LOST IN TRANSLATION… OR IN CULTURAL DIFFERENCES?

Maura Donahue and Kelly Johnson
University of Dayton

The University of Dayton has attempted to address the role of business education within the Catholic and Marianist character of the university by bringing together business and humanities faculty members to explore various facets of that mission in a semester-long academic seminar. During fifteen weeks of the Winter 2007 semester, thirteen faculty members from the School of Business Administration and the College of Arts and Sciences met weekly for two hours to explore the ways in which business education at a Catholic and Marianist university should be distinctive. Participants in the seminar often encountered impediments in the conversation, which we at the time termed “language problems.” Our terms were sometimes unfamiliar to each other. Some common terms carried different connotations or even denotations in other fields. During the seminar, we were not able to investigate this matter deeply, but the frequency with which these language problems arose left the two of us curious enough to look more closely. In this paper, we will present our modest findings as they relate to vocabulary, language, and culture. We will then offer suggestions and questions for further work.

This investigation is a shared endeavor that works across the cultural divide of the two university units. One author’s degree is in theology; the other’s degree is in finance. We will present this as a mutual paper, reflecting on how we each have attempted to start from our home language and reach out to the other. In doing so, we hope also to demonstrate the Marianist charism at work: we have been able to describe these problems because we work in a community that cultivates patient conversation as a means to social transformation.

Part I: Words, Language, and Culture

As we continued our conversations beyond that seminar, we began to realize that this ‘language problem’ was more complicated than it first appeared. It wasn’t simply a matter of different terms or alternate definitions for the same word; rather, certain terms were integrally connected to and served as structural supports for larger patterns of thought, entire frameworks for thinking within the different disciplines. As we looked more deeply, we found that some of these words acted more like building blocks for different systems of thought, or even more, for different ways of engaging the world. In an attempt to name this larger element, we have begun to speak of different cultures, meaning that our words and the systems of reasoning in which they occur are actually part of social customs and mores, systems in which and for which we do our intellectual work.

This relationship of language and culture is not a new idea. It may seem that every graduate student in the humanities has to go through some sort of version, however short-lived, of the linguistic turn. For those who have not been part of that graduate culture, a brief introduction may be helpful. Briefly put, in the humanities we are trained to understand that language is not just about labels for things in the world; rather, it is constructive of ourselves and our world.

Various thinkers have taken different approaches in describing the ways in which language is more than just labels and pointers for objects. Sacramental theologian Louis Marie Chauvet writes, "the relation of the subject to reality, therefore any properly human or signifying relation, is mediated, consequently constructed, by language and, in a more general sense, culture;…that it is precisely by constructing reality as "world" that the subject constructs itself as subject. Language is thus a construction game in a twofold sense: objective, of construction of reality as world and, subjective, of construction of the subject."[1] Chauvet goes on to compare language to a filter, or a lens. The construction of one's reality is done through that lens, which, though invisible to us, is nevertheless constructing our worldview and our sense of self.

Other thinkers see the relationship as even more complex. Wittgenstein developed the idea that speech is actually a matter of "language games;" as we speak, we are engaged in an activity that has an internal logic and rules we at least implicitly understand, but which is not identical to every other act of speech and is certainly not driven by correspondence to some outside world. It is only insofar as persons at least implicitly understand the game, the way the language functions as part of the world, that they can be said to speak correctly. Language is a part of the world and of ourselves, and to learn to speak correctly is to learn how to live within a certain social arrangement. Learning a language deeply requires that one be trained into it by being brought into the community who use that language. One learns how to use a language as one learns how to live in its world. "The limits of language are the limits of the world."[2]

While the specifics of Wittgenstein's approach remain controversial, philosophical attention to language as more than mere labeling is not. Many of us trained in the humanities therefore presume linguistic problems are not easily resolved. Language is part of the world and ourselves, it constitutes our relationships and our societies, it *does* things rather than only *naming* things. It may well take more than a dictionary to resolve a problem of translation. Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, in his demonstration of the history of growth and change in certain western traditions, has argued that when traditions come into conflict, translation may even be impossible. What is needed, he claimed, is a person who speaks both languages as his or her first language. Only the person who has "two first languages" can understand each from within and can therefore rightly understand in what ways they might overlap or intersect.

