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Cardinal Peter Turkson, an outspoken advocate for reform of the world’s financial systems, will highlight an international conference on Catholic business schools at the University of Dayton June 18-20. The conference is organized by the University of Dayton and the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota.

The eighth annual International Conference on Catholic Social Thought: Renewing Mission and Identity in Catholic Business Education will explore the unique influence Catholic higher education can have by bringing a sense of mission, vocation and justice to business education.

"The agenda for outstanding business education is often set by leading secular universities," said Brother Ray Fitz, S.M., Ferree Professor of Social Justice at the University of Dayton. "Through the lens of our faith and intellectual traditions, Catholic universities have the opportunity to be thoughtfully critical of this agenda and work to enrich it."

Turkson is president of the Pontifical Council for Peace and Justice, which last October issued a controversial report in the wake of the global financial crisis, calling for a "true world political authority" to bring more democratic and ethical principles to the marketplace.

The council this year issued a guide for business leaders that calls for them "to engage the contemporary economic and financial world in light of the principles of human dignity and the common good."

Turkson, a native of Ghana, who has been mentioned as a potential pope, will open the conference by celebrating Mass and delivering the keynote address.

Fitz said the conference will allow faculty from various disciplines to share approaches and learn from each other.

"If we are to realize our mission of outstanding business education in a Catholic university then we must be able to integrate the Catholic intellectual tradition and its emphasis on the liberal arts with business education. This will require that our faculty develop a common language across the discipline that will allow them to integrate the curriculum for business students," Fitz said.

Conference topics include: business education in the post-global economic crisis environment, corporate governance as a foundation of Catholic business education, mainstream management theory and Catholic social teaching, spirituality and leadership.

Institutional sponsors include the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; Albers School of Business, Seattle University; John A. Ryan Institute for Catholic Social Thought at the Center for Catholic Studies, University of St. Thomas (Minn.); and Marquette University.

Cost is $300 for conference participants, $50 for graduate students and $125 for guests. For information and registration visit Renewing Mission and Identity in Catholic Business Education (url: http://www.udayton.edu/events/international_conference) or call 937-229-5409.

For information, contact Judy Keyes at 937-229-5049.