

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

The Hank Center

May 2026



From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Kind greetings, one and all, and welcome to the annual jam-packed "Grad Edition" of our newsletter.

We laud in a special way the seven Catholic Studies seniors who will "walk" this week with their classmates in Loyola's 156th Commencement. We are quite proud of these CS Minors as they represent the core of what we seek to "do" here at LUC and at the Hank Center-- that is, to provide a holistic, transformative undergraduate education in the Catholic-Jesuit tradition. This kind of education discloses itself not only as historically distinct, but also as presently practical. Undergirding any LUC major with the fruits of the Catholic, integrated liberal arts curriculum is more important—and I daresay "useful" (and I am looking at you AI)—than ever, and we thank Dr. Naomi Fisher for her superb leadership as she directs students in the CS minor to intellectual, spiritual, and social growth.

Speaking of history, the Hank Center has officially embarked on its 20th anniversary year, a milestone that we unveiled as we celebrated the excellent Lorraine Ozar at our 2026 Living Tradition Award (LTA) gala last month. Dr. Ozar, the Founding Director of the Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education, is a living legend who has touched lives of so many educators—past, present, and future. Her work, which still continues even into her so-called

"retirement years," demonstrates how important it is to not only train future teachers in innovative pedagogies, but also to help form them with a living sense of spiritual and communal mission—to form them in the living body of the Catholic-Jesuit heritage, a tradition that has served as a unique, holistic, and needed approach to teaching and learning 486 years and counting. Lorraine is the true exemplar here: a living tradition of how faith and reason work in the art, science, and mystery of teaching; a living expression of how the tradition coheres and lives in both a person and in her professional work. Please read Lorriane's LTA reflection below as it is, at once, superb and edifying.

Another teacher of some renown is our Chicago-raised Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. Pope Leo has been much in the news lately, and we are most heartened by his steady, principled leadership—his subtle way of teaching us the needed priorities of peacemaking and forming consciences that practice and grow in proper care and concern. We continue to pray with enthusiasm from our Jesuit context for this wonderful son of Augustine, a teacher who recalls us to the fruits of our Catholic Intellectual and Social tradition, recalls us to simply being who we are. We at the Loyola and the Hank Center continue to work with the Vatican from multiple locations on Holy Father's priorities and are most grateful to do so. Today, May 8, is the first birthday of Pope Leo's Papacy and so Happy Birthday, Pope Leo! Ad multos annos!

Finally, in a similar spirit of gratitude, we take the opportunity here to thank Joan and Bill Hank once again—and to thank their extended family as well—for their extraordinary financial, spiritual, and moral commitment to Loyola and the Hank Center. We look forward to celebrating 20 years with a collection of high profile "20th Anniversary Series" events and hope to see you in person or at Loyola. In the meantime, check our web pages, our [excellent 15th Anniversary commemorative "Coffee Table" book](#), and this very newsletter, even, for a roundup of our initiatives and activities. We have come so far in a short time and are excited by the path that is unfolding before us.

There are so many things to read, celebrate, and view below-- so please read on. Abundant, unreserved thanks to our Hank Center staff: Katie Arnold, Dr. Joe Vukov. Julian Sieber, ABD-- and our undergrad phenoms Vincent, Emily, Matthew, and Kami. What a superb team and it's been another substantive and consequential year here at the Center thanks to their efforts. Vincent, Emily, and Matthew are graduating while the rest of us are in the stupor of total denial. Be that as it may, we wish this cherished trio every grace and happiness. Great cooking, team, and three Huzzahs on that!

Our very best to you, dear reader, as well. Excelsior, and,

Warmest regards,

Dr. Michael P. Murphy

**Hank Center
Highlights and
Calls**

**Join Us for An
Upcoming Event!**

**Ever Ancient, Ever
New:
The Sources of
Pope Leo XIV**

Reflecting on the Gifts of the Semester

**Reflection:
Living Tradition Award 2026
honoring**

Dr. Lorraine Ozar

AI, The Future of Work, and Pope Leo's First Encyclical: What Magnifica Humanitas Might Say



***Wednesday, May 13
Ruth Lake Country Club,
Hinsdale, IL***

Pope Leo XIV has already spoken movingly about the isolation and stress, especially for the young, of modern life. In a different format from our normal lecture, Hank Center Director, Michael P. Murphy and Associate Director, Joe Vukov will dialogue as they consider the prospects for the future as the Church confronts challenges such as social media, cyberreality and artificial intelligence.

**More
Information**

**The Lumen Christi
Institute and the
Hank Center
Presents**



Each spring the Hank Center presents the Living Tradition Award to a retired Loyola University Chicago faculty member who has exemplified the integration of Catholic thought into their work. This award commemorates extraordinary lives of scholarship, research, service, and teaching in specific fields of expertise.

This year, we were pleased to honor Dr. Lorraine Ozar with this award. The ceremony took place on April 21st in McCormick Lounge, Coffey Hall.

