From the Desk of Fr. Mark Bosco, S.J.

Dear Friends,

Spring has finally sprung on Loyola’s campus and graduation ceremonies begin soon. It has been an exciting time at the Hank Center. Our mission—to connect, to communicate, and to research the Catholic intellectual heritage—produced 23 events this past academic year. Students, faculty, and invited scholars and artists from around the world participated in a myriad of programs. A few of our spring initiatives were brand new for the Center, including our Cardinal Newman Lecture, our Catholicism and the Arts symposium and our Lunch with LUMA series.

This was a momentous spring for the life of the Catholic Church, with both a papal resignation and conclave. The Center found itself inundated with calls for interviews from both local and national media, and around campus we hosted a faculty-student panel entitled Habemus Papam: Abidication, Conclave, and the Chair of St. Peter. After the election of the first Jesuit Pope, the Center found itself again taking calls from the press, as the world tried to understand the Jesuit quality in the life of Pope Francis.

In April we celebrated a papal commemoration of a different sort, the 50th anniversary of the watershed encyclical of Pope John XXIII on peace and justice, Pacem in terris. The Center sponsored a panel with faculty, a symposium with students, and a culminating lecture by Senator George Mitchell on his role as a peacemaker in Ireland. Last but not least, our spring colloquium, Music of the Jesuit Missions, performed newly recovered archival music of the Jesuit missions in Mexico. A Hank Center Faculty Research Grant funded the restoration of these musical compositions.

We bid adieu for the summer, but consider joining us in the fall when we continue to recover and rediscover the rich cultural heritage of Catholicism in intellectual and artistic life today.

Dr. Mark Bosco, SJ
Our first conference is devoted to the Italian American experience, investigating how Catholic faith and devotional life bolstered Italian cultural/national identity at the same time that the Church's institutions helped to assimilate them into a new city and nation.

The conference will include scholars from the fields of ethnic studies, urban and cultural history, literature and language, theology, and sociology of religion, as well as many Italian American artists who hail from Chicago and midwest. Future planned conferences to follow this one will look at the role of Catholicism in the life of Mexican, Polish, Lithuanian, Vietnamese, and African immigration.

Follow the link for more information

Catholic Studies Program Highlights

Last week, we honored our graduating Catholic Studies Minors at our annual Spring Banquet. A large contingency of students and invited guests gathered at Ignatius House for food and fellowship. The main event of the evening was to experience the presentation of Senior Capstone projects. These presentations, based on longer, culminating papers, demonstrated the broad, interdisciplinary scope of the Catholic intellectual and artistic tradition-ranging from reflections on the political thought of St. Augustine (articulated in his classic City of God) to a performance art piece that featured a one woman dramatic interpretation of Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find." It was a special evening and a real treat to behold a wide range of creative and scholarly work. Graduating seniors received the Catholic Studies diplomas, the result of four years of excellent, intentional work.

The banquet caps off a full semester of Catholic Studies programming. In March, Associate Provost, Fr. Justin Daffron, S.J. introduced students to a cornerstone of Ignatian spirituality at the bi-annual students only event "Catholic Q and A." In his presentation, What are Spiritual Exercises and do They Require Stretching Fr. Daffron's delighted students with his insights into a method of prayer developed by St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus. Students were struck by the practicality of the exercises and energized to learn more about this effective and highly adaptable "spiritual workout."

Catholic Studies Minor community will inaugurate the first annual John Courtney Murray Forum next spring. This forum seeks to not only examine a topic of broad, interdisciplinary interest, but also aims to showcase the vast abilities of undergraduate students. From conception to advertising, from panelists to moderator (and all places in between), the JC Murray Forum provides a venue for students to
be both instigators and practitioners of their own learning. We decided upon an exciting topic at our April workshop at LUREC, but, in the spirit of deep Catholicism, will keep this topic a mystery until our next newsletter.

Dr. Michael Murphy
Catholic Studies Program Director

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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.