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Editorial

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Editorial

In the June 1980 issue of *Pro Rege*, we introduced our readers to Dordt's newly formed Lectureship Institute—the name of which has been changed to the Dordt College Studies Institute. By the time this issue of our faculty publication appears, the Institute will have been in existence for two years. During this time the Institute has been tested and evaluated with the result that certain structural changes have been made—changes designed to bring the Institute into a closer relationship with the faculty and to make it more effective in its service to the Christian academic community in and around Dordt College.

Last year at this time we told you of our project to develop a Reader to explore “the contemporary significance of principled pluralism for our society and the contemporary world.” We said the project would explore pluralism as a social philosophy which rejects both the individualist and collectivist traditions and seeks “a normative order in which the entire creation, with its plurality of institutions, authorities, and associations, is empowered by the Word of God for the good of humanity.”

Although the members of the Institute are also engaged in teaching, writing, and lecturing, we have worked steadily on this communal assignment—and this issue of *Pro Rege* is intended to reflect the present stage of the Reader's development. Rockne McCarthy introduces the Reader in his article on pages 34, 35. He outlines three different

approaches to societal pluralism—natural law and subsidiarity, history and the unfolding of society, creation and sphere sovereignty. In the Reader each approach will be introduced by an essay and illustrated with selections from different authors.

The articles written by James Skillen and McKendree Langley will eventually be the introductions to two of the three approaches to societal pluralism. Every selection is being submitted to the Institute membership for joint discussion, revision, and refinement so that the Reader will be a product of communal scholarship. This emphasis upon communal scholarship is already reflected in the references to “we” and “authors” in the essays that follow. When the Reader is completed none of the sections will be identified with a particular author.

In the spirit of communal scholarship, we have invited lecturers visiting the campus and members of the faculty to participate in discussions concerning parts of the Reader. These working sessions have proved to be very beneficial; as time goes on they will be expanded to include other members and departments of the faculty. In this connection, we also request responses from our readers. It would be very encouraging to receive correspondence providing assistance in this concerted attempt to develop and share “an understanding of principled societal pluralism.”

J.B. Hulst