In this way, one can view the language of business as part of the culture of business, as formative of the communities of business, and therefore formative of the individuals in both business and business education, who themselves continue to remake that culture and language, from the inside. Business faculty must attend closely to contemporary business practices so that they can train students to be ready to step into that world; business education is about being formed for work in a linguistic community, the business world. Students learn to think, to analyze, to plan for business, but they also learn to carry themselves and to dress and speak in ways appropriate to that world. Faculty members are not just teaching ideas or techniques. They are, in a sense, acculturating students into a form of life.

Language in the humanities is also part of a form of life, although the role of faculty members in the humanities may be less specifically connected to their students' careers. Theology students

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[1] Louis-Marie Chauvet, The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body (Liturgical Press, 2001), 8.
[2] Brad Kallenberg, Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject, p.2.

may become clergy; history students may become secondary teachers; English majors may become lawyers. (Or any of them may go into business!) But humanities faculty members are not charged with forming them for that work; seminaries or graduate schools of education, law, or business will take on those tasks. Instead, humanities faculty members may prefer to think that they are forming undergraduate students to be "critical thinkers" or "educated world citizens" or "people of faith and reason," but in comparison with those who prepare students to be accountants, financiers, or entrepreneurs, these are rather abstract goals and may refer to somewhat imaginary communities. So what *are* humanities faculty doing? While business faculty are simultaneously both academics and in various ways participants (such as consultants) in the world of business, humanities faculty form a world unto themselves, speaking their native (and somewhat indecipherable to outsiders) language among their graduate school colleagues, at conferences and in peer-reviewed journals and department meetings, as well as in the intellectual work of discovering the "interesting." We say this acknowledging the reality that business faculty members do many of the same things; however, the ends cultivated in business research are practical, applied ones. Conclusions drawn from research in business and papers presented at conferences must ultimately be *applied* to real business situations, if they are to be useful to the world. In their teaching, business faculty members help students learn practical skills designed to help students in business careers. It is possible that theologians may also have some formation in ministry (the 'practical' side), but their expertise is normally more attached to the institutions of academia than to those of the ministry. The fact that humanities faculty are not connected to "practical work" as their colleagues in business are does not mean that they are not formed for and engaged in a form of life. They are formed to be that peculiar thing, the intellectual.

Our point here is that our academic formation as scholars in business and the humanities is very different, as we are acculturated into different ways of speaking and working, and even different ways of thinking and seeing. We speak differently because we reason differently because we live in different communities. Roberto S. Goizueta also explains this concept. "The language is not incidental to the individual person's self-understanding and worldview; it shapes and informs these. If community is prior to individuality, language is prior to self-understanding."[3]

The languages that we use in the different areas do create a chasm, but the distance is not unbridgeable. Theologians and others in the humanities have mortgages and retirement plans; we live in a world in which some understanding of opportunity cost and the laws of supply and demand are simply survival skills. At the same time, members of the business faculty have spiritual lives, participate in religious communities, read literature and love art. We ought not overstate the difference in our linguistic communities as we most of us negotiate several of them more or less simultaneously. We are not exactly strangers to each others' ways of speaking, though our levels of fluency and ways of negotiating the discrepancies between those languages do vary. Still, we have good reason to hope: the very fact that we have a language problem means we have bumped into each other, and at the intersections of our languages, we can try to find a way to see the worlds each other speak. While we do not claim to possess MacIntyre's "two first languages," we think that the recognition and acknowledgement that we are speaking different languages in the fullest sense of that word, is an important first step.

[3] Roberto S. Goizueta , Caminemos Con Jesus, (Orbis, 1995), 53.

Part II: Words and the worlds in which they have meaning

Words as simple as 'value,' 'labor,' or even 'the world,' may cause difficulties (or moments of opportunity, if you like) in conversations between a theologian and a business professor. In the limited space we have here, we will offer some reflections on a few other such words, as a way of illustrating how a simple discussion of terminology can turn into a sort of academic intercultural dialogue.

Utility

The word 'utility' caused quite a problem in our seminar. For philosophers and theologians, utilitarianism is an ethical system which explains that judgments about what is right are actually judgments about "utility," and "utility" in this context refers to the promotion of pleasure and diminution of pain. The right thing to do is that thing which on the whole and for everyone will produce more pleasure and less pain. The point is that we know "the good" by knowing how to promote the greatest amount of human pleasure and the least amount of human pain. In this way, the door is opened for efficiency to become moral righteousness. That is not to underestimate the lofty ideals of some proponents of utilitarianism. John Stuart Mill's famous essay on the topic claims that we ought not insult humanity by presupposing that maximizing pleasure means merely satisfying the body. Experienced humans (those who have experienced both lower and higher pleasures) know that the higher pleasures of spirit and intellect are much preferable to 'lower' pleasures. Still, it is true that Mill's complex and generous sense of "utility" is not typical. For most, "utilitarianism" refers to a morality that calculates "the greatest good for the greatest number" in ways that do not necessarily honor goods that require more training and may not serve the dignity of each person.

