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FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends of YDS,

Every year offers new challenges and opportunities at YDS as to all of us. The departure of two senior colleagues, beloved as teachers, mentors, and vital members of the YDS community, posed a major challenge in 2005. David Bartlett '67 B.D., '69 M.Phil., '72 Ph.D. and David Kelsey '58 B.D., '60 M.A., '64 Ph.D. will be missed, but new colleagues will renew the faculty and provide new energy in crucial areas. The pages of this issue will introduce you to them: Emilie Townes, the Andrew Mellon Professor of African American Religion and Theology, Thomas Troeger, the J. Edward and Ruth Cox Lanz Professor of Christian Communication, and Denys Turner, Horace Tracy Pitkin Professor of Historical Theology. We are delighted to have these new colleagues aboard, and I hope that you will get to know them, both in the pages of *Spectrum* and in person.

Students change as do faculty, and in this past year we initiated 126 students into the ranks of the alumni of the school. As usual, they have gone on to a variety of ministries, further education, or productive engagement with the world, and you will read some of their stories in the pages that follow.

The incoming student body, almost 150 strong, is alive with new talent and energy. It replicates the diversity of recent years in geography, denominational affiliation, and academic interest, although it continues a trend toward youth. The median age of the incoming class was twenty-six. It is a delight to see the enthusiasm of the group, although the wisdom of more mature students is a welcome leaven.

Special times of each year offer particular opportunities for remembrance, reflection, and rededication to the mission of the school. Convocations and commencements always perform that function, but this last year we had two events that did so in a very special way: a celebration of the life and work of Margaret Farley, a beloved colleague at YDS for almost three decades, and a celebration, involving the wider University, of William Sloan Coffin, Jr. '49 B.A., '56 B.D., '02 Div.D.H., famed chaplain of the University in the tumultuous '60s and '70s. Both events provided ample opportunities for reflection. In the case of Margaret Farley '70 M.Phil., '73 Ph.D., students and colleagues in ethics engaged her contributions to the field in a lively symposium. Bill Coffin's celebration evoked some nostalgia for the days of the civil rights movement and anti-war protests, but it

also offered an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be involved in prophetic ministry today. In his own remarks, Bill offered a focus for contemporary concern: the continued presence of nuclear weapons throughout the world.

Bill and Margaret, and the friends and students who followed their example and engaged in dialogue with them, offered a rich testimony to what Yale Divinity School has long meant to the Church and to the contemporary world. The YDS community takes the tradition of faith seriously and enables its alumni to apply the insights of that tradition creatively and boldly to the real problems that confront today's churches and the world.

The School's work goes on, in the high-profile engagement by Kristen Leslie '86 M.Div. with the chaplains of the Air Force Academy, helping them to minister better to the spiritual needs of a diverse population. The work goes on, in the quieter experimentation, with new forms of internship currently being crafted by Barbara Blodgett '87 M.Div., '00 Ph.D. The work goes on in daily worship at Marquand and in the collegial collaboration with our friends at Berkeley Divinity School and the Institute of Sacred Music. It goes on, as it always has, in the classroom, in the corridors, in the refectory, and on the Quad, where faith continues to seek understanding and effective expression.

To all of you who continue to make this enterprise happen, we express our deepest gratitude for your continuing support.

Sincerely,



Harold W. Attridge
 Dean and Lillian Claus
 Professor of New Testament

