

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS**  
**REV. DANIEL S. HENDRICKSON, S.J., PH.D.**  
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Thank you very much.

It is truly an honor to stand before you as the 25th president of Creighton University.

Archbishop Lucas, Bishop Dendinger, Congressman Ashford, Mayor Stothert, Chairman McCarthy, trustees, delegates, alumni, and friends of the University, thank you for joining the faculty, staff, students, and me here on our campus today. This University community is excited to host you as we ritualize and celebrate the beginning of a new chapter of our lives. At a place of higher learning that is in and of service to the Catholic Church, at a university that is deeply and passionately Jesuit, we at Creighton are serious about our mission and identity, and we do not step lightly into our future.

As I begin my tenure as president, I am particularly mindful of three meaningful engagements of this University over the course of 20 years. As a Jesuit scholastic, in the 1996-97 academic year, I lived and studied in the Jesuit Humanities Program here. In 2000, the same year Fr. John Schlegel began his time as president, I worked in the Department of Philosophy for three years. And just a few years ago at the invitation of Fr. Lannon, I became a Creighton University trustee. The teaching here is second to none, the campus kinship is genuine, and a sense of commitment to this institution is resilient. And, simply, the legacy of leadership – distinctive of times, institutional needs, and opportunities, and expressive of vision – is remarkable. Fr. Schlegel, Fr. Lannon – John, and Tim – thank you for your service to a place so close to your heart, thank you for giving your life to the apostolate of Jesuit education, thank you for your fraternity in our shared life, and thank you for being here today.

My coming to Creighton is my coming home. I grew up less than an hour from here, in Fremont, Nebraska, and I did so in a family filled with continuous love and support; constant encouragement and challenge; an ethic of work; a spirit of ingenuity; and a pointed interest in educational success.

My brothers and I, the doctors Hendrickson if you will, attended an idyllic boarding school run by the Benedictine priests and brother. With brick archways; a horse stable; fields and gullies; dormitories and classrooms; monks as deans, teachers, coaches, and counselors; evening Vespers; and a chapel in the heart of it all, we thrived. Dedication of life, prayerfulness, academic achievement, and conversation were just some of the values we learned and lived.

From a pastoral landscape to the metropolitan cityscape, I attended Marquette University. As a freshman student in 1989, my life in Jesuit higher education began, and for most of the past 25 years, on both sides of my desk, in classrooms, conference rooms, and boardrooms, I have been in and around the ministry of Jesuit education. In those undergraduate years and in a vocation

that followed, I learned about the essentials of Jesuit pedagogy – an education of transformation, and, surely, I met women, men, and Jesuits who have devoted their lives to it.

When I think of where I am today, however, and many campuses, cities, and countries where Jesuit schools impact anyone, I think back to 1989, and I recall three important realities of my first year in Jesuit higher education.

After nearly a quarter century of presidential leadership by a beloved leader, the university announced a presidential search, and as freshman student, I was taken up with it. In particular, I was fascinated by the biographies of the four Jesuit finalists. Their lives were storied with academic credentials, ministries of many kinds, great personal and professional achievements, and travel. Of each of them, I sensed depth and breadth. And the university made a great choice, and our new president brought fresh perspective and great energy. And we were so excited. He launched an urban renewal program that was featured in national media, and he played racquetball with us.

And in the midst of this, in that same first semester, on another Jesuit campus in a different country, at the University of Central America in San Salvador, El Salvador, a different Jesuit president and his Jesuit colleagues – for the work they were doing in Jesuit higher education – were killed. The assassination of six Jesuits and two women shocked us, and what I was learning about Jesuits and my own Jesuit university was placed in new perspective. To a new student, suddenly, Jesuit higher learning was global; its pedagogy was even more powerful; and its mission to transform people and places was now prophetic.

And yet, weeks before our own presidential search that fall semester 26 years ago, and months before the awful UCA event, I went to the Mass of the Holy Spirit. In the church of Gesu, with the chanting of “veni sancta spiritus” and through clouds of incense, Jesuits streamed in from all sides. In procession with lay collaborators, and in an over-packed university church, I was impacted by an experience I can still see, hear, and smell, and I immediately knew that Jesuit education was part of a bigger, grander reality, and I wanted to be part of it.

I have many mentors and wisdom figures in my life, but I am proud to have with me today people who are particularly important. In a moment I will ask you to recognize them.

Father Albert DiUlio of the Society of Jesus was the president I spoke of. He had been the president of Xavier University where I am currently a trustee, and then the president of Marquette University for my undergraduate years. Later he was superintendent of Catholic schools in Los Angeles, California; he worked at the Jesuit conference in Washington, D.C.; he was the director of the Vatican Observatory in Tucson, Arizona; and he is currently the treasurer of the Wisconsin and Chicago-Detroit provinces. And the second individual I would like to feature was his executive vice president.

Father William Leahy of the Society of Jesus, the president of Boston College since 1996 who will soon complete and exceed a \$1.5 billion campaign, was the chaplain of my freshman

residence hall, and until he joined Albert's administration, he taught in the history department. Then and still, he always asks me the right questions. His fraternity and friendship for almost three decades are sustenance and grace, and many of my Marquette classmates who are with us today proffer the same claim.

And, Dr. Megan Lavery is here. Associate professor of philosophy and education at Teachers College Columbia University in New York, N.Y.; Australian national; and Kantian in philosophical training; Dr. Lavery was my dissertation sponsor at Columbia. She has authored books on the philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Iris Murdoch; she has published nearly 30 articles and book chapters in recent years; and she has held previous positions and appointments at universities in Australia, the United States, Hong Kong, and South Korea. A sharp intellect, a persistent sense of inquiry, and organic friendliness create and facilitate meaningful parlors of discourse wherever she is, and in my own work she cultivated clarity, scope, precision, and vision.

