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

A Semester of CIT Riches

Msgr. George Higgins
One of the 20th century’s great leaders in Catholic social teaching visited UD on October 4th at the invitation of the Forum on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition Today. Msgr. George Higgins has been involved in labor movement education and activism since the 1930s. He was introduced and joined in conversation by Dr. William Porter, from Mount St. Mary’s College in Emmitsburg, MD, the Department of Religious Studies’ Distinguished Visiting Professor for Fall 2001.

Marianist Award Winner Mary Douglas
British anthropologist Mary Douglas received the 2002 Marianist Award on October 9th. Among her many books are Natural Symbols (1970). Originally instituted to recognize scholarship relating to Mary, the Marianist Award has been presented annually since 1986 to a Catholic who has made a distinguished contribution to the scholarly world. Recipients are invited to present an address in which they reflect on how their faith and scholarship have influenced each other. Dr. Douglas’ address, “A Feeling for Hierarchy,” like the other Marianist Award addresses, will be published in pamphlet form.

Taneli Kukkonen
The Department of Philosophy’s 2001 Thompson Christian Philosophy Lecture was presented by Taneli Kukkonen of the Department of Systematic Theology at the University of Helsinki. Kukkonen’s work concerns medieval Islamic philosophy and its significance for developments in the Christian and Jewish philosophical traditions. His talk, entitled “The First Moment of Creation: Ancient Light on a Recent Debate,” argued that some forgotten Christian understandings of creation were preserved by Islamic scholars and thereby re-entered Christian tradition in the Middle Ages. The lecture was co-sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies and the Forum on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition Today.

Dedication of U.S. Catholic Collection
On Sunday, October 14th, Roesch Library dedicated the U.S. Catholic Collection, a research collection housed in a special suite on the library’s third floor. The dedication included a dedicatory prayer by Fr. James L. Heft, S.M., and a lecture by Professor Elizabeth McKeeown of Georgetown University.

The U.S. Catholic Collection is largely the work of Dr. Nicoletta Hary, who sent requests for donations of books to dozens of congregations of religious men and women across the country. She also ensured that the Collection’s material were catalogued according to the sources of the donations, thus preserving invaluable information about the library collections of the various congregations.

Kathleen Norris
The 2001 Scholars’ Program author was Kathleen Norris, author of Dakota: A Spiritual Geography, The Cloister Walk, Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith, and The Virgin of Bennington. An oblate of a Benedictine monastery in North Dakota, Norris has written extensively about Christian history and liturgy. She spoke on Monday, October 15th to the students in the University Scholars Program, and on October 16th in Kennedy Union Ballroom as part of the University’s Distinguished Speakers Series. The title for the October 16th talk was “Dakota and Beyond: What’s the Use of Memoir?”

Conference on Christianity and Literature
On October 19th-20th, the Department of English welcomed the Mideast Conference on Christianity and Literature to campus for its annual meeting. The Conference featured as its keynote speaker critic Patricia Waugh of the University of Durham, U.K., author of Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction, Feminine Fictions: Revisiting Postmodernism, and The Arts and Sciences of Criticism. The featured poet was Julia Kasdorf of Pennsylva-
The Task Force, appointed in the working groups to address issues the following academic year in three Catholic and Marianist character, will complete its work in January and intellectual life, its campus culture and diversity.

This lectureship is dedicated to bringing Jewish scholars to campus to speak about Judaism, its traditions and contemporary forms.

Elie Wiesel

Author and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel spoke at UD on October 24th. As the first speaker in the newly-established Max and Darlene Gutmann Lectureship in Judaic Studies, Wiesel addressed an overflow crowd on the topic of “Building a Moral Society.” In addition, he met earlier the same afternoon with a group of about 100 students and faculty to discuss human rights issues.

In the fall of 2001, the Task Force made public a draft of its final report and recommendations and requested responses from all members of the University community. The Task Force will submit the final report and recommendations to Brother Fitz in January 2002; the report will be available on the University web page and will also be published in hard copy. Recommendations in the final report are in the areas of “Hiring, Orientation and Development of University Faculty and Staff,” “Connected Learning and Catholic-Marianist Character,” and “Justice and Equity.”

Faculty Retreat on Christian Leadership by Fr. Jack McGrath, S.M.

It is not a common event for university faculty to take out a weekend to talk about their academic life as a vocation. But that’s what happened on November 30th and December 1st. UD’s Program for Christian Leadership sponsored the event, inviting a group of established faculty and administrators from across the university to think and talk together.

The first evening was spent on discussing our idea of vocation and how and if we experience our university life as a call. Many did, though for some it was a much clearer decision than for others. Sometimes it was only in hindsight that the path of vocation became clear. Academic life can be seen as a call by non-religious people, while Christian faith of its nature sees human life as a vocation as well as our professions and the occupations to which we dedicate our lives.