Reflection by Lorraine Ozar

I am deeply honored and grateful to receive this award.

This is a remarkable award that has been given to remarkable people. I believe I am the first recipient from the field of Education and that means a lot to me.

I completed a Ph.D. in philosophy at Fordham University, and then I spent over 40 years working in and for Catholic education – working with students, teachers, principals; in elementary schools, in high schools, in diocesan offices around the country and in other parts of the world, and in this university, serving as the founding director of the Adrew Greeley Center for Catholic Education in the School of Education, and leading the national effort to create the first ever and – more importantly, still being used -- *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*. They are even in a second edition!

The Vocation of the Patristic Theologian



**May 23rd, 2026, 4:30
PM - 6:30 PM**
**Loyola University of
Chicago Water Tower
Campus**

This forum invites graduate students and scholars to reflect on the vocation of the patristic theologian and its relationship to contemporary theological studies, the academy, and church today. A panel of senior faculty and early career scholars will speak on this topic in order to provide perspectives from those at every stage of their scholarly career. The discussion will be moderated by Fr. Matthew Dunch of Loyola University Chicago.

This reception and forum, following the annual meeting of the North American Patristics Society, is co-organized by the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage at Loyola University of Chicago and The Lumen Christi Institute.

This event is open to graduate students and faculty. For more information and to receive the registration link contact
gzokal@lumenchristi.org.

I am not a world-class scholar or researcher. I am a good teacher, but with limited time spent in formal classrooms, and more time spent teaching teachers and school leaders in workshops and on-site in schools. My work has been the practical, creative, and, I believe, transformative work of convincing Catholic school leaders and teachers that putting cutting edge educational research into their daily practice was not only within their reach, but an absolute requirement of their mission as Catholic school educators.

To me, that mission is pretty straightforward: to educate the whole person – cognitive, affective, physical, and spiritual – the whole person and every person who comes, to serve the common good, consistent with the Gospels and a Catholic world view as reflected in Catholic social teaching; or to quote Jesuit, John Foley, founder of the Cristo Rey Schools Network, “to make the Kingdom of God concrete in the here and now,” One of my mantras whenever I worked with Catholic educators around the country on curriculum design, assessment, instruction was this: I would say to them, It is unconscionable to ask parents to make a choice between excellent academics and faith-based education. The stakes are too high. We need to be excellent or we need to close...

[Read More](#)

Reflection: Reconciling Justice: A Chicago Conversation on Criminal Justice



Reconciling Justice: A Chicago Conversation on Criminal Justice took place on Monday, May 4, at St. Ignatius College Prep in Tully Hall. The program was organized in partnership with the Archdiocese of Chicago, St. Ignatius College Prep, and the Catholic Criminal Justice Reform Network (CCJRN), an initiative of the Lumen Christi Institute with support from the Hank Center. Hank Board member, The Honorable Thomas More Donnelly (pictured at right), was the main architect and engine of this superb and fruitful initiative.



[More Information](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS for 6th Annual Conference of the [Catholic Studies Consortium](#)

"The Renewal of Your Mind": Catholic Studies and Higher Education

This sixth annual conference of the Catholic Studies Consortium will focus on Catholic Studies as a source of that ongoing and continuous renewal of Catholic Higher Education so powerfully articulated in *Ex corde ecclesiae*.

Papers on the renewal of Catholic Higher Education, especially in the light of *Ex corde ecclesiae*, and the three bullet points are invited:

- in their explicitly interdisciplinary integration premised on the unity of knowledge and complementarity of faith and reason,
- in their fostering of the collegiate life with its cultural, moral, and spiritual formation of the student, and
- in their integration of liberal and professional education to

The evening featured a panel moderated by retired justice Mary Jane Thies and included prominent figures within the criminal justice system, a returning citizen, and a survivor of crime. A delicious meal was served and participants engaged in intentionally curated, moderated roundtable conversations. These conversations facilitated meaningful interactions among key players in the criminal justice system, such as prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, corrections officials, and law enforcement, with those most directly affected by it, including formerly incarcerated individuals, crime victims, and their families.

CCJRN has been hosting these dialogues since 2020, and the previous Chicago dialogue attracted over 200 participants. Survey results consistently demonstrate the transformative impact of these evenings. You can find coverage of the [Michigan dialogue](#) and our the last [Chicago dialogue](#).

Special thanks to Dr. Michael Le Chevalier of the Lumen Christi Institute—and to one of the Hank Center's new Garanzini Fellows, UIC doctoral student K.T. Brizek, who both works on the CCJRN and who participated in one of the table conversations. Read her reflection below, and thank you, K.T.!



Garanzini Fellow, K.T. Brizek, with Hank Center Director, Dr. Michael Murphy at the Reconciling Justice event on Monday, May 4th.

