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Faith’s Reasons

The Catholic Intellectual Tradition at the University of Dayton

“St. Peter said that we must give a reason for the faith that is in us, and I am trying to give you those reasons . . .” —Dorothy Day

UD Faculty at New National Catholic Initiative

by Anthony B. Smith (Religious Studies)

University of Dayton faculty represented a substantial presence at the opening meeting of a major new initiative entitled, “Passing on the Faith, Passing on the Church,” organized by the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University, April 1-2, 2005. They included Una Cadegan (History), Fr. James Heft (University Professor of Faith and Culture), Cecilia Moore (Religious Studies), Anthony B. Smith (Religious Studies), Sandra Yocum Mize (Religious Studies). These UD faculty have been asked to participate in a three-year consultation exploring the future of the Catholic community in the United States. The project focuses on three specific areas of concern—the question of generational differences in religious practice and belief, models of effective lay and clerical leadership in the American church at the parish, diocesan and national levels, and the role of American Catholic studies in understanding the Church in America. The consultation includes approximately 90 scholars and church leaders including academics, journalists, bishops, youth ministers and diocesan officials. This large group has been broken into three subgroups, each intended on exploring one of the three major issues. Over the next three years, the subgroups will meet and develop papers to present to wider publics on the future of American Catholicism, beginning in the spring of 2006 at a conference at the Lincoln Center campus of Fordham University.

The initial meeting involved an opening night dinner in mid-town Manhattan and a day-long session at the main Fordham campus in the Bronx. UD faculty constituted the largest group outside Fordham University itself represented at the conference, highlighting the role that UD scholars are playing in important conversations about Catholicism in America today. Among the issues discussed were the challenges posed by a younger generation of Catholics whose spirituality was described as “benign whatever-ism” (defined as “moralistic, therapeutic deism”) by Christian Smith in Soul Searching (Oxford, 2005), the urgency of fostering new styles of effective leadership, and the creative potential of translating the emerging field of American Catholic studies into a resource for the wider Church.

Over the course of the two-day meeting it became clear how propitious the current moment is for American Catholic studies within Catholic universities. Twenty years of creative, critical work in the study of American Catholicism, including contributions from a number of UD faculty, have resulted in a dynamic, interdisciplinary academic field. This has occurred at a time when religion itself, as Stanley Fish recently suggested, has become perhaps the most important and exciting area of exploration in the academy. As the study of American Catholicism has assumed a new, robust profile, however, the Church itself faces a critical period. In this regard, UD’s own sustained efforts to develop the Catholic intellectual tradition have positioned its faculty to contribute to wider discussions about the future of the Church in America. Conference sessions revealed that while some universities are in the early stages of exploring how to develop programs in Catholic studies, UD participants could draw upon a wealth of practice and conversation to reflect on the merits, difficulties and strategies of developing the Catholic identity of academic programs and institutions. The next meeting of “Passing on the Faith, Passing on the Church,” will be in December,
Seminar on Engineering at a Catholic University

In his most recent interdisciplinary faculty seminar, Fr. Jim Heft, S.M., led a group of faculty in a semester-long exploration of engineering at a Catholic university. Other participants included Peggy DesAutels (Philosophy), Wiebke Diestelkamp (Mathematics), Brad Duncan (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Daniel Farhey (Civil/Environmental Engineering & Engineering Mechanics), Bro. Ray Fitz, S.M. (Ferree Professor of Social Justice), Brad Hume (History), Brad Kallenberg (Religious Studies), Mickey McCabe (Associate Vice President & Director, University of Dayton Research Institute), Andrew Murray (Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering), Leno Pedrotti (Physics), and Robert Wilkens (Chemical & Materials Engineering).

The seminar met weekly for spirited interdisciplinary discussion of readings on topics that included the mission of the university, the mission of a Catholic university, vocation and engineering as a vocation, the history of engineering, engineering today, gender and engineering, the role of the engineer in society and how the Marianist mission and the distinctive identity of UD might translate into specific curricular recommendations for engineers and for the faculty at large.

The seminar also examined questions of ethics (of contributing to a consumer society, of accepting defense contracts), social justice, the sacramentality of engineering, creativity in engineering and inspiring students to think creatively in a way that could be tied to the larger goals of UD and of Marianist education. The seminar will continue to meet less frequently through summer 2005 as members work on projects ranging from curricular collaborations to individual research covering issues discussed during the semester.

