Catholic thought during the period prior to the Second Vatican Council is often depicted as backwards and obscurantist by both liberal Catholics and secularists. Andrew Greeley referred to Catholic higher education in this period as a “backwater.” The terms “ghetto Catholicism” and “fortress mentality” are often used to characterize Catholic attitudes toward modernity during the period. These criticisms are based on a strong foundation in reality. It is necessary, however, to distinguish the negative from the more promising developments. One of the promising developments was a strong emphasis on the integration of knowledge into a coherent Christian worldview as a counter to the increasing fragmentation of knowledge found in secular universities. Closely connected to this principle of integration was a renewed emphasis on the spiritual dimension of all learning. Many Catholic educators during this period believed that Christian spirituality must permeate all aspects of the Catholic university: the curriculum, student life, and the administration. In this chapter, I will examine those developments; specifically, I will investigate how Catholic college and university educators viewed the relation between spiritual and intellectual life and how they saw the relation of religious thought to other academic fields. Finally, I will examine their attitudes toward research.
The Imperative for Integration of Thought, Life, and Spirituality

A major impulse for integration was Pope Pius XI’s 1929 encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri* (*On the Christian Education of Youth*; hereafter DI). One of the main thrusts of the encyclical was that religious instruction should be taught not merely at fixed times but must permeate the entire curriculum (DI 80). A sacred spirit must pervade the entire academic community. The goal was to form morally upright citizens who could then help infuse the spirit of Christianity into society once they graduated. The proper end of Christian education was to cooperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, formed in the image of Christ. Christian education was to take in the entirety of human life—physical and spiritual; intellectual and moral; individual, domestic, and social—and to elevate and perfect all these dimensions. The graduate of Christian schools was to be “the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the spirit and teaching of Christ” (DI 96). Another thrust of *Divini Illius Magistri* was its insistence that the ultimate goal of education was the formation of the “whole man,” complete in body, mind, and soul (DI 58). Any education that excludes the religious dimension is seriously defective (DI 60).

Great deference was shown to magisterial teachings on education and the ideals expressed in *Divini Illius* were readily adopted by most American Catholic colleges. Echoes of the language from the encyclical could be found in the writings of Catholic educators and in the mission statements of many Catholic college catalogues during the period. Educators proclaimed a “Catholic Renaissance” of philosophy, literature, and art. Slogans such as “education of the whole man” and “permeation of the curriculum” with religious truth were commonly found in Catholic college literature. In the decades prior to the Second Vatican Council, writes Philip Gleason, the Catholic Church boldly promoted “an organically unified Catholic culture in which religious faith constituted the integrating principle that brought all the dimensions of life and thought together in a comprehensive and tightly articulated synthesis.” Catholics took a newfound pride in their own tradition, and Catholic artists and writers flourished, especially in Europe. The sense of renewal in Catholic culture also came to America and was a major spur to attempts at reformulating educational principles.

The principle of integration became central to Catholic higher education during this period. All knowledge and all reality were seen to be interrelated. Everything fits together into a coherent scheme framed by a Catholic worldview, informed by Catholic philosophy. The theme of