



DR. RON AMBASSADOR OF GRACE

MANNAHAN

A DURABILITY REQUIRED • A DESTINY TO TEACH • A SMALL TOWN PREACHER • A CONFIRMATION OVER LUNCH • A CHAMPION FOR RESTORATION
A UNIFIER & COLLABORATOR • A QUIET STRENGTH OBSERVED • AN EDUCATION REFORMER • A CONSENSUS BUILDER • A LEADER'S SUMMATION

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK & ANDREW JONES (BA 11)

A DURABILITY REQUIRED

In 1994 Grace College and Theological Seminary had a site visit from its regional institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. Dr. Ron Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82) remembers the walk-through assessment well. “The guy who chaired [the site visit] said to me, ‘You know what Grace needs is someone who’s going to be there for a while.’” Manahan had just assumed the role of president. In the turbulent time prior to his taking office, the school had struggled to stay buoyant in a mire of problems ranging from fragile finances and conflicting personalities to aging infrastructure. Manahan’s first few years as president were a reconstruction period from what had been, in Manahan’s words, “challenging times.”

But as of April 2013, Manahan has been president for a full 20 years. And although his tenure will end at Commencement 2013, he will continue to serve Grace as senior advisor to President-elect Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). So what is it that keeps him around, active and successful? He says simply, “If you believe something is valuable to do, work at it. And then hope that there’s a way to bring people along.” Which is exactly what he has done at Grace.

Some may revere a college president as an Atlas of sorts, a Titan who elevates and suspends the

mission, ideals and hopes of the institution on his shoulders, one knee bent to the ground with the weight. But the more you look into the decisions Manahan has guided Grace through, the more you realize that it’s not first and foremost his intellectual or entrepreneurial brawn that’s held the school up these two decades. Rather, it’s a simple, underlying principle: Christ’s irrevocable call for character, competence and service. It’s for this clarion mission and in response to that call that Manahan joyfully serves God and Grace.

For his recent doctoral research, Dr. Jeff Gill (MDiv 82), dean of Grace Seminary, read all of Manahan’s three-year goal plans and subsequent self-evaluations since his tenure began. “Ron considers himself to be the guardian and the leader in the fulfillment of Grace’s mission,” Gill says.

And, according to Manahan, that mission is the school’s sustenance. “Fight tenaciously to understand and apply the mission,” is his encouragement to leaders at Grace, present and future. And he supports this tenacity with an analogy that is central to why and how he’s led: use the mission, not as a fence, but as a platform.

“He knew we had to change and adapt, and he pushed us to change, but never to the detriment of a quality education or our commitment to biblical values,”



THE GRADUATE / Dr. Manahan graduates with his Master of Divinity from Grace Theological Seminary in 1970, receiving the Old Testament Award, the New Testament Award and the Preaching Award.



FATHERHOOD / Dr. Manahan with wife Barbara and firstborn daughter Kelly.

says Katip, Grace's current provost. It's a firm balance between commitment to standards and an unbelievable sense of vision.

Mission statements are not impervious to the difficulties and trials that lie ahead of the future they preface. They require durable trustees — leaders who courageously steer into an opposing storm, dodge bullets and come through with deeper dedication and resolve. A leader who knows how to balance strength and humility, conviction and a listening ear — that leader can bring not only longevity to his role, but perspective. Such firsthand knowledge is what makes the organization tick while revealing improvements still required. Leaders that last like this are made of the rarest mettle. A mettle typically tempered by an intriguing backstory.

A DESTINY TO TEACH

Where it came from, Manahan can't explain. His parents grew up in extreme poverty, dropping out of school after grade six to help support their families.



DESTINED TO TEACH / Dr. Manahan received the Grace College McClain Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1982.

Manahan was the youngest of seven children, and they lived in the diminutive town of Paw Paw, Ill., where resources were few and money was tight. But he remembers it as clear as day. "As a 5- or 6-year-old kid I remember riding around on my trike thinking about teaching — at a college," recalls Manahan.

