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## UD president shares how faith impacts the workplace

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Eric Spina has served as president of the University of Dayton since July 1, 2016. Spina has made investments in initiatives targeted toward increasing diversity and accessibility, key strategic focal areas of his presidency.

He recently discussed how faith impacts his leadership.

**How do you think faith affects the culture of your workplace?** We are in a relatively unique position as a faith-based university with no expectation or mandate that everyone will be Catholic, or Christian, or even a believer of any kind (although a majority of people on campus are indeed Catholic). That said, we are proud of both our Catholic foundation and the diversity of faith traditions on campus, which together support a powerful learning environment. The Catholic, Marianist nature of the University of Dayton manifests itself in the sense of community that is found on campus and the caring nature of relationships that people establish. More specifically, Catholic social teaching is central to who we are as a University and impels our faculty, staff, and students to work toward the common good through their teaching and learning as well as their scholarship and community engagement.

**What faith-based principles are particularly important or helpful in running your organization?**

Personally, I try to create an environment of love, an environment where people feel that others care about them, even as there are real expectations and a sense of accountability. I also anchor my leadership in the Catholic, Marianist teaching that every person is created in the image of God, and take that teaching as an imperative to create a diverse environment in which the dignity of each person is respected and valued.

**How does the mission to help others impact your life and work?** I am a lifelong educator, so serving others is at the core of my vocation — much of my work comes about at what I often describe as the intersection of head and heart. While I spent 28 years at a private, secular university, I find I am able to be my full self at this Catholic institution, where it is completely acceptable to talk about the faith-based values that drive me and where the grace of God is central to our work.



LILIA SCIARRETTI/UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON  
University of Dayton President Eric Spina at the  
Chapel of Immaculate Conception

**Do you consider yourself part of a particular religion, and if so, is there a place of worship that you attend?** I am Roman Catholic and my regular place of worship is the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the heart of UD's campus. While my wife and I considered joining a local parish when we first arrived, we so enjoy and value worshipping with the students we can't imagine going anywhere else.

**Caleb Stephens**

Editor-in-Chief

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