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From the Editor

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insights about the important issues college students must face as they try to find clarity in their lives. And I am glad that you have the opportunity to read this journal to stimulate your thoughts about these issues.

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From the Editor

This issue of INTERSECTIONS contains several things that should be of interest to you: A) A continuation of the papers from last summer's Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, these by Cheryl Ney and by Robert Scholz. Both papers argue from and for a particular "take" on disciplines in the university, in their cases chemistry and music. B) In addition we have a personal response to the themes and issues of that conference written by Jennifer Sacher Wiley. We hope to include more responses of this kind in future editions. C) An interview with four faculty at Capital University who visited Cuba last summer and came away vitally transformed by it. D) A brief, but very thoughtful, meditation written by Eric Haaland, a student at St. Olaf College. E) An INTERSECTIONS first, a letter to the editor!

Among this variety I am sure you will find things to inspire you, things to provoke questions, and things to argue with. Whatever your reaction, let us know. We don't want this to be the only issue to print a letter to the editor. Share your thoughts with us.

Once again I want to share with you some things I've read. But in this case it is not the content of a book that I want to share, but the thing it models for us. *Wagering on Transcendence* is a collection of essays, all of them written by faculty at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee. In the introduction to this volume, the editor, Phyllis Carey writes:

A few years ago, a small group of Mount Mary faculty members met on a Friday afternoon to discuss George Steiner's Real Presences over a glass of wine in the faculty lounge. From the lively discussion that ensued ... the idea for this volume emerged. Steiner's book sparked a conversation about the relationship of God's existence to a variety of issues. ...in our own time ... God's non-existence has become a given. ... [By contrast] George Steiner argues that even secular transcendence implicitly depends on God's existence: "any coherent understanding of what language is and how it performs any coherent account of the capacity of human speech to communicate meaning and feeling is, in the final analysis, underwritten by the assumption of God's presence"

The essays in the volume are accounts of writers and works that witness to dimensions of transcendence: from Augustine to Italo Calvino, St. John of the Cross to Annie Dillard, Czeslaw Milosz, Etty Hillesum, Joan Didion, and Vaclav Havel.

Though I found many of the essays provocative and informing, what excited me about the volume was the community of intellect and spirit it bore witness to. What a wonderful model; conversation over wine about things of a deep and serious nature expressive of the nature and mission of the institution, provoking excellent academic work by a wide variety of thinkers. I think *we should shamelessly copy this idea*, and we should do it even before we get the faculty development grant that we usually wait for to begin such things. What better use of the Dean's budget than to spend it on a few copies of Steiner's book (or someone else's) and a jug (or a case) of wine? When I pass from this world I hope to leave money to endow many Friday's worth of wine and conversation. This shall be called the Christenson Endowment. *In vino veritas!* How about you?

Tom Christenson
Capital University, Summer, 1999.