After graduating from Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music (now a part of Cornerstone University), marrying fellow classmate, Barbara Campbell (July 18, 1964), earning his bachelor's from Shelton College (Cape May, NJ) and his Master of Divinity from Grace Theological Seminary, Manahan was invited to join the faculty of Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music. It was then, in 1973 — during Manahan's second year in his young teaching career — that student Les Lofquist (BA 79, MDiv 82) took his first of what would be 17 courses taught by Manahan.

"I loved him so much, I took any and every class he taught," says Lofquist, now IFCA International Executive Director. "Many people are brilliant and are unable to communicate that



brilliance. But Ron could. He'd start with the simplest premise and end with a very complex conclusion, and he brought you along from start to finish." That's one of the reasons why Lofquist says Manahan's classes were always crowded. "He was one of the most popular teachers at the school."

His intuitive understanding of people, relationships and God's love, intersected to make Manahan an outstanding teacher. But what many don't know about the inception of his teaching career is that professorship wasn't his first rodeo.

A SMALL TOWN PREACHER

Shortly after Manahan graduated from Grace Theological Seminary in 1970, he and Barbara moved to Orland, Ind., where Manahan became a pastor at a local church. He describes it as a church of about 40 people who had little knowledge of Scripture. One member even asked him why Christians did not study the Koran.

"I remember," he says, "the first time I went there to speak. When we left, I told my wife, 'One thing's clear. We aren't coming back here.' And that's where we ended up."

It was a pin-prick-sized town and, mostly because there was little else to do, Manahan went knocking on his congregation's doors in an attempt to get to know people. One man, a teacher by the name of Steve Keesler, was more than a little surprised to see "a preacher" at his house. Manahan recalls that the man laughed so hard that "he couldn't get control of himself." Keesler, unfortunately, was

somewhat representative of the entire congregation's view of the conservative, gospel-driven man who had planted himself among them.

But, when the imperturbable, young-blooded pastor announced a Bible study, Keesler was one of the first to be intrigued. "You mean we could have [a Bible study] at our house?" Manahan said, yes, he meant it. And they did. Half the church showed up.

The next week, Keesler came knocking on Manahan's door. "You know this stuff you talk about?" he said. "I think I need that." Manahan recalls with reverence how that man's life was changed. "It was just radical. He couldn't shut his mouth about the faith. He was such a bear-wrestling, tough dude."

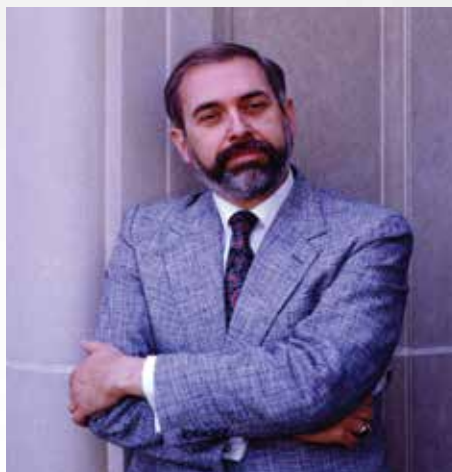
Keesler was just the beginning. Before the Manahans followed God's calling yet again, the church had grown to 200, all believers.

"It wasn't anything we were doing," says Manahan. "It was something God had to do there."

Manahan and Barbara remember this 13-month experience as one of the best in their lives. Little did he know that he was about to relive almost the same story in a totally different setting. God had something to do at Grace too. And he chose that resolute preacher-turned-professor to do it.