Insofar as discussions of utility among philosophers and theologians have to do with maximizing human pleasure in an effort to know "the good", to members of the business faculty, "utility" is a morally-neutral word. It is simply a numerical proxy for the satisfaction that consumers seek to maximize, whether that satisfaction is maximized through consumption of vaccines for one's infant or through the purchase of land mines and howitzers. The field of positive economics does not address the question of whether a consumer *ought* to pursue consumption of certain goods or services; rather, it asserts that consumers have free choice about how to allocate their own dollars in an effort to maximize personal utility.

As Amarta Sen writes, one of the limitations of the utilitarian approach is that it "tends to ignore inequalities in the distribution of happiness (only the sum total matters—no matter how unequally distributed)"[4]; also, the utilitarian approach "attaches no intrinsic importance to claims of rights and freedoms (they are valued only indirectly and only to the extent they influence utilities)."[5] In addition, because the utility of consumption of a particular good is completely determined by the consumer, and because we cannot accurately measure the amount of utility that each person derives from the consumption of a particular good or service, it is not possible to make "interpersonal" utility comparisons. Due to this problem, for people in economics and business, utility is now merely "the numerical representation of a person's choice."[6]

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[4] Amarta Sen, "Development as Freedom, (Anchor Books, 1999), 62.
[5] Sen, p. 62
[6] Sen, p. 67.

In contrast, for philosophers and theologians, talk about utility happens in the context of moral reasoning. The term is part of debates over the meaning of the good, the nature of human concern for morality, and questions about whether such judgments could reach consensus. Talk about utility leads to debates about whether such a matter could be calculated and how claims about it are related to claims about intrinsic evil. On the other hand, "evil" is a term that rarely, if ever, is heard in a finance, economics or business class. Even in class discussions about accounting fraud, marketing deceptions, lending discriminations or other financial scandals, the conversation around the notion that these behaviors could be interpreted as manifestations of "evil" in the world is avoided.

Although in both business and humanities "utility" serves as a stand-in for ways maximize of human pleasure and in both cases is recognized as psychologically complex, in one context it plays a role in describing and promoting morality; in the other, it is explicitly morally neutral, leaving question of "the good" to the side. Already we can see that something much more than different terminology is at stake.

Goods

A similar problem arises when we speak of 'goods.' In a business context, when people refer to objects as 'goods' (such as 'goods and services'), they are not implying or attaching any moral character or quality to the objects. Over time, the term 'good' has come to be used in a way (in economic terms) that is now independent of any moral significance. A quick survey of the Oxford English Dictionary indicates that it was at shortly after the year 1400 that the term 'goods' came to be used in this way, and nowadays such usage (ex. goods and services) is unremarkable. The definition "saleable commodities, merchandise, wares (now chiefly applied to manufactured articles)"[7] for the word 'goods' first arose around 1460. It is interesting to note that 1436 also marks the year in which we first find the usage of the term 'commodity' to mean "kind of thing produced for use or sale, an article of commerce, an object of trade; in *pl.* goods, merchandise, wares, produce."[8] Both humanities and business faculty may refer to 'goods' in this way when talking about the economy, but when philosophers and theologians speak within their disciplines, the word 'goods' may indicate that things are seen and evaluated in relation to some greater good (or Good).[9] To Catholic theologians, the term 'goods' also conveys the principle of the universal destination of goods. Though the answer is not a foregone conclusion, it would, at least, be meaningful in a theological context to ask whether landmines are actually 'goods', and whether they benefit "all" by cultivating and promoting human flourishing.

What, we wonder, would it mean for students and faculty in a business school to consider the moral good and universal destination of goods in their discussion of 'goods,' or to think of 'utility' in a way that attends to the kind of moral significance a philosopher hears in the term? Suddenly it becomes very clear that we are not just talking about words as pointers. Using the words differently is like moving Jenga blocks. The words are a part of different languages, different cultures, resulting from different systems of thought and leading to different systems of action. Could cheap, poorly-made junk products be called 'goods', and if not, how would we

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[7] Oxford English Dictionary.
[8] Oxford English Dictionary.
[9] "God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good." – Genesis 1:31.

talk about them? How would that change business education? How might it change the experience of producing, transporting, marketing, and consuming 'goods'?