Reflection by K.T. Brizek

On May 4th, the **Catholic Criminal Justice Reform Network** met in Chicago's Near West Side. The network hosts regular dialogues that bring together those responsible for our criminal justice system and those directly impacted by it to break bread and converse in the light of their shared faith. Over 240 people came. The night began with prayer and during dinner we listened to a panel made up of a returning citizen, a grieving mother, a justice, and a retired police officer.

The final hour of the night was reserved for table discussion. My table discussed the obstacles to a more humane system and the struggle to balance justice and mercy. What stuck with me were dyads: us and them, power and service, forgiveness and atonement. Both the cause and the effect of the grave

form leaders of institutions across society.

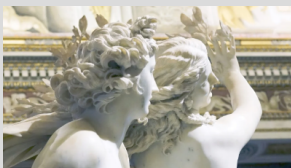
Please submit an abstract of no more than 400 words as well as a one paragraph biography that includes institutional position and affiliation, and research and teaching interest in an attached Word document to Dr. Edmund Lazzari at lazzarie@duq.edu

Proposals are due May 15, 2026 with notification of acceptance/rejection June 15.

More Information

CALL FOR PAPERS for the 8th Power of the Word Conference

"Silence and Word"



The Power of the Word Project Team, supported by the Hank Center, are delighted to announce the eighth Power of the Word Conference, titled Silence and Word: Theology, Philosophy, and Literature in Conversation, which will take place from April 7-9, 2027 at Jesus College, Cambridge.

problems with our criminal justice system is dehumanization: we cannot imagine committing a crime and so we think of those who do as alien and, worse still, associate it with race, class, or place of origin. Perhaps we do not say they are not human, but we think their humanity is not quite the same as ours. These men and women are then treated inhumanely by law enforcement, in the courtroom, and in prison and experience the trauma of dehumanization.

These dialogues are a first step towards reform by connecting at the human level. When you share a meal with a judge and a man who was incarcerated for twenty years, you see for yourself that these are two souls cut from the same cloth: the image and likeness of God. There is nothing we can do that could annihilate that image. I walked away with a prick of conscience: I have this day failed to forgive others the way I would have them forgive.

K. T. Brizek is a Ph.D Candidate in History at the University of Illinois Chicago.

Recap of Semester Events!

2026 Bernardin Dialogues Habemus Papam: Three Journalists Weigh-In on Pope Leo XVI's First Year



**Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
McCormick Lounge, Coffey Hall, Lakeshore Campus**

In less than 12 months since his election to the Chair of St. Peter, Pope Leo has continued Vatican reforms, personally reached out to the faithful in need of support, and inspired the Catholic faithful—both committed and lapsed. His influence has been felt outside of the Catholic Church through his ecumenical and interreligious dialogues, as well as his public ministry to the marginalized in Rome.

To mark the one-year anniversary of Pope Leo's election, The Hank Center hosted a conversation focused on the first year of the Pope Leo's reign: What has he accomplished? Where do we go from here? What remains to be done?

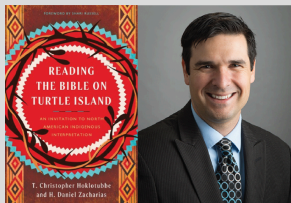
POW warmly invites submissions for papers exploring the interplay between word and silence, and encourage dialogue across a range of academic and creative disciplines, perspectives, and practices.

The deadline for paper submissions is July 30, 2026. More details, including keynotes, themes, submission guidelines, and deadlines, are available in the link below.

[More Information](#)

Book Discussion with Chris Hoklotubbe (Cornell College):

"Reading the Bible on Turtle Island"



This groundbreaking book reimagines biblical interpretation in light of the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples in North America and Canada. All were welcome for a panel discussion with one of the authors, Chris Hoklotubbe (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, ThD, Harvard), joined by Josefrayn Sánchez-Perry (Assistant Professor, Theology Department) and Julian Sieber (PhD

Featured journalists included Colleen Dulle (America), Michael Sean Winters (National Catholic Reporter), and Gretchen Crowe (Our Sunday Visitor) offered their takes on Pope Leo's first year. Dominic Preziosi (Commonweal) moderated.



[Watch the Lecture Video](#)

Conference: Reassessing the Emergence of the Gospels: Genre, Media, Reception



Candidate, New Testament/Early Christianity). This event was hosted by the New Testament/Early Christianity Research Colloquium and the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage.

More about the Book Discussion with Chris Hoklotubbe

EVENT RECAP
Building Bridges Initiative: International Encounter for Peace and Reconciliation



This event, part of the **Building Bridges Initiative**, invited students, faculty, and practitioners to gather for a day of peacebuilding in the synodal spirit. The main objective was to explore, discuss, and propose interdisciplinary avenues on how to promote peace among peoples of the human family. We shared information for reflection in advance, host a pre-meeting on Zoom, and then gathered for structured dialogues similar to Conversations in the Spirit. These topics were introduced and facilitated by

Keynote address by Dr. Mark Goodacre, "On the State of Gospels Research"

More than at any time in perhaps the past 125 years, New Testament scholarship has been returning to serious questions about the nature of the canonical gospels and the processes behind gospel writing. This scholarly resurgence of interest in and reassessment of the emergence of our New Testament gospels may be leading to a renaissance in our contemporary study of the earliest narrative witnesses to the life and ministry of Jesus. The desire with this conference was to bring together the most prominent figures in this current discussion with a view to putting these disparate voices into direct dialogue with each other. This conference thus represented an internationally important endeavor that brought real attention to the subject matter and to the various units of Theology represented at Loyola University Chicago. This event was sponsored by the Joan & Bill Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage and the Loyola University Chicago Department of Theology.