A CONFIRMATION OVER LUNCH

Manahan had garnered a reputation as a great, introspective instructor, and Grace



THE ADMINISTRATOR / Dr. Manahan became Grace College's assistant academic dean and general education coordinator in 1985, the vice president for academic affairs in 1987 and Grace's first provost in 1990.

was privileged enough to welcome him back as a professor of biblical studies in 1977 where he faithfully and powerfully taught God's Word. But, before one day in 1982, Manahan wasn't sure whether or not his career at Grace had long-term roots. On that day, another Christian university in Ohio had offered him a contract to teach. Manahan and his wife were seriously looking into the possibility of moving because, for all they knew, Ohio was just the next place God was calling them to. But one man didn't think so.

"So, Homer Kent, Jr. (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56) took me out to lunch one day, and he said, 'I want you to know, we want you to stay,'" Manahan remembers. "It was a very helpful lunch. I think that God used that. That was a stake in the ground for us. And we said, 'OK. We're in for the duration.' We didn't know how long 'duration' was." That lunch, that decision, opened a gate to a winding but clear path for Manahan. The duration, as it turned out, led first to his appointment as vice president of academics and then provost. It was the first time the internal academic management position of

provost existed at Grace, and Manahan was the perfect prototype to fill it.

"During the years I was provost, those were really turbulent years," says Manahan. He recalls meetings where faculty and administration brainstormed strategic ways to bring a shine to an institution that had been dulled by controversy and a subsequent identity crisis. But, while he did his job, participated in the meetings, strove for excellence, the gears were turning in Manahan's mind. And when — after controversial personnel changes nearly sunk Grace — he was asked to become acting president, the ruminating idea manifested itself in a request. "I think that a search [for the new president] should be done... and I want to be included in the search [process]." It was and he was. Dedicated to a willingness to serve and a relentless commitment to accountability, he became, not just acting president, but president in 1994. It was a massive and often problematic inheritance in the beginning, but the inception of his career at the helm began, not with a declaration of confidence on his part, but with yet another request.

“I felt that I needed to be evaluated on a systematic structure.” To date, no such structure was in existence. But Manahan’s request prompted a new system, one that not only assessed the work of the president, but one that probed his board of trustees as well. This prompted a three-year movement of internal- and external-based review, self-evaluation and goal-setting that, in the midst of what had been some of the institution’s darkest days, became the rungs in the ladder which led upward toward a new horizon.

A CHAMPION FOR RESTORATION

Less than two years into Manahan’s presidency, God began to do big things at Grace. “The day he decided that Grace should buy Westminster is the day that Grace turned the corner,” says Grace’s Dean of the School of Adult and Community Education Dr. Steve Grill (BA 70). It was 1996, and Grace hadn’t seen new programs in more than 15 years or buildings in more than 20 years.

But there were bigger problems. The local community saw Grace as a fenced-off island that wasn’t interested in the needs of the community.

“The community felt like all we ever did was ask them for money for projects we never completed and which contributed little back to the community,” laments Grill. So when Manahan decided Grace should buy the dilapidated and soon-to-be-torn-down Westminster Hotel — an old relic to the Winona Lake community — there was plenty of skepticism.

The Board conducted a feasibility study to determine if it could raise enough money to renovate the building. The conclusion was overwhelmingly negative. There wasn’t a dime to be raised from the community. But Manahan wasn’t swayed. He went to the Board and said, “We can either dry up and go away or get connected to the community.”

“And, thank the Lord,” comments Provost Bill Katip, “the Board accepted his recommendation to proceed.”



Dr. Richard Dilling

Professor of Mathematics and Science at Grace College for 45 years until his retirement in 2011.

“One of Ron’s first visions was for Grace to have a distinctive common core general education curriculum. He saw this as being developed around a set of values. To implement this, he appointed a faculty task force to work with him on the set of values Grace would use. He realized that faculty must be totally committed to these for them to work, so he secured a grant from The Lilly Foundation to take a large number of faculty members to Williamsburg, Va., in late May for 10 days, where we focused on historical consciousness, community and critical thinking. Since that time my primary focus of personal academic development was to study original sources in science and math and then incorporate them in my classes.”



