



## Office of the Vice President for Mission

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TO: The Gonzaga Community  
FROM: Frank E. Case, S.J. and Shanea Giroux  
SUBJ: Moment for Mission  
DATE: September 11, 2012

### **Mass of the Holy Spirit and 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Week**

Tomorrow the University community celebrates the Mass of the Holy Spirit. This is a time-honored way to begin the school year, praying for the guidance of the Spirit in what lies ahead for the University.

Some years ago Brian Swimme, a physicist and graduate of Bellarmine Prep in Tacoma, wrote a book entitled *The Universe Is a Green Dragon*. This rather whimsical title was intended to open the reader to some fresh ideas about space, God, and human beings.

The Spirit, he says, fills all the emptiness of space. The Spirit pervades and suffuses everything and every dimension of our universe. Nothing particularly surprising in this! But he then goes on to say that the Spirit fills the emptiness inside each of us humans. When challenged by his pupil to explain what he means by the emptiness inside of us, Brian says that we are all made up of atoms, and that if you were to blow an atom up to the size of a baseball stadium, the nucleus of the atom would be the size of a baseball in center field and the electrons would be like gnats flying around in the lights. All the rest, he says, is empty space. He concludes that we are more “fecund emptiness” than we are created matter.

It’s kind of nice to know that when I look down deep within myself I am not going to encounter a black hole from which no light can escape, but rather will encounter God’s Spirit within me. That is precisely what St. Ignatius asked those making the Spiritual Exercises to do. He counsels us in the exercises and throughout our lives to listen to our deepest desires, because it is through these deep desires that the Spirit is communicating with us, leading us into a deeper relationship with God, with other people and with the created universe.

I hope you will be able to join us at the mass tomorrow as well as the Pilgrimage this Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup> (contact University Ministry for additional information on

registering) and the Historic First Day Mass at 12:10 on September 17<sup>th</sup> in the student chapel along with other wonderful events to celebrate our heritage and history.