More Information

Book Discussion: *Crabgrass Catholicism* by Stephen M. Koeth

specialists in each of these areas in dialogue with university students from across the Americas. **Review media reports of this needed event here.**

Discussion topics included:

- Peace and the Church
- Peace, Law, and Migration
- Peace and the Economy
- Culture & Art Inspiring Peace
- Peace, Truth, and Justice in an AI era

More Event Information

VIDEO NOW AVAILABLE & EVENT RECAP
The 2026 Annual St. John Henry Newman Lecture featuring David Gibson

"How to be Catholic: A User's Guide to Converting"



Thursday, February 12, 2025, 7 - 8:30 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor, Lakeshore Campus

This year's lecturer was **David Gibson**, Director of the McGrath



Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor, Lakeshore Campus

The 1960s in America were a time of revolt against the stifling conformism embodied in the sprawling, uniform suburbs of the 1950s. Typically, the reforms of the Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council, which aimed to make the Church more modern and accessible, are seen as one result of that broader cultural liberalization. Yet in *Crabgrass Catholicism*, Stephen M. Koeth demonstrates that the liberalization of the Church was instead the product of the mass suburbanization that began some fifteen years earlier.

Koeth argues that postwar suburbanization revolutionized the Catholic parish, the relationship between clergy and laity, conceptions of parochial education, and Catholic participation in US politics, and thereby was a significant factor in the religious disaffiliation that only accelerated in subsequent decades.

Fr. Koeth's talk was a *tour de force*--not only was the substance compelling and well organized, but the oratorical and pedagogical elements of the presentation--too often lacking in lectures like these--were in full bloom.

View **[Crabgrass Catholicism: How Suburbanization Transformed Faith and Politics in Postwar America.](#)**

Fr. Stephen M. Koeth, C.S.C. is Assistant Professor in the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame. He is an urban, religious, and political historian of twentieth-century America. His research focuses on U.S. Catholic involvement in postwar metropolitan development, including urban renewal projects, public housing, and suburbanization, and the effects of these interactions on Catholic faith and politics

This in-person event was free and open to the public.

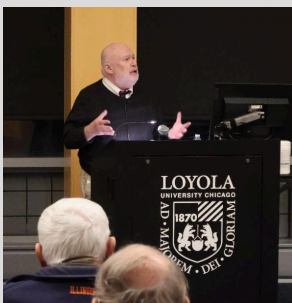
Center on Religion and Culture at Fordham University.

David Gibson went to Rome a Protestant, got hired by the Vatican, traveled the world with the pope, and became Catholic. Nice story. But what could such a tale possibly teach most of us about becoming Catholic, and staying Catholic? In the 2026 Newman Lecture, Gibson – a veteran journalist and currently director of the Center on Religion and Culture at Fordham University – talks about what took him from his upbringing as a “Billy Graham Evangelical” to his conversion to Roman Catholicism, and how his unusual experience relates to our church’s challenges today.

[Watch the Lecture Video](#)

VIDEO NOW AVAILABLE & EVENT RECAP: Annual Jesuit Lecture featuring Fr. Mark Massa, SJ

"Catholic Fundamentalisms"



The Hank Center was pleased to welcome **Fr. Mark Massa, SJ** of



[More Event Information](#)

Flannery 101: Capping the Centenary Year of an American Master



Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 2 - 9:00 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor, Lakeshore Campus

March 25th, 2026 marked 101 years since the birth of acclaimed author, Flannery O'Connor. Though she only published two novels and two collections of short fiction in her life, O'Connor continues to compel and inspire scholars of literature, devotees of the short story, theologians, visual artists and a cast of others. A post-war author, a southerner, a woman, a Catholic writer, a contrarian, she's been identified and grouped in a number of ways, but she always seems to transcend simple reductions. This gathering had as its focus the ways that "art responds to art" and took up the terrain of childhood and the art of teaching O'Connor as robust subthemes. The day was a celebration of an artist who put her

**Boston College's
Boisi Center for
Religion and
American Public Life,**

for its 2025 Jesuit Lecture. He spoke about his new book, Catholic Fundamentalism in America. Heidi Schlumpf, Senior Correspondent for Commonweal, provided a response.