CHANGING OF THE GUARD / In 1994 Dr. Manahan succeeded Dr. John Davis (MDiv 62, ThM 64, ThD 67) as the fifth president of Grace College & Seminary. Dr. Homer Kent, Jr. (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56) is pictured left.

Few in the community thought the Westminster renovation project was a good idea. Community leader Jean Northenor, then executive vice president of Lake City Bank (Warsaw), remembers like it was yesterday: Manahan called her and asked her to come walk through Westminster with him. "One of the things I did for the bank was to build banks. So I understood the construction side of things. And oh my goodness. It was such a wreck. There were birds flying around in there! My thought was, "This should just be bull-dozed." But Northenor says there was a sparkle in Manahan's eyes. He believed so confidently that the project could be completed that she decided the only option was to help him.

Manahan formed a committee of community group leaders, and Grill says the only reason it worked is because Manahan's vision was for more than Grace; this project wasn't just about meeting another need for Grace, it was about serving the community. Northenor and several other community leaders agreed to join Manahan's committee, and vision became reality. The committee raised the several million dollars needed to renovate the building.

"He made me a believer," marvels Northenor. "I hardly know how. But next thing I know, I'm on the phone, calling everyone I can think of to donate to this project. And just when I think I can't raise a dime more, we meet with Ron, and I walk out thinking, 'OK. We can do this. I can make some more phone calls.'"

Northenor calls Manahan's ability to make people believe the impossible his "quiet, humble strength." Manahan isn't charismatic. He isn't fiery. On the

contrary, he's reserved and poised. You have to lean in to hear him talk. "But somehow you can't turn him down. If he asks you to do something, you do it. I don't see anyone saying no. And when you say yes, you can be sure he'll work harder than anyone else."

To this day, the first floor of Westminster is used often for community needs. Grace and the community are inseparable now.

Where most see obstacles, Manahan sees opportunity. Westminster was a chance to save and restore a community landmark and create not just more living quarters for Grace students, but meeting and conference space for the community. Of even greater consequence, it was a chance to win over the heart of the community.

Dr. Dane Miller, former president of orthopaedic company Biomet Inc., testifies, "If you say there is something the community needs, Dr. Manahan is on it in a heartbeat."

A UNIFIER & COLLABORATOR

Home to the largest three orthopaedic companies in the world, Warsaw, Ind., is practically synonymous with orthopaedics. So when Manahan was at a seminar in Indianapolis and the speaker inquired what would happen if the orthopaedic companies decided to relocate, an idea began to germinate in Manahan's mind.

Getting the "Big Three" together had never been done before. They were competitors, battling for market share, skilled employees and patents. They



Dr. Richard Jeffreys

Adjunct Professor of Biochemistry

"I believe that Dr. Manahan is cognizant of the need for and the power of prayer. I have seen him in agony when making tough decisions concerning the campus. I have listened to him in prayer pleading with God for His guidance and direction. Dr. Manahan has prayed many times for me and the spiritual and medical needs of my family. Based upon the skill set and multi-tasking needed by the modern-day college president, I believe that the Lord chose Dr. Manahan for heading Grace Schools. He's had the ability to guide the school academically and yet confidently appeal to major contributors, all the while leading a life of reliance on God."

wouldn't even get on the same plane together to travel to the same meeting. Nevertheless, in 2001 Manahan began having conversations with the leaders of Biomet, DePuy and Zimmer before inviting them to meet together to discuss the possibility of building and funding the Orthopaedic Capital Center (OCC), a facility that would be a rallying place for community businesses, Grace athletics, chapel and regional events.

Miller, the president of Biomet at the time, still remembers that first meeting. "The presidents of all three companies showed up for the meeting. I was thinking, 'This is going to work out really well or really badly, and I honestly don't know which.' Turned out, it went really well. We each made a commitment of \$1 million." It was the first time in history that the three largest orthopaedic players supported a joint project. Miller explains, "Ron just won't accept no for an answer. Even though there may be a lot of barriers, he just keeps the ball in play."