Conversations on Research and Reading

Research

The Forum on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition Today sponsored a number of discussions during the academic year that were open to participation by all faculty and staff. Two of the discussions centered on faculty research funded by the Forum through Summer 2004 Research Council Seed Grants. Sr. Laura Leming, F.M.I., Ph.D., of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work, reported on her research studying a local chapter of the Voice of the Faithful. VOTF is a lay group founded in response to the clergy sexual abuse crisis. Sr. Laura has studied the local chapter since its founding, attending meetings and interviewing VOTF members and local clergy with the aim of understanding the group as a potential agent of change in the Church.

A second discussion focused on the work of Dr. Danielle Poe (Philosophy) on "Teaching Peace at a Catholic University." "The focus of my research," Dr. Poe writes, "is on the question, 'How can we use our daily interactions and commitments to move to more so-called "idealistic" ethical commitments?' For instance, we all admire people such as Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King, Jr., but we don't know how to apply that in our own lives. One area that I find promising for many people (not everyone) is the way in which romantic love can open people to more active justice commitments."

Reading discussions

Two other Forum-sponsored discussions invited faculty and staff to read and discuss books on topics of interest. The Forum provided the books and a meal around which to gather.

A two-part discussion grew up around the volume of essays Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The volume was edited by Fr. James L. Heft, S.M., Ph.D., who was also one of the key organizers of the international conference sponsored by the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies and held in May 2003 at the University of Southern California) that produced the volume. The volume's six essays were the conference's keynote addresses, in which speakers from each of the three religious traditions were asked to reflect on the question of what resources might be available in their respective traditions to address the persistence and prev-
ience of religious violence. Interest in the volume was great enough to generate two discussions, one in the fall and one in the winter semester.

The other book discussion focused on *Soul on Soul: The Life and Music of Mary Lou Williams*, by Tammy Kernodle of the Department of Music at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. Mary Lou Williams was a jazz pianist and composer active and influential in the jazz world for decades. After her conversion to Roman Catholicism in the 1950s, she began composing jazz masses and other religious music, a number of which were performed at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, among other venues. Dr. Kernodle presented an earlier version of this research in a public lecture at UD several years ago—the Forum was very happy to welcome her back to celebrate the book’s publication.

**ACHA Spring Meeting**

The Spring 2005 Meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association was held on campus April 22-23. The ACHA was founded in 1919 by and for scholars interested in the history of the Catholic Church or in Catholic aspects of secular history. The Association meets twice a year—once jointly with the American Historical Association at its annual meeting in January, and once in the spring on a university campus. The Spring Meeting was last held at UD in 1975.

The program featured 45 presenters from universities in three countries. Special sessions were devoted to undergraduate research at the University of St. Thomas (Houston) and at UD, and to recent work by students in UD’s Religious Studies doctoral program in the Theology of the U.S. Catholic Experience.

The meeting’s welcoming social featured tours of UD’s Marian Library—the largest collection of printed material related to Mary—including the art gallery, which regularly features new Marian art, and the rotating permanent display of the Library’s large collection of Christmas creches. Also open for tours by ACHA members were the U.S. Catholic Collection, a special collection recently established to support the doctoral program in theology, and the Provincial Archives of the Society of Mary.

The conference banquet was followed by a powerfully evocative presentation by Dr. Cecilia Moore of UD’s Religious Studies Department. Dr. Moore is helping to research the history of the Society of Christ the King, a women’s religious community founded in the 1930s, members of which moved in the 1950s to Danville, Virginia, and over the next decade played a significant role in the events of the Civil Rights movement as it evolved locally.

**Past and Future Marianist Awards**

The 2005 Marianist Award will be presented to historian David J. O’Brien of the College of the Holy Cross. Dr. O’Brien is a historian of U.S. Catholicism whose publications include *American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years* (1968); *The Renewal of American Catholicism* (1972); *Renewing the Earth: Catholic Documents on Peace, Justice and Liberation* (1977); *Faith and Friendship: Catholicism in the Diocese of Syracuse, 1886-1986* (1987); *Public Catholicism* (1988); *Isaac Hecker* (1992); *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage* (1992) and *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture* (1994). He has also been active for decades in national discussion of the role of the laity in the Vatican II era, the future shape of Catholic Studies, the process of implementing *Ex corde ecclesiae* (the Vatican’s Apostolic Constitution on higher education), and the clergy sexual abuse crisis.

The Marianist Award is presented annually to a Catholic who has made a significant contribution to the intellectual life. The award ceremony includes an invitation to the awardees to present an address reflecting on the relationship between their faith and their scholarly work.