The term "fundamentalism" has its roots in specific forms of American Protestantism that arose around the turn of the twentieth century in reaction to liberalizing and modernizing trends within the church. In this book, Mark Massa argues that an analogously reactive, militant, and sectarian "fundamentalist" movement emerged within American Catholicism in the decades after World War II, for a similarly complex mix of theological and cultural reasons. In Catholic Fundamentalism in America Massa gives the first account of the Catholic form of the anti-modernist impulse. Through seven portraits of individuals and movements that embody the Catholic fundamentalist impulse, Massa demonstrates how the Catholic Right, like its evangelical Protestant counterpart, has reacted to--and fought against--modern American culture.

The response was given by **Heidi Schlumpf**. Heidi Schlumpf is an award-

storytelling first, who embraced discomfort in the pursuit of truth, and who knew that "anybody who has survived his childhood has enough information about life to last him the rest of his days."

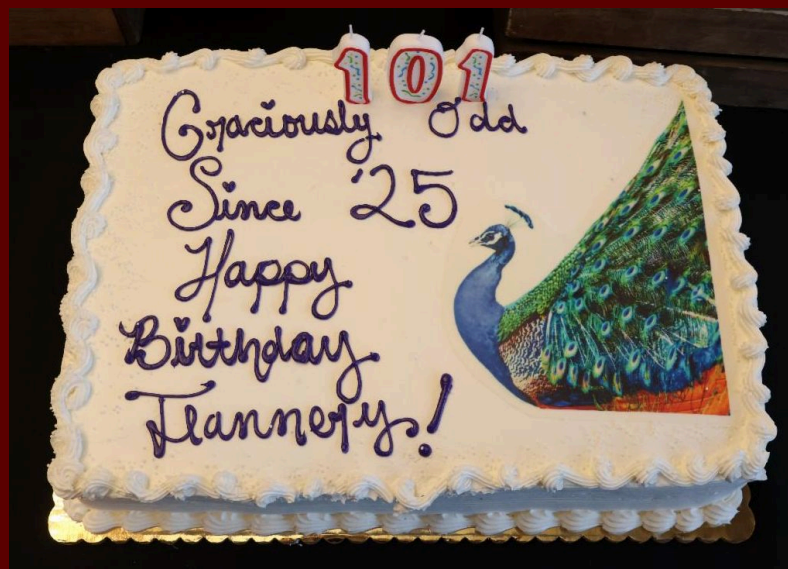
Conference attendees reported how deeply appreciative if this multi panel colloquium citing a "great mix of academic experience, spiritual retreat, and fun birthday party." That's high praise and it matches our Hank Center planning objectives.

Featured speakers--and performers--for this event include Amy Alznauer, Fr. Mark Bosco, S.J., Angela Alaimo O' Donnell, Elizabeth Coffman, Colin Cutler, Claudia Zoe Bedrick, Ping Zhu, Nick Coffman-Price, and Hank Center Director, Michael P. Murphy.

*This in-person event was free and open to the public. **Video available soon.***



Folk Musician, Colin Cutler, performs during Session Two, "Art Responding to Art: Demonstrations in Cinema, Gaming, and Music"



winning, nationally recognized multimedia journalist, editor and podcaster with three decades of experience covering religion, spirituality, political, social and women's issues. She is currently the senior correspondent at [Commonweal Magazine](#).

Watch the
Lecture Video

More Event Information

Faith that Builds Worlds: the Catholic Imagination and Speculative Storytelling Conference



We were happy to host the Faith that Builds Worlds Conference on Saturday, March 14th at Loyola's Lakeshore Campus. This conference brought together experts from across the speculative fiction genres--horror, fantasy and sci-fi--for a series of presentations and panels about the art of worldbuilding and its place in the spiritual life.

Worldbuilding is inherently spiritual. Worldbuilding in speculative storytelling insists that all things have meaning, that—if we but hold on until the end, gathering up pieces of language and lore, architecture and myth—all will be revealed. Every tiny detail helps a reader understand the new and wondrous world that the storyteller is weaving together.

Worldbuilding, when seen through a spiritual lens, sits squarely atop the oft-noted Ignatian insight that God *is in all things* and that all things glimmer with God's grace. All things—even small—have value, even if we can't immediately see what that value is. Too often, though, we're tempted to ignore or skip past those details in our lives that don't have immediate, understandable value. As adults, we claim to be far too busy for those aspects of life without an immediate ROI.

Fairy tales and fantasy—all the genres of speculative storytelling—have long battled the trope that such nonsensical storytelling is just for children, that wasting time on fictional worlds is a form of foolish escapism. But what if we have it all wrong? Children, after all, are expert worldbuilders. They need to be if they're going to grow. Children, as they develop, collect seemingly random pieces of information, holding this collection in their heads until such information becomes useful. This is worldbuilding! And yet, when it happens in the real world, we simply call it growing up.

This in-person event was free and open to the public.



[More Event Information](#)

[Article: "A Gathering for Those Whose Faith Builds Worlds" by the Jesuit Media Lab](#)

[Watch the Conference Videos](#)

*The Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.
Fellowships in the Catholic
Intellectual Tradition*



The Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.

