



July 4, 2011

**Mission**

To provide a source of information, a means of communication, and a collective voice to Notre Dame alumni and others in the Notre Dame family who are concerned about preserving the Catholic identity of the University.

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**Sycamore Trust**

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"Sycamore Trust is a model of calm and reasonable yet unrelenting friendly questioning of recent events on the South Bend campus"

– Ralph McNerny  
1929-2010

Dear Friend,

**"The University should not compromise its academic aspirations in its efforts to maintain its Catholic identity." – Notre Dame's Faculty Senate**

That's a shocking declaration from a place where, Fr. Hesburgh has declared, "the Church does its thinking." It reflects a radical weakening of Catholic identity under the Golden Dome. But so goes the secularizing of formerly religious schools: The faculty loses its anchor in the founding faith and gradually the school drifts toward typically worldly ambitions.

Even now, as Dr. Alfred Freddoso, one of the University's most respected professors, points out, "Notre Dame is something like a public school in a Catholic neighborhood" where "most faculty members would be deeply disturbed by the prospect of having doctrinally orthodox Catholicism intrude itself into the classroom."

Still, hope is not lost. There remain a splendid, if radically reduced, corps of Catholic scholars at Notre Dame, a number of supportive non-Catholics, a heavily Catholic student body, and the continuing, if diminished, presence of priests on the campus. And there is Sycamore Trust – the first effort of its kind by alumni to resist the forces of secularization at their alma mater.

In a few short years, members of the Notre Dame family have made a difference through Sycamore Trust. Among issues on which Sycamore Truth has focused:

1. A newly elected member of the Board of Trustees was obliged to resign when her support of pro-choice organizations was discovered and publicized.
2. After two years of relentless criticism, the University finally relented and dropped the prosecution of the pro-life advocates who demonstrated at Notre Dame in protest of the University's honoring of President Obama despite his pro-abortion record.
3. Both The Vagina Monologues and the Queer Film Festival have quietly disappeared.
4. Father Jenkins has left his position on the board of the pro-abortion Millennium Project.
5. And, most importantly, the decline in Catholic faculty has been arrested for the moment, though not reversed.

But much remains to be done. We encourage you to join our effort by reading our new brochure, visiting our website, and making a tax-deductible contribution to Sycamore Trust in whatever amount you can afford. If you have any questions, or would simply like to talk about Notre Dame, feel free to get in touch with me or any other member of the Board.

Sincerely,

William H. Dempsey ('52)  
President

PS A more detailed version of this letter can be found at [SycamoreTrust.org](http://SycamoreTrust.org)