Many issues were touched on without being resolved, such as reinforcing our Catholic/Marianist identity while welcoming colleagues of other faiths, the difficulty of carrying out research on a religious question in one's discipline, and the exploration of ways to work across disciplines with teachers on a common project. We were happy to hear the story of faith’s effect on a professional life in William Gray’s article. In his article on Catholic higher education, John Haughey, SJ insisted that “the issue of Catholic identity will be endless talk unless it gets down to the research choices of the faculty person and how these choices are rewarded by the institution.” Paul Powell Sapienza’s article investigated the question, if our academic pursuits are a vocation, then “what is the mission and ministry of Catholic intellectual life?”

Of course these questions were not resolved, but serve as part of the ongoing consideration of such challenges and a stage in the development of concrete proposals. Participants in the retreat were: Jim Biddle, Una Cadegan, Kelvin Dickinson, Brenda Donnelly, Dennis Doyle, Tom Eggemeier, Kevin Hallinan, John Inglis, Pat Johnson, Janet Lasley, Tom Lasley, Jack McGrath, SM, Cecilia Moore, Mike O’Hare, Joe Saliba, Vernellia Randall, Ulrike Schellhammer, and Sandra Yocum Mize. The retreat was facilitated by Maura Skill, Executive Director of the Program for Christian Leadership and her graduate assistant, Dan Sarell.

Recent Activities of University Professor of Faith and Culture

Fr. Heft was invited by the Marianist General Assistant in Rome to contribute an essay on leadership and Marianist education, which will appear along with several other essays in a compendium to be used in Marianist educational institutions throughout the world. The National Catholic Education Association published as an individual pamphlet his

On Friday the 22nd of February he will speak to the faculty of John Carroll University on “The Challenge of Ex corde ecclesiae.” On the 23rd he will join with Professor David O’Brien of Holy Cross College speaking in Washington, DC at a national conference on “Catholic Intellectual Tradition: Addressing Poverty and Injustice”; his particular contribution will address “Catholic Intellectual Life and the Academic Culture.” He continues to make progress on a book about Catholic higher education, which he hopes to finish during a sabbatical next year.

UD Faculty: Recent Work in Brief

Eugene August continues to plug away at his book on divine comedies in world literature. He is currently finishing a chapter surveying the bias in critical theory from Aristotle to postmodernism that favors tragedy as the highest art and that denigrates comedy in general (and divine comedies in particular) as "unserious" forms of literature.

Dennis Doyle (Religious Studies) has been working with Catholic Common Ground to plan and deliver their spring conference in Malibu next April. The theme is "Participation and Communion." He has also continued his work with the Methodist-Catholic Dialogue in Washington, D.C. He has recently completed the updating of over a dozen articles in the area of ecclesiology for the revised New Catholic Encyclopedia.

"Falls of Desire / Leaps of Faith: Religious Syncretism in 'Mixed-Blood' Women's Poetry" by Sheila Hassell Hughes (English) has just come out in the summer 2001 issue of Religion and Literature (33.2). This work was begun 2 summers ago with a CIT grant and was presented as a brown-bag discussion sponsored by the Forum. The essay looks at poetry by Joy Harjo (Muscogee/Protestant) and Louise Erdrich (Ojibwe/Catholic). She continues to work on issues of religious and cultural mixing in Native women’s poetry.

Tom Hunt (School of Education) has edited a Handbook of Research on Catholic Education (Greenwood Press), and has finished work on The Impossible Dream: Education and the Search for Panaceas (Peter Lang, forthcoming spring 2002) and on Catholic Schools Still Make a Difference: Ten Years of Research, 1991-2000 (NCEA, 2002). He is also under contract for three other projects related to Catholic education, all involving Ellis Joseph, Ron Nuzzi, and other UD colleagues. He is also preparing to host a national conference at UD in June of 2002 on the subject of "Preparing the Next Generation of Catholic Educational Leaders."

Therese Lysaught (Religious Studies) presented a paper "What Would You Do If...? Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and the Defense of the Innocent" at Stem Cell Research: New Frontiers in Science and Ethics, Oct. 18, 2001, Milwaukee, WI, sponsored by the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and Marquette University. She will be presenting a paper entitled "Life Sciences in the Ecclesial University" at Pt. Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, CA, March 2002. The paper is part of a book project, "The Ecclesiably-Based University in a Liberal Democratic Society," sponsored by the Rhodes Consultation on the Future of Church-Related Colleges and Universities. At the same meeting, she and Amy Laura Hall (of Duke University) will be presenting at an associated event at the UCSD on how the contemporary "bio-ethical dilemmas" are defined by liberal categories, and how a Christian may reconceive how to approach these issues.

During the Winter semester 2002, Maureen Tilley (Religious Studies) will occupy the William P. Shannon Chair of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition at Nazareth College in Rochester, NY. This is an interdisciplinary chair; her courses will be listed in both religious studies and history. They are "Modern Roman Catholicism" and "Martyrs, Monks, Maidens and Maidens: Lifestyles in Early Christianity."

Terrence Tilley’s (Religious Studies) recent book, Inventing Catholic Tradition (Orbis, 2000) was the subject of a panel discussion at the November 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Reli-

William Vance Trollinger, Jr. (History), has recently written three articles for Christian Century: "In Lockdown America" (June 2001); "Managing a Merger: Mennonite Church USA" (August 2001); and, "Peace Churches in a Time of Terror and War" (tentative title; Dec. 2001).