Michael Garanzini, S.J.

Fellowships in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

The Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., Fellowships in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition encourage and support graduate students in their exploration of the Catholic intellectual tradition in its many disciplinary and creative forms—in theology and philosophy, literature and the arts, natural and social sciences, social movements and culture, pedagogy and pastoral life. Named for Fr. Michael Garanzini, S.J., whose tenure as President of Loyola University Chicago from 2001-2015 was a profoundly transformational, watershed example of leadership and vision, the Garanzini Fellowships support the next generation of Catholic scholars across the United States as they engage life-giving scholarship in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.

Spotlight:
**The Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., Fellowships in the
Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

Meet our Fellows!

Julian Sieber



Julian Sieber is a Theology Ph.D. candidate in New Testament and Early Christianity at Loyola University Chicago and holds an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School and a B.A. in Film & Television from Curtin University in Western Australia. In his dissertation, titled “Autochthonous Narratives: The Politics and Poetics of Land-Based Epistemologies in the Acts of the Apostles,” he seeks to better describe the complex positionalities of the text at the specific intersection of politics, religion, and conceptualizations of the environmental and imperial spatiality. To this end, he employs a decolonial hermeneutic that draws upon a variety of modern scholarship on indigenous land-based religious traditions and indigenous literature, complicating Western settler colonial presuppositions of land, space, and the environment as mere background scenery to theological ideas. He argues that Acts articulates a complex poetics of land that echoes, yet attempts to distance itself from, certain diverse strands of land oriented Second Temple Judaism. This serves to gain sociopolitical clout within the Greco-Roman world around the turn of the 2nd century C.E. and preempts the consciously land-disoriented theology of many influential early Christian theologians.

Emily Turner



Emily Turner is a Ph.D. candidate in Historical Theology/History of Christianity at Boston College. She received her B.A. in History and Latin American Studies from Willamette University (2017) and an M.A. in Religion with a concentration in Theology from Yale Divinity School (2021). Her major area of research is early Christian theology, especially the co-emergence of Christian legal and theological traditions in the 3rd to 5th centuries. She is also interested in the development and application of contemporary canon law, especially since its codification in 1917.

Emily's dissertation is a study of early Christian governing priorities with a historical focus on 3rd-5th century Christian North Africa and a contemporary interest in the relevance of those priorities for the theory and practice of Roman Catholic canon law.

Meet All of Our Fellows!



In the spirit of cultivating the Catholic intellectual and artistic tradition, CCIH recommends new and notable books several times a year that integrate, interrogate, and celebrate Catholicism in dialogue with the world.

[The Theological Imagination: Perception and Interpretation in Life, Art, and Faith \(2025\)](#)

Author: Judith Wolfe, Publisher: Cambridge University Press

How can we live truthfully in a world riddled with ambiguity, contradiction, and clashing viewpoints? We make sense of the world imaginatively, resolving ambiguous and incomplete impressions into distinct forms and wholes. But the images, objects, words, and even lives of which we make sense in this way always have more or other possible meanings. Judith Wolfe argues that faith gives us courage both to shape our world creatively, and reverently to let things be more than we can imagine. Drawing on complementary materials from literature, psychology, art, and philosophy, her remarkable book demonstrates that Christian theology offers a potent way of imagining the world even as it brings us to the limits of our capacity to imagine. In revealing the significance of unseen

depths – of what does not yet make sense to us, and the incomplete – Wolfe characterizes faith as trust in God that surpasses all imagination.

Karl Barth on Religion (2024)

Author: Keith Ward, Publisher: Cambridge University Press

Karl Barth is one of the most influential theologians of the past century, especially within conservative branches of Christianity. Liberals, by contrast, find many of his ideas to be problematic. In this study, Keith Ward offers a detailed critique of Barth's views on religion and revelation as articulated in *Church Dogmatics*. Against Barth's definition of religions as self-centred, wilful, and arbitrary human constructions, Ward offers a defence of world religions as a God-inspired search for and insight into spiritual truth. Questioning Barth's rejection of natural theology and metaphysics, he provides a defence of the necessity of a philosophical foundation for Christian faith. Ward also dismisses Barth's biased summaries of German liberal thought, upholding a theological liberalism that incorporates Enlightenment ideas of critical inquiry and universal human rights that also retains beliefs that are central to Christianity. Ward defends the universality of divine grace against Barth's apparent denial of it to non-Christian religions.

Just Universities: Catholic Social Teaching Confronts Corporatized Higher Education (2021)

Author: Gerald J. Beyer, Publisher: Fordham University Press

Gerald J. Beyer's *Just Universities* discusses ways that U.S. Catholic institutions of higher education have embodied or failed to embody Catholic social teaching in their campus policies and practices. Beyer argues that the corporatization of the university has infected U.S. higher education with hyper-individualistic models and practices that hinder the ability of Catholic institutions to create an environment imbued with bedrock values and principles of Catholic Social Teaching such as respect for human rights, solidarity, and justice. Beyer problematizes corporatized higher education and shows how it has adversely affected efforts at Catholic schools to promote worker justice on campus; equitable admissions; financial aid; retention policies; diversity and inclusion policies that treat people of color, women, and LGBTQ persons as full community members; just investment; and stewardship of resources and the environment.