Albert, Bill, and Megan, may I please ask you to stand for a moment as we welcome you?

And allow me to also introduce and thank my family. Scott, my identical twin father, if you will, is an assistant professor of Spanish language and literature at Loyola University Chicago. My brother Ryan is the interim dean of the graduate school and professor of political science at Eastern Illinois University, and with his wife Tece and their three children – Marguerite, Frances, and Ryan Warren, lives in Champaign, Illinois. My parents grew up in Lyons, Nebraska, and they began their married life and my father's career in Fremont, where we were raised. Please welcome my family!

Pope Francis recently spoke to an American audience of four notable persons of our national history; and of Jesuit tradition, and for a sense of inspiration in my life as well as the work of vision, I would like to invoke two key Jesuits.

Matteo Ricci was a late 16th century Jesuit who spent his life in an international mission of the Society of Jesus. His map-making, writings, and work in truly foreign context and culture represent diplomacy, dialogue, and determination. In the early modern era, at the cusp of global exploration, his letters from China introduced the western world to language, literature, and life of an ancient Asiatic dynasty, and his sharing of tools, trade, and text brought a bit of Europe into a closed but curious global community. His respect for cultural difference is famous, his desire to communicate in and across customs and civilizations is historic, and his sense of self as an ambassador of faith and virtue is notable. And in an early era he personifies the global scope of the Jesuit life and work.

Pedro Arrupe was a mid-20th century Jesuit who was the superior general of the Society in a time of cultural tumult and trial. Much can be said about his life, but for Jesuit educators, he challenged us to be grounded and growing in religious faith and service to others. Reminding us of our Renaissance humanist roots – invoking in fact Ciceronian ideals of ethical regard and civic engagement – and living and speaking through the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises – he asks

everyone in Jesuit education – faculty, staff, students, and more – to be men and women for and with others. He brings the world to our campuses, and he takes us into the world, and as we ourselves are changed by those realities, we become agents of change.

Ricci and Arrupe are both and at once roots and revolution. They point us to who we are and where we come from, and they move forward with distinctive focus and expansive impact. And they do so with passionate humanist regard.

As I ponder American higher education today, and think of the role of the Jesuit university in particular, Ricci and Arrupe are helpful. The need for us today to study the landscapes of our own lives is prescient, and the need for understanding the conditions and realities of those around us is just as urgent. At an institution like ours, with nine colleges, with programs of expertise in a broad range of health sciences, law, business, and the humanities, we are poised to meet such needs. In doing so, I will remind us to recognize the role of the humanities as essential to who and what we are as a Jesuit university. Philosophy, theology, history, language, and literature take us into ourselves in special ways, and they tell us about the lives of those around us. They are instruments of self-awareness, and they catalyze understanding, empathy, and compassion for others. They also strengthen how we read, speak, think, and write. They let us graduate lawyers, leaders, doctors, dentists, pharmacists, therapists, social workers, bankers, educators, and so much more, but doing so as Creighton lawyers, Creighton leaders, Creighton doctors, Creighton dentists, and so on, they are so much more. Creighton educates experts and professionals with sound souls and strong hearts.

With Ricci and Arrupe in mind, I am very happy today to announce two institutional initiatives.

The Creighton Global Initiative is a seed-funding program for faculty, staff, and student use designed to strengthen global perspective at Creighton University; and in weeks and months ahead, I will continue seeking funds that support related efforts. Later this semester I will ask a campus committee of faculty, staff, and students to help develop matrices and criteria for assessing proposals and distributing awards. Initially, I will ask the committee to consider five areas of interest:

- Academic enhancement for projects related to research, scholarships and curricular development
- The cultivation of a globally conversant campus for projects that encourage members of our University community to better appreciate, analyze, and discuss multicultural realities and expressions of diversity
- Impact on Omaha, whereby campus constituents further understand and engage our neighborhoods, local schools, and businesses and allow the study and experience of the global to become local
- International immersion and study abroad experiences, including preparation and Ignatian integration programs

- And finally, institutional innovation to prompt especial focus on pressing global issues, such as migration, refugees, climate change, disease, and the use of natural resources

And it is possible that these five categories can be assessed by the following criteria:

- Sustainability of a given program
- Student development
- Academic rigor
- Institutional focus in and through existing international efforts
- And enhancement of institutional mission and identity, including leveraging international Jesuit partnerships

Through the generosity of friends, I am able to announce a current funding pool of nearly \$4 million.

A second initiative is made possible by two anonymous donors. I am sincerely grateful to alumni who have provided a robust endowment that will be able to strengthen our mission through the creation of a Catholic Social Teaching fund. These resources will be used to bring attention to social injustice and the poor and marginalized of our society, and related efforts will seek to educate not just our campus, nor just our city, but a regional sphere of influence in and around the Midwest. Programs of Catholic Social Teaching will ensure that Creighton continues its leadership in promoting human dignity in its many forms, thereby strengthening our Jesuit, Catholic mission.

Allow me to end with the concluding words of our inaugural theme. They come from the Jesuit priest and poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins who, faith-filled, passionate, and personal, and recognizing our call to greatness, simply says of any one of us, “I say more.” It is something Creighton has always said: “I say more.” As a student, a teacher, and a trustee, this is quite clear – Creighton keeps saying, “I say more.” And today, in my new role, and as your new president, I do likewise. With the faculty, staff, and students of this prestigious place of higher learning, and joined by alumni and longtime friends of this institution, and for these groups and individuals and how Christ plays in ten thousand places, lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his, through the features of Creighton faces, “I say more.”