Fr. James Heft, S.M., has collected the second decade of Marianist Award addresses into a volume to be titled *Believing Scholars: Ten Catholic Intellectuals*, forthcoming this fall from Fordham University Press. The volume will include pieces by Charles Taylor, Gustavo Gutierrez, David Tracy, Jill Ker Conway, Marcia Colish, Mary
Ann Glendon, Mary Douglas, Peter Steinfels, Margaret O’Brien Steinfels and Cardinal Avery Dulles. The first decade’s addresses were previously published by the University of Notre Dame Press as Faith and the Intellectual Life.

The 2005 Marianist Award ceremony will be held in the first part of September 2005; details will be announced as they are finalized.

**Faculty seminar, 2005-06**

Seventeen faculty from nearly every unit of the university will meet regularly during the 2005-06 academic year to study and discuss research and sources in Catholic intellectual tradition. Participants will receive a one-course reduction for each semester. Participants include Jim Biddle (Teacher Education), Una Cadegan (History/American Studies), Corinne Daprano (Health and Sport Science), Pat Donnelly (Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work), Jim Heft, S.M. (University Professor of Faith and Culture and Chancellor), Fred Jenkins (interim Dean of Libraries), Kelly Johnson (Religious Studies), Andrea Kozial (Geology), Laura Leming, F.M.I. (Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work), Jack McGrath, S.M. (Religious Studies), Caroline Merithew (History), Gary Morrow (Chemistry), Kurt Mosser (Philosophy), Danielle Poe (Philosophy), Scott Schneider (Engineering Technology), and Tony Smith (Religious Studies).

The purpose of the seminar is to renew and extend the intellectual community UD aims to create surrounding issues of Catholic intellectual tradition. Reading will consist of recent and newly-relevant works in theology and, in the second semester, works that illustrate how topics in Catholic intellectual tradition are approached from and in a variety of other disciplines.

**Engineering and a Catholic University**

The School of Engineering will sponsor a conference on The Role of Engineering at a Catholic University September 22-24, 2005. Featured speakers include historian of technology John M. Staudenmaier, S.J., of the University of Detroit Mercy; Daniel R. Lynch, MacLean Professor of Engineering at Dartmouth College; Philip J. Chmielewski, S.J., Professor and Holder of the Sir Thomas More Chair of Engineering Ethics at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles; and Dr. Billy Koen of the University of Texas at Austin. The conference will feature topics such as the history of engineering at Catholic Universities; the role of the Catholic nature of the university in informing scholarship and research; engineering ethics at Catholic universities; present examples of the melding of Catholic social teaching into engineering education; and processes for better integration of Catholic beliefs and ideals into engineering education. Further information is available on the conference website at recu.udayton.edu.

**Recent Activities of the University Professor of Faith and Culture**

Fr. James L. Heft, S.M., has finished editing a volume of Marianist Award lectures (see above). He is also finishing a book on Catholic High Schools that will be published next November by the National Catholic Education Association. His most recent address, "Catholic Education and Social Justice," will be published in a future issue of Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice. Boston College has invited him to speak this July at the Summer Institute for Administrators in Catholic Higher Education on "Hiring for Mission and Faculty Development." In late August, he will give a one day retreat to the Humanities faculty at Messiah College. He will present a paper at the September Conference held at UD on "Engineering and a Catholic University"; the paper will describe the cross disciplinary faculty conference on the same subject that he has led at UD during the Spring Semester. He continues to devote time to building the endowment for the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at the University of Southern California.

**UD Faculty: Recent Work in Brief**

Legions of members of the Religious Studies department spent much of the month of April performing yeoman service as public teachers and scholars by offering comment in a wide variety of media on every conceivable aspect of the
recent papal transition. Dennis Doyle, Fr. Jim Heft, S.M., Bill Portier, Maureen Tilley, Terry Tilley, Sandra Yocum Mize and Sr. Angela Ann Zuzkowski commented on history and theology, past and future, ceremony and controversy. While many members of UD's faculty perform similar public teaching service on issues related to Catholic intellectual tradition, the sheer volume of expertise in the course of recent historic events demonstrates the depth and breadth of resources available at UD to the university and the church, locally, nationally and internationally.

Christopher Duncan (Political Science) presented a paper titled "Catholicism, Poverty and The Pursuit of Happiness" at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/University of Cincinnati Ethics Center for a symposium titled "Religious Perceptions of Poverty and Welfare Policy" (May 7-9, 2005). Participants included an international array of scholars and Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk, among others. The work will be published by The Journal of Poverty: Innovations on Social, Political & Economic Inequalities. He will present a paper titled "Community and Culture: Reflections from Contemporary Resources" at the Annual Marianist Universities Meeting at the University of Dayton June 6-9, 2005. In addition, he published "Lincoln's Theocentric Turn" in Politics and Policy (September 2004).