Pioneers of Latino Ministry: Claretians and the Evolving World of Catholic America (2025)

Author: Deborah E. Kanter, Publisher: NYU Press

Pioneers of Latino Ministry tells the story of the Claretian Missionaries, a male Catholic congregation, dedicated to Latin American immigrants and their families on the margins of US society since 1902. The Claretians' accompaniment of Latinos makes them distinct in American Catholic history. When the first Claretians arrived from Mexico, Spanish speakers were a small, often unrecognized part of Catholic America. Today Latinos constitute half of US Catholics.

The Claretians inaugurated parishes and schools in over fifteen states. Their outreach was felt in wider Catholic America as they published popular magazines, created missions in Central America, and fostered a now wide-spread devotion to St. Jude. They cultivated respect and dignity for Latino people in regions where wider society marginalized the newcomers. Because they encouraged education and leadership within their parishes, many Latinos emerged to lead and enhance US Catholic life as priests, female religious, and lay leaders. Today, the Claretians have circled back to their original mission in the US: committed to new generations of immigrants and their children.

Pioneers of Latino Ministry charts the history of the Claretians and their influence on Latino Catholics in the US, as well as on broader American Catholicism. Filled with compelling stories, the volume offers a vital portrait of unexplored Catholic American history.

African Ecological Ethics and Spirituality for Cosmic Flourishing: An African Commentary on Laudato Si' (2022)

Edited by: Stan Chu Ilo, Publisher: WIPF and Stock Publishers

This is the definitive African text on ecological ethics, African environmental spirituality, a theology of creation, and climate justice. The contributors to this important volume explore the common threats facing this earth our common home and the particular threats facing Africa because of our sick environment, unsustainable development practices, and the false narratives and programs of modernity in the African Motherland. Here, African environmentalists, theologians, and peace advocates in conversation with Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'*, develop a roadmap for pastoral, local, and global education on ecological consciousness in order to bring about ecological conversion. African ecological wisdom is also offered as indispensable resources for recovering the intimate connection of all creatures and all peoples and as a praxis of solidarity for the poor, and our fragile earth.

Faith, Family, and Flag: Branson Entertainment and the Idea of America (2025)

Author: Joanna Dee Das, Publisher: The University of Chicago Press

Sons of Britches. The Great American Chuckwagon Dinner Show. The Haygoods. The Grand Jubilee. These are just a couple of the many shows performed in Branson, MO, a popular tourist destination that has played a role in the nation's culture wars for over one hundred years.

Branson, Missouri, the Ozark Mountain mecca of wholesome entertainment, has been home to countless stage shows espousing patriotism and Christianity, welcoming over ten million visitors a year. Some consider it "God's Country" and others "as close to Hell as anything on Earth." For Joanna Dee Das, Branson is a political, religious, and cultural harbinger of a certain enduring dream of what America is. She takes Branson more seriously than the light-hearted fun it advertises—and maybe we should too.

For Das, Branson's performers offer visions of the American Dream that embody a set of values known as the three Fs: faith, family, and flag. Branson boosters insist that these are universal values that welcome all people; the city aims to capture as many tourists as possible. But over the past several decades, faith, family, and flag have become markers of contemporary conservatism. The shows and culture of Branson, for all their fun and laughter, have been a galvanizing political force for white, working-and-middle class, Christian Americans. For social and economic conservatives alike, Branson is practically proof-of-concept for America as they want it to be.

Faith, Family, and Flag is a comprehensive history of the Branson entertainment industry, within the context of America's long culture wars. Das reveals how and why a town known for popular entertainment, a domain associated most often with the political left ("Hollywood liberals"), came to be so important to the political right and its vision for America.

A Consistent Ethic Of Life: Navigating Catholic Engagement with U.S. Politics (2024)

Author: Steven P. Millies, Publisher: Paulist Press

The consistent ethic of life is a fully Catholic engagement with the difficult challenges that conscience encounters in our time. This short book is a resource for parishes and general readers to rediscover the consistent ethic now in this challenging, divided moment of our history.

Tracing the historical development of the consistent ethic from the early 1970s up to recent days, *A Consistent Ethic of Life* encourages readers to adopt an attitude that calls them to be partisans for life above the partisanship of our politics.