Freedom to and freedom from

The suggestion that there are differences in language and culture becomes more pronounced when we look at the word 'freedom', a termed fraught with complexity in both business and theology. It was evident in our seminar that the participants associated significant cultural baggage with this word, and the baggage made the word exceedingly difficult to use. For the business faculty who touted the praises of a market-based economy, the concept of 'freedom' was straightforward and was especially valued: freedoms such as the freedom from government interference/intervention in markets, the freedom of parties to enter into contracts, the freedom to choose which goods one wants to consume, etc. Indeed, in business education, the characteristic act of freedom is the act of choosing, whether one is choosing a 'good' to purchase or a market to target.

Some faculty members in our seminar questioned the very existence of these economic freedoms. For example, market-based economics asserts that individuals earn income by choosing to sell their labor, the price of which is determined in the same manner as all other prices (equilibrium price based on intersection of supply of and demand for labor). However, while the market-based system regards this choice to sell one's labor as a freedom, it silently assumes that all people have equal access to participate in the market for labor. It assumes that the workers (in all occupations) have freedom to choose among many possible employment options, and thereby agree to the labor contract that will maximize their own utility. Unfortunately, many people do not have access to many different potential employment opportunities; there is not as much "free choice" to sell one's labor as the economists might like to argue. We face a problem of underemployment, in which people earn wages that are below their earning capacity. Some economists, among them Amarta Sen, work to draw attention to these inequities such as this, but their voices are seldom heard in business education. While business curriculum grounded on market-based economic theory purports to promote and honor freedom (mostly freedom to make choices that maximize one's utility), questions about the existence of free choice, whose freedom is being promoted, at whose cost, and the implications one's free choice on others and the environment are all too frequently disregarded.

The humanities faculty in the seminar were dealing with their own quite different problems with the word 'freedom'. Pope Leo XIII, well-known for his later *Rerum novarum*, also promulgated an encyclical entitled *Libertas* in 1888. In it, he argued that humans act freely when they act in accord with their reason, but because reason and the will are broken among fallen humanity, our choosing is often a deficient exercise of freedom. We choose, but we choose things that our reason and will have mistaken for good. In that case, *choice is not the same as freedom*. To put the matter more sharply, the encyclical points out that "the infinitely perfect God, although supremely free, because of the supremacy of His intellect and of His essential goodness, nevertheless cannot choose evil; neither can the angels and saints, who enjoy the beatific vision."[10] The more one knows and loves the good, the more one becomes just and prudent, the less does one need to *choose* the good. Adhering to it becomes easy, obvious, a matter of

[10] Pope Leo XIII, "*Libertas*", Papal Encycylical letter, Rome, 20 June 1888, paragraph 6.

character. That sort of integrity is therefore not a loss of freedom, by any means. To adhere habitually to what is good is precisely to have become free… from sin.

It follows, then, in Leo's argument, that law is necessary to protect human freedom from its tendency to pervert itself. Submission to the eternal and natural laws and to civil laws that are in accord with the eternal law is fully consistent with Leo's freedom. Law and authority do not limit freedom; they guard it.

Not every theologian and certainly not every Christian has agreed with Leo's account in its entirety. It may not be an overstatement to say that the whole of twentieth-century United States Catholic theology has been driven by an anxiety about freedom, anxiety that carries over into the current day. In his encyclical *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI writes, "…where freedom is concerned, we must remember that human freedom always requires a convergence of various freedoms. Yet this convergence cannot succeed unless it is determined by a common intrinsic criterion of measurement, which is the foundation and goal of our freedom. Let us put it very simply: man needs God, otherwise he remains without hope."[11] The question of freedom and what it means underpins debates about authority and obedience, tradition and formation, community and the individual, reason and appetite, church teaching and political debate, religious diversity and evangelization. And make no mistake: these debates are not, so to speak, merely academic. This language about freedom, grace, virtue and sin accomplishes political, moral, and ecclesial work, just as discussions of freedom in business schools do economic work. But while the question for business schools is how to create an economic order that genuinely allows freedom for all actors, the question in the humanities is more about what we mean when we advocate freedom and what roles authority and obedience play in it.