Manahan's determined leadership proved to be more than a boon: it was a game-changer. "Ron's character, integrity and persistence have given him an incredible reputation in the community, and you can see it on display in the OCC," says Grill.

A QUIET STRENGTH OBSERVED

Ron has the heart of a champion, the mind of a scholar and the soul of a theologian," says former student and close friend Les Lofquist. Initially, you might not see Manahan's champion spirit. With his soft-spoken speech and listening ear, one might assume that Manahan is more passive in nature. On the contrary, when he believes in the Westminsters and the OCCs, he sees them to completion regardless of obstacles. Grill explains, "He doesn't care if it takes three, five or seven years to make it happen. He'll get everyone on board. He fulfills his vision so kindly and slowly, sometimes you don't even realize you've gotten on board.



Dr. Paulette Sauders

(BA 64, CBS 77)

Chair of the Languages, Literature, and Communication Department; Professor of English and Journalism



THE ARCHITECT / Under Dr. Manahan's leadership, the Orthopaedic Capital Center was completed in 2007 and not only provides classroom, chapel and athletic space for Grace, but also serves as a community center.

"Dr. Manahan was the first president to really stress making connections in the community. Dr. Davis and Dr. Kent did that somewhat, urging faculty to belong to service clubs in town. But Dr. Manahan started a community advisory committee to find out community perceptions of Grace and to see how Grace could help the community. Also, I have always been impressed by the love and support he has shown to his wife Barbara — especially during her illness. But even when she was healthy, I could always see a great deal of love and respect between them."

There's a deeper reservoir — a more powerful resolve — than most would ever understand.”

Not only does he have the heart of a champion, but his mind is equally as strong. Some describe Manahan as “the smartest guy in the room.” But many agree with Lofquist that a deep-seated humility gracefully shrouds his brilliance. “It’s a rare combination. Brilliant people are often arrogant. But Ron is both brilliant and humble.”

Dr. Jeff Gill, dean of the Seminary, agrees. “He truly believes he doesn’t have a corner on the truth. So he’s diligent and persistent in soliciting input from everyone around the table. Even though he’s the smartest guy in the room, because of his humility and listening skills, you’d never think he was the smartest guy in the room.” Gill and Northenor say it’s common for Manahan to be the last person to speak in a discussion, and often, he has to be asked to give his input before he will.

Undergirding his quiet strength and his brilliant mind is Manahan’s theology. Every decision is sifted through God’s Word. Lamarr Lark (BS 87), a Grace Board member and a former student and protégé of Manahan’s, says he’s been most profoundly impacted by Manahan’s belief in, understanding of and commitment to the Bible. “There have been some very difficult, painful, gut-wrenching decisions he’s had to make, from cutting programs to letting go of faculty and staff. Regardless of what’s happening, he always goes back to the Word of God, putting his full trust in the same God that parted the Red Sea and was with Daniel in the lion’s den.”

AN EDUCATION REFORMER

In November of 2011 Manahan went to Washington, D.C. He took a seat with a number of other educational experts and prepared to present to the Congressional Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training on the topic of “Keeping College Within Reach.” Manahan, along with other educational minds, offered his perspective on what higher education schools like Grace could do to stay competitive in an unpredictable economy.

When the recession hit in 2008, nobody wanted to take any chances. It was best to hunker down and ride out the storm. Enrollments were declining across higher education institutions. Colleges were cutting staff and programs to compensate for lost revenue. But Manahan saw the economic downturn differently because, where others see threats, Manahan sees possibilities.

At the hearing, Manahan gave extensive detail about how Grace had been able to brave the waters of the recession by rethinking otherwise traditional educational methods. He spoke of strategy and innovation, bolstering the school’s endeavors by discussing its philosophical and religious underpinnings.