Startling Figures: Encounters with American Catholic Fiction (2023)

Author: Michael O'Connell, Publisher: Fordham University Press

Startling Figures is about Catholic fiction in a secular age and the rhetorical strategies Catholic writers employ to reach a skeptical, indifferent, or even hostile audience. Although characters in contemporary Catholic fiction frequently struggle with doubt and fear, these works retain a belief in the possibility for transcendent meaning and value beyond the limits of the purely secular. Individual chapters include close readings of some of the best works of contemporary American Catholic fiction, which shed light on the narrative techniques that Catholic writers use to point their characters, and their readers, beyond the horizon of secularity and toward an idea of transcendence

while also making connections between the widely acknowledged twentieth-century masters of the form and their twenty-first-century counterparts.

This book is focused both on the aspects of craft that Catholic writers employ to shape the reader's experience of the story and on the effect the story has on the reader. One recurring theme that is central to both is how often Catholic writers use narrative violence and other, similar disorienting techniques in order to unsettle the reader. These moments can leave both characters within the stories and the readers themselves shaken and unmoored, and this, O'Connell argues, is often a first step toward the recognition, and even possibly the acceptance, of grace. Individual chapters look at these themes in the works of Flannery O'Connor, J. F. Powers, Walker Percy, Tim Gautreaux, Alice McDermott, George Saunders, and Phil Klay and Kirstin Valdez Quade.

The Love of Learning and The Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture (1982)

Author: Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., Publisher: Fordham University Press

The Love of Learning and the Desire for God is a classic text composed of a series of lectures given to young monks at the Institute of Monastic Studies at Sant'Anselmo in Rome during the winter of 1955-56. For those interested in Catholic education -- particularly the "poetic knowledge" and "poetic education" movements -- as well as those who want to understand more deeply the medieval mind, this book is profoundly helpful. One finds, among the occasionally dry descriptions of monastic writing style or various influences of obscure monastics, that one is swept up into the beauty, simplicity, and poetry of monastic life. LeClercq inspires his readers to seek God more ardently, more simply, more courageously, and to fill one's heart and the world with Beauty. A delight to read--and re-read--particularly for those of literary, medieval, or liturgical bent.

Hindsight: Poems (2025)

Author: Rosanna Warren, Publisher: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

One of the California Review of Books' Best Poetry Books of 2025

A meditation on damage, aging, and injustice from a poet whose work “live[s] in a realm of classical purity” (Anthony Hecht).

Hindsight arises from a tormented time in our country's history. Some poems contemplate the shocks of the COVID-19 assault. Others consider our nation, which is torn to pieces politically. The poems in this collection attempt to find a language to describe the breakage.

But political fracture occurs because of more fundamental dislocations: for this book, most crucially, spiritual. A search for forms of the sacred drives the whole collection. It's a book of questions, not answers. In places, it struggles with the Christian story of sacrifice and crucifixion: a heretical attempt to make sense of suffering and of aggression. “Offices” and “Concerning ceremonies” borrow Christian liturgy to chart an experience of learning compassion. Each poem asks some version of the driving question from “Dead Flowers”: “What can be made of all this / grief.” Other poems turn to Judaism and Buddhism to see what wisdom they offer.

Beneath theology pulses the private life. These poems look into a personal past and try to weigh the moral meaning of experience. In “Hindsight,” the speaker discovers, “I could have / seen you better, I / know that now.” Who have we been as we struggled to grow up? Whom have we hurt? What does it mean to be conscious?

Hindsight elegantly embraces life writ large—larger than we are, sometimes violent, sometimes harshly beautiful—as ongoing instruction, in turn leaving the reader with a lyrical compass for orientation in our troubled moment.

The Pelican Child: Stories (2025)

Author: Joy Williams, Publisher: Knopf

“Night was best, for, as everyone knows, but does not tell, the sobbing of the earth is most audible at night.” “Men are but unconscious machines and they perform their cruelties so effortlessly.”

“Caring was a power she’d once possessed but had given up freely.” The sentences of Joy Williams are like no other—the coiled wit, the sense of a confused and ruined landscape, even the slight chortle of hope that lurks between the words—for the scrupulous effort of telling, in these eleven stories, has a ravishing beauty that belies their substance. We meet lost souls like the twin-sister heiresses of a dirty industrial fortune in “After the Haiku Period,” who must commit a violent act in recompense for their family’s deeds; in “Nettle,” a newly grown man who still revolves in a dreamscape of his childhood boarding-school innocence; the ghost of George Gurdieff, on an obsessive visit to the Arizona birthplace of the shining Susan Sontag; the “pelican child” who lives with the bony, ill-tempered Baba Yaga in a little hut on chicken legs.

All of these characters insist on exploring, often at their peril, an indifferent and caustic world: they struggle against our degradation of the climate, of each other, and of honest human experience (“I try to relate only to what is immediately verifiable,” says one narrator ruefully), possibly in vain. But each brief, haunted triumph of understanding is celebrated by Williams, a writer for our time and all time.

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About the Center

The Joan and Bill Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage exists to help faculty and students recognize and research Roman Catholic thought and its link to all academic disciplines in the university. It also seeks to convey that thought to other audiences inside and outside Loyola University Chicago.



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