

As dean of the incoming class, I get to assign the summer reading, something all members of the Class of 2012 will read in common as they begin their journey here. To mark the first year of Montserrat, I am assigning *A Pilgrims Journey, the Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola* (introduction, translation and commentary by Joseph N. Tylenda). We learn about Ignatius' search for meaning in life through his devotion to God. He chose Montserrat as the place to lay down his soldier's weapons and begin a new life devoted to study, teaching, service, faith, and purpose. He established a new religious order, the Society of Jesus. Its members, the Jesuits, founded Holy Cross College, continue to be leaders in the community, and shaped our mission statement. Fall Convocation will connect to the events and themes described in the autobiography.

As you read it I hope you will reflect on questions like: What part of your life will you leave behind as you enter college? What personal mountain will you climb in your journey of academic exploration and self-discovery? How will you decide which paths to follow? What approaches will you take to achieve your goals? How will you recognize and avoid distractions to your commitments? How will you handle setbacks or detours in your plan of action? Will you be open-minded, sensitive and responsive to your environment? Which people will you let help you and guide you in your journey? How will you assist the other pilgrims in your class? How will you share your gifts with the world?

I would also like to make you aware of another book I find intriguing. *Evolution for Everyone* offers a completely different way of making sense of the world. As a scientist I appreciate the scientific method developed in this book but it is presented for the non-scientist as well. What makes it unique is the application of evolution theory to nearly all of our activities and everything going on all around us in our daily lives. The author, Davis Sloan Wilson, touches on everything from morning sickness to infanticide to life expectancy by neighborhood. The theory is used to explore a wide variety of human and animal behaviors like laughing, sharing and shyness. The author tells an interesting story where some applications are bound to be of greater interest to you than others. The non-linear arrangement of the book does not require that you fully understand application of evolution theory to perception of beauty in order to appreciate its treatment of religion. I hope to bring the author, David Sloan Wilson, to campus during the upcoming year and hear more about how evolution theory can be used to understand our capacity for symbolic thought, culture and morality. While not required reading, I hope you will consider reading *Evolution for Everyone* and participating in any related campus activities.