More than one member of that congressional committee was impressed by Manahan’s revelation of Grace’s multi-site Weber School, the carefully monitored cost-control that kept tuition so competitive and many other original initiatives.



Dr. Don DeYoung

(MDiv 83)

Chair of the Department of Science and Mathematics

“Grace has matured in living out creation stewardship since Ron’s presidency began. The campus shows this emphasis with open environmental green spaces, replacement of the Gatke dump site by the OCC, an environmental science major, tree plantings, etc. In past years Ron taught the summer course Environmental Ethics for Au Sable Environmental Institute in northern Michigan, a Christian field station dedicated to outdoor studies. Many Grace students have taken courses at Au Sable over the years. Ron’s Au Sable participation shows his heart for caring for our present-day creation.”

At the end of the hearing, Manahan spoke out one last time in support of “transparency” in how tuition prices were marketed. “To the degree there is a lack of transparency, it diminishes the value of the education, and people begin to sense that deeply,” he remarked. Honesty in a time of crisis, he advocated, was still the best policy.

“Ron truly saw the economic crisis as an opportunity. He believes you have to be able to take advantage of a crisis. Not that he didn’t have some sleepless nights, because he did. But ultimately he saw potential,” says Gill.

Mix together the ashes of the recession and one man’s resolve and what do you get? Grace’s extraordinarily popular three-year bachelor’s degree program. It just goes to show what integrity and competence can do to open doors.

A CONSENSUS BUILDER

During his presidency, Manahan has been a calculating risk-taker, if there is such a thing. He may be the first to see an opportunity, but he takes time assessing it from every angle. “He has this ability to weigh all the pieces and sides. He’s so patient, so thoughtful and deliberates so much on things,” admires Katip. And while he’s evaluating an opportunity, he seeks input from as many people as possible, offering up the data he’s discovered and inviting others to offer input.

Manahan’s deliberateness not only ensured a more successful decision-making process, but it also built

consensus. “Before we came up with the three-year degree option,” remembers Katip, “Ron just kept bringing us data week after week about the recession. Eventually we started to dig deeper and asked him if we should form a committee to investigate possible solutions. I think Ron knew where he wanted us to go from the very beginning. But he let us get there ourselves and along the way, not only did he create buy-in from his team, but it became clearer to him how we might offer students a more affordable education.”

Manahan doesn’t come with a lot of flair or fanfare, says Dr. Dane Miller, community benefactor and co-founder of Biomet, Inc. Instead, he quietly goes about his business and gets the job done. “He’s the kind of guy that you don’t know how fast he’s moving and how far he’s come until you look behind him. He’s very understated. You look around and all of sudden you realize where you were yesterday is not where you are today.”

That almost imperceptible — though monumental — progression is born from a heart that is bent on pleasing God and serving others.

A LEADER’S SUMMATION

It’s typical for leaders to get shortsighted in pursuit of the “big prize” — to miss the most important milestones in attaining the most public ones. Nothing could be further from the truth for the president of Grace College & Seminary.

While Manahan has been at Grace, standards have been high, but tangible



Dr. Marcia Lee

Professor of Biological Science

“Dr. Manahan’s leadership has involved vision, a commitment to prayer and a process of thinking about what’s best for the school. He’s not so much a reactionary as proactive. He has his ideas and his vision, and he always looked to the Lord for leadership. It’s his overall pensive, quiet yet persistent personality that has helped him and us go through some pretty difficult times. Part of that was purposefully seeking help and finding help to get the campus buildings we needed, and I’m very thankful for that.”

and visible progress has not usurped his passion for students and spiritual infrastructure. Manahan plowed both fields and hearts. He believed in the power of modeling, mentoring and discipleship — that faculty members and administrators should live kingdom-focused lives that students can observe, interact with and imitate as they study.

