REPORT FROM FACULTY CONGRESS **–** DR. Q Chung, Chairperson

As we reflect upon the academic year that’s coming to an end, what the Faculty Congress experienced this year could be best characterized as the ‘heightened sense of community’ – felt not only among the faculty, but more importantly, felt and expressed by the faculty as members of Villanova community. Community spirit was easily visible among the representatives serving on the Faculty Congress and its committees, echoing their interactions with their constituencies. Most delightful to report today is that we were able to identify a few of the enabling forces.

We enjoyed a year of free and active sharing of opinions, ideas, and experiences. We were lucky this year to have such an abundant supply of attention-gathering ‘issues’ – such as football, dean search, benefits review, faculty salary study, Middle States visit, and the shaping up of the campus master plan, to name just a few – in addition to the perennial (but important) topics like budget and awards and policy reviews. While the rich supply of issues certainly fueled the faculty interest, what prompted the faculty to participate and engage must have been the grand optimism, the belief that participation and contribution are welcomed and will benefit the community? We also enjoyed a year of growing trust and respect between the faculty and the administration. The many formal and informal meetings that were held over the issues mentioned above must have fostered such an organic growth of mutual understanding as well as the courage to explore less visited areas. In addition, we are grateful that, this year Fr. Peter instituted a new venue called Faculty Friday. It has been wonderful to see faculty colleagues from all over the campus come together and create energy that transcends time, rank, and discipline. Countless words of appreciation from the faculty are owed to Fr. Peter for his vision to create it and generosity to sustain it.

As mentioned at the beginning of the academic year, the members of the Faculty Congress are modest, not very good at bragging about their accomplishments, which are many. Out of respect for their admirable character, I would also keep a low profile today – except that I should inform the University Senate that the members of the Faculty Congress are eager to channel the collective wisdom of the faculty to where it is due and expected.