All of this may help explain a particular moment of deep confusion and frustration in our seminar. Our languages bumped, or in this case perhaps crashed, into each other around the question of whether faith could be considered a sort of consumer preference. It was obvious to some that moral and theological commitments necessary for faith are *choices* one makes that demonstrate the freedom of persons who are maximizing their utility. To others, being called into a community of faith and working within it to become a free person who readily adheres to the Good could not adequately be called a choice to maximize utility. Rather, it is viewed by them as a matter of obedience to a call or encounter with truth. Mere translation of terms greatly underestimates the differing cultures and worlds within which those terms have their meaning.

Still, as we mentioned before, it is not as though these two different ways of speaking never overlap. People do "shop" for churches. The Church Growth movement has made very successful use of marketing techniques, and the "Catholics Come Home" website is an impressive example of advertising as evangelization. For that matter, political scientist Mike Budde[12] and theologian Vince Miller[13] have both argued that even devout Christians formed by the rationality of the market do more or less consciously approach their faith as a kind of consumer preference. Rather than engaging theology as life-long and deep formation into a

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[11] Pope Benedict XVI "*Spe Salvi*", Papal Encyclical Letter, 30 November 2007, paragraph 23.
[12] Michael Budde, The (Magic) Kingdom of God: Christianity and Global Culture Industries, (Westview Press, 1997), 18.
[13] Vincent Miller, Consuming Religion, (Continuum Publishing, 2003).

system of thought, a community, and a history, people create spiritualities, (which may or may not be rich and complex), out of fragments of faiths. In the same way that our homes may be furnished with pieces from IKEA and Ethan Allen and Uncle Jim's basement and a genuine Amish craftsman, our faiths include bits abstracted from many traditions. It's been more than two centuries since Adam Smith argued that competition among religious providers would be helpful in rooting out fanaticism.[14] These days, speaking of faith as an exercise in consumer preference simply seems obvious, even to many believers. Even so, claims of obedience, calling, and truth linger uneasily in our speech. Parents choose baptism for a child, but "I baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" still resists translation into a utility-maximizing outcome.

Scarcity and Finitude

The term 'scarcity' in economics refers to the principle that there do not exist goods enough to satisfy every desire of every person. (A typical definition of the field of economics is "the study of the allocation of scarce resources over unlimited wants.") If it weren't for scarcity, we would not need to allocate resources, and there would be no economics. The term 'scarcity' exists to describe why systems of allocation are necessary; however, 'scarcity' is often misunderstood by those outside that field who hear in it the implication that poverty, perhaps even miserable poverty, is inevitable. One Christian economist advocated the use of the term 'finitude' in place of 'scarcity.'[15] Aiming to avoid the implication that it was impossible to meet human needs, he argues that creation is indeed finite. Therefore insofar as humans have infinite desires, creation cannot satisfy all of them. Some system of allocation will indeed be necessary. But this, he clarified, in no way implies that poverty is necessary. Nor does it presuppose that humans are incapable of limiting their own desires in order to care for the needs of others.

This suggestion is valuable. But it still underestimates the problem. For economists who use scarcity within a system, the term is not a counsel of despair. On the contrary, it is what drives economists to understand better the dynamics of production and consumption work so that the limited goods of the world can be used more effectively.[16]

Some theologians, on the other hand, have been emphasizing the importance of 'abundance' in Christian theology. The importance of abundance for these theologians is the reminder that Christianity is about confidence in a God who creates from nothing, who resurrects from the dead, who rescues Israel from overwhelming odds. The genre of theology is comedy, not tragedy. Rage, grief, anxiety, fear—these are part of the theological world insofar as sin is part of that world. But they are not simply facts to be accepted. They are moments in a story that is moving toward a different end. What is 'natural' for humans can and by the grace of God does change.[17]

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[14] The Wealth of Nations, V.1.197. http://www.econlib.org/LIBRARY/Smith/smWN.html

[15] James Halteman, The Clashing Worlds of Economics and Faith (Wipf and Stock Press, 1995).

[16] For a theological discussion of the moral value of scarcity, see Albino Barrera, God and the Evil of Scarcity: Moral Foundations of Economic Agency (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005).

[17] Douglas H. Knight, The Eschatological Economy: Time and the Hospitality of God (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006).