“So, a graduate goes out after graduation,” says Manahan, “... and hopefully they’ve had some model in front of them who said, ‘So how will you live in your community. What is God asking you to do? What voice will you have? Will it only be in your basement to yourself? Or will you live in that rough-and-tumble world, where you may not have exact Bible verses to answer questions, but where God is calling you ... to be there, and to be a light.’”

This means things can get messy. “And that means feeling uncomfortable,” Manahan says. But the mess is a given. Storms are a given. Failure is a given. But we still need to pursue “kingdom work”

as Manahan calls it. The question he hopes drives the school forward is, “How do we get to the point where we run toward that and not away from it?”

The answer begins with our faith in the One who promises to instruct and counsel us in the way we should go and equip us for the purposes to which He calls us. And Manahan believes this with a unique staunchness. Barbara Manahan (C 86) reflectively commented on her husband’s life and leadership, saying, “Early on, Ron started regularly reciting the beginning of Hebrews 11:6: ‘Without faith it is impossible to please God.’” The faithfulness of God to those who follow by faith is also a given.

And if he ever smiles that grand, wide smile of his — the one that greeted you in the halls and on the sidewalk, or as you were handed your degree with a hearty handshake — it’s because he knows without a doubt there is perfect joy in God’s pleasure, perfect contentment in finishing strong and any mess along the way is worth it. The glory is a given. *



Nancy Weimer

(BA 75)

Executive Assistant to the President

“I believe Ron has two characteristics that are unusual in tandem — he is highly relational and highly visionary. I can probably name only two people that have both of those characteristics, and Ron is one. Ron will give people time and time and time. When someone is with him, he does not seem to be cognizant of the passing of time. From the beginning I believe he has known where he wanted to see God take Grace. Although exact changes in our culture and technology would not have been foreseen in the past twenty years, Ron has known that we have to be adaptable to changes and the way higher education is done. He has empowered those under him to be creative in problem solving, and he himself has spent countless hours thinking through the challenges of Christian higher education.”



THE CHIEF LEADER / During Dr. Manahan’s presidency, Grace’s enrollment grew from 835 students to 1821; the college implemented a three-year degree program; its marketing was revamped; the operating budget more than tripled; and numerous programs and partnerships were established.

PRESIDENT OF GRACE
COLLEGE & SEMINARY

DR. RON MANAHAN



CELEBRATING A LIFE OF SERVICE & ACHIEVEMENT



70

Old Testament Award, New Testament Award,
Preaching Award, Grace Theological Seminary

82

McClain Award for
Excellence in Teaching,
Grace College

64

Diploma, Grand
Rapids School of
Bible and Music

67

BA Shelton
College

70

MDiv Grace
Theological
Seminary

73

Chair, Biblical
Studies Dept., Grand
Rapids School of
Bible and Music

77

ThM Grace Theological
Seminary; Chair,
Religion & Philosophy,
Grace College

82

ThD Grace
Theological
Seminary

87

Vice President for
Academic Affairs,
Grace College

1970

1980

DR. MANAHAN'S PRESIDENCY WILL BE REMEMBERED BY HIS UNCANNY ABILITY TO MAKE THE UNATTAINABLE, ATTAINABLE.

Dr. Dane Miller, former president of orthopaedic giant Biomet, puts it this way: "When it doesn't look like it's going to be possible to get an idea implemented, that's when he does his best work. [Manahan] is motivated by the impossible."

During one of his first months as president, Manahan met with a prominent community leader who aptly described the school's precarious state. He warned, "If you don't hit a home run ... the community's going to kiss [Grace] goodbye. It's the bottom of the ninth. Three-two count. You're a run down, there's a guy on first. If you're going

to win, you better hit that ball, and it'd better be a homer." Manahan hit his first homerun with the Westminster project and since then, he's hit a whole lot more.

But it hasn't come as a surprise. One of Manahan's favorite verses to quote is Ephesians 3:20: "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory" Manahan's faith in God has birthed more homeruns during his 20-year tenure as president than anyone imagined. Glory be to God.

