tell us that they have actively worked to further social justice; 75 percent tell us they have defined their own values and beliefs; 77 percent tell us that they demonstrate a respect for others’ differences; 66 percent tell us they have actively worked toward a more inclusive community; and 66 percent tell us that they understand the Jesuit principle of “men and women for and with
I regard the Law School as a common ground where folks ought to be able to come together—not because they agree but precisely because they do not.

More than ever, we need such common ground in the legal profession. It scarcely exists these days, it seems to me. This is no indictment, or even criticism, of groups such as this one or its counterpart on the plaintiffs’ side, the Wisconsin Association for Justice. Such groups provide a valuable forum for the pursuit of common interests, though not as much so for debate, in my experience. By contrast, this may be a something of a criticism of the State Bar of Wisconsin. I am not one of the dis-integrators and, in fact, see the State Bar as, in important respects, playing a positive role, especially among some of the lawyers perhaps most at risk of losing an adequate connection to the larger profession.

At the same time, it is difficult for me to see the State Bar (that’s a capital “S” and a capital “B”) as providing a robust intellectual commons where folks from the profession can come together to discuss and debate large ideas in the administration of justice. To some extent, my difficulty in seeing this derives from some of the pursuits over the past decade or two, in which, for example, the State Bar of Wisconsin has decided that it is among its interests to lobby the legislature of the State of Wisconsin as to proper content of the substantive law of torts (and, more