Bro. Raymond Fitz, S.M. gave a workshop on "Poverty and Social Justice: What Does It Mean to Me?" at St. Albert the Great Parish on May 14, and a 4-day workshop on "Solidarity with the Poor and Social Analysis" for the temporary professed Marianists in Nairobi, Kenya from May 23 to May 28.


In addition to the book co-written with Monalisa Mullins (below), Thomas C. Hunt (Teacher Education) presented (with Fr. Ron Nuzzi) on "Catholic Schools in the United States: An Encyclopedia" at the recent meeting of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in Philadelphia in March. He also presented with Fr. Nuzzi and Sr. Mary Peter Traviss at the NCEA meeting in Philadelphia in March on "Doctoral Research on Catholic Education, 2003: Combining Theory and Practice." Tom is in his seventh year as co-editor of Catholic Education: A Journal of Theory and Practice," the only refereed journal on Catholic schools in the nation.

Therese Lysaught (Religious Studies) has been invited to become the new co-editor of the third edition of On Moral Medicine: Theological Explorations in Medical Ethics (Eerdmans), the classic anthology of theology and medical ethics, to be issued in 2007. She published a review of Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World, by Tracy Kidder; Pathologies of Power: Health Care, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor, by Paul Farmer; and The Uses of Haiti, by Paul Farmer, in Commonweal (Feb. 2005). In addition, she submitted two chapters for inclusion in books, one entitled "Vulnerability within the Body of Christ: Anointing of the Sick and Theological Anthropology," for Health and Human Flourishing: Religion, Medicine, and Moral Anthropology (Georgetown University Press; Carol R. Taylor and Roberto Dell’Oro, eds.), and the other entitled "And Power Corrupts...: Theology and the Disciplinary Matrix of Bioethics," for Faith at the Frontiers: A Reader in Religion and Bioethics (Oxford University Press; David Guinn, ed.). She also presented a workshop on "Spirituality and Healthcare: Anointing the Sick," at the Foundations of Catholic Health Care Ethics, Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, March 4, 2005 and a talk "From the Challenge of Peace to the Gift of Peace: Re-reading the Consistent Ethic of Life as an Ethic of Peacemaking," at the Cardinal Bernardin Center, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Illinois, November 13, 2004.

Jack McGrath, S.M. (Religious Studies), on April 8 was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Catholic Education Foundation at their annual banquet in Rye, New York. The keynote speaker of the evening was Thomas Monahan, Catholic philanthropist and founder of Ave Maria University. He presented the first annual lecture on Catholic and Marianist Education to the College of Arts and Sciences on April 29, entitled "Men and Women on a Mission: Catholic and Marianist Education." "The First Marianist Seminary: Paris, 1897-1903" was the topic of his colloquium for the Religious Studies Department on April 27.

Monalisa Mullins (Philosophy/Teacher Education) just published with Thomas C. Hunt (Teacher Education) Moral Educa-
tion in America's Schools: The Continuing Challenge, 2005, Information Age, Greenwich, CT. In addition, she is also a contributing editor for The Encyclopedia of Moral Education, which is due in print next spring.

Bill Portier (Religious Studies) was invited to write the “Foreword” to New Wine, New Wineskins, A Next Generation Reflects on Key Issues in Catholic Moral Theology, ed., William Mattison (Sheed & Ward, 2005). On April 4, 2005, he gave the Annual Keating Theology Lecture at St. Peter’s College in Jersey City, NJ, entitled “Genealogy of a Metaphor: Evolution and the ‘Warfare’ Between Science and Religion.” On April 17, he presented “Heartfelt Grief and Repentance in Imperial Times” at a Lansdowne, Va. conference entitled “Love Alone is Credible – A Conference Honoring the 100th Anniversary of Hans Urs von Balthasar’s Birth,” and on June 4, he will address the Annual Meeting of the College Theology Society, on “John Courtney Murray: Forty Years Later.”

Terrence W. Tilley (Religious Studies) edited New Horizons in Theology (Orbis, March 2005), containing the best papers from the 2004 College Theology Society Convention. His essay, "Christian Orthodoxy and Religious Pluralism" was accepted for October, 2005 publication by Modern Theology. He is giving presentations to the College Theology Society (on revelation) and the Catholic Theological Society of America (on the resurrection of Jesus) this June.

For the next issue:
The next issue of “Faith’s Reasons” will appear in the fall of 2005. If you know of any other activities, events, people, or publications that should be highlighted here, please bring them to the attention of the editors. Contact Una Cadegan by e-mail (Una.Cadegan@notes.udayton.edu) or at the Dept. of History, The University of Dayton, Dayton, OH 45469-1540.