The importance of 'abundance' for this paper is that while Christian theology has to be interested in history and in present human societies as the field of God's work, theologians have reason to see those realities within a story of change, from the garden to the fall to the covenant with Jews to the fulfillment of that in Christ to the full coming of the Kingdom. Present realities are not simply facts. They are moments in an ongoing story. Present lack of fulfillment is not simply motivation for better management. It is part of the fallenness of the world and will be overcome. Management of scarce resources is important for now, but so is the fostering of hope that the way we are is not the way we must be.

Part III: Suggestions and questions

This closing part of our paper is not titled "conclusions"; like the Carpenters, we have only just begun. Instead, we hope to raise some questions and propose suggestions for future work. That being said, however, our efforts for this paper will have been in vain if people leave this conversation, shrug their shoulders and say, "Oh. We have different languages and cultures. So what?" We think this difference in languages and cultures is a significant, if not the primary, reason for the difficultly in integrating "Catholicism" into our business curriculum, and in fact, should be addressed prior to efforts to incorporate Catholic Social teaching (and other worthy humanities concepts) into the curriculum. We humbly offer the following suggestions and questions for further work in this area.

We have briefly touched on the fact that, in most schools of business, economics is a purely technical endeavor, a positive science that deals with describing how the world is. We propose that faculty members from both humanities and business engage in dialogue and exploration of the different cultures, in an effort to understand how business faculty members might be able to make more room for the "normative" questions that underlie the presuppositions and assumptions of market systems and 'business as usual'.[18] For example, finance textbooks maintain that the goal of financial decision-making is to maximize shareholder wealth. This goal is stated repeatedly throughout the course of business education. But the normative question that precedes this goal, "What is the purpose of business?" is rarely asked. While economics may ask questions related to whether the market is efficient in helping consumers maximize utility, there is still an underlying and prior question of what goods *should* increase my utility (should I purchase pornography and illegal drugs?[19]). In our post-modern age, this question is looked upon as personally subjective (who are we to tell each other what to pursue?), and one that business faculty are typically disinclined to examine. We propose that it is time to collaborate and get started asking these tougher, primary, normative questions and finding ways to help students investigate possible answers.

Second, we think that Catholic universities offer the perfect environment to work across these cultural divides in an effort to generate new and relevant knowledge. That is, after all, what universities are supposed to do. We see this as a big adventure – exploring how to include these questions in the works that both units do. We invite you to go down the road on this journey

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[18] As Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Spe Salvi*, "If technical progress is not matched by corresponding progress in [hu]man's ethical formation, in a [hu]man's inner growth (cf. Ephesisans 3:16, 2 Corinthians 4:16), then it is not progress at all, but a threat for [hu]man[s] and for the world." *Spe Salvi*, paragraph 22.

[19] To further complicate the point, should we even refer to pornography and drugs as "goods"?

with us, and see where it takes you. How will our fields be changed if theologians have to help answer questions about pressing human needs today, and if economists have to think about biblical abundance?

Thirdly, in an effort to support our first two suggestions, we recommend that Catholic universities make an effort to set aside time and space for faculty members from different fields to engage in difficult conversations around these issues. We would like to offer that, from our own experience, these conversations cannot happen instantly. We have benefited enormously from the Marianist tradition that honors patient conversation, humility, and the partnership of equals, as it has given us an opportunity to truly hear each other and to begin to unravel the layers of misunderstanding between us.

We have found that conversations such as these are richer, deeper, and more fruitful when the people involved work from a framework of trust, honesty and openness. In most cases, this takes time and a lot of goodwill. It requires being vulnerable, allowing one's own position, training, and even academic culture to be challenged. We have been fortunate, in that the Marianist virtue of "staying at the table" ensures us that we can argue and furrow our brows and get culture-shocked by each others' worlds, and know that we are committed to continuing the conversation. In the family spirit of community, we know that such frustration and disagreement is not the whole story. We are bound together in Christian community, which allows us to better listen and respond to Mary's prompting, "Do whatever he tells you."[20]

We can see new vistas opening up for our disciplines and for our students, and we are hopeful about the possibilities. While we recognize that we do not possess MacIntyre's "two first languages", we have the two languages between the two of us and part of each other's language in each of us. We have some overlap, and we have a strong collegial friendship characterized by honesty and truthfulness. Our conversations have grown both more difficult and more meaningful over the past few years. As a result, we know the benefits we have reaped are well worth the time and diligence required to cultivate relationships among faculty members from vastly different fields; indeed, they are an important part of the culture of a Catholic university. We know that who we are now is not who we have to be. It may yet be that a culture of Catholic intellectual work will become a kind of common ground for all of us.

[